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## RATIONALIST AND INTUITIVE ISSUES IN TEMPORARY ARCHITECTURE

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### WĄTKI RACJONALISTYCZNE I INTUICYJNE W ARCHITEKTURZE TYMCZASOWEJ

#### Abstract

Architecture is a broad discipline, which encompasses sciences and arts, and shapes the space around us. Its major part is durable architecture, permanently connected to the ground, very rational, bound by the strict rules of engineering, law, and fixed budgets. On the other hand, temporary architecture allows for greater freedom in making decisions and, despite certain unavoidable or intentional rational elements, it is the artistic trait that is of vital importance here. Multifaceted, shaped by so many various fields, a piece of architecture has a great chance of becoming a complete work, which fulfils its goals and receives general recognition.

*Keywords: durable architecture, temporary architecture, function, art, idea*

#### Streszczenie

Architektura to szeroko pojęta dyscyplina, z pogranicza nauk ścisłych i sztuki, kształtująca przestrzeń. Znaczna jej część to architektura trwała, trwale związana z gruntem i bardzo racjonalna, kierująca się surowymi zasadami inżynierii, prawa i nieelastycznym budżetem. Architektura tymczasowa natomiast daje dużo więcej wolności w podejmowaniu decyzji na swój temat i – mimo występowania w niej w pewnym stopniu nieuniknionych bądź zamierzonych wątków racjonalistycznych – to element artystyczny jest w niej w znacznym stopniu decydujący. W ten właśnie wielowątkowy sposób ukształtowana architektura ma szansę stać się dziełem kompletnym, spełniającym swoje cele i zyskującym powszechne uznanie.

*Słowa kluczowe: architektura trwała, architektura tymczasowa, funkcja, sztuka, idea*

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## 1. Creation of architecture

When considering architecture, one cannot fail to refer to a work which determines and explains the principles of creating architecture, namely Vitruvius' treatise titled *The Ten Books on Architecture*. Even in the introduction, the author mentions the following:

*The architect should be equipped with knowledge of many branches of study and varied kinds of learning, for it is by his judgement that all work done by the other arts is put to test. This knowledge is the child of practice and theory. Practice is the continuous and regular exercise of employment where manual work is done with any necessary material according to the design of a drawing. Theory, on the other hand, is the ability to demonstrate and explain the productions of dexterity on the principles of proportion. It follows, therefore, that architects who have aimed at acquiring manual skill without scholarship have never been able to reach a position of authority to correspond to their pains, while those who relied only upon theories and scholarship were obviously hunting the shadow, not the substance. But those who have a thorough knowledge of both, like men armed at all points, have the sooner attained their object and carried authority with them<sup>1</sup>*

Based on these words, one can formulate a simple equation which says that theoretical knowledge supported by practice allows for creation of an impressive piece of art. Despite the passing of time, this thesis remains relevant. The ideal design combining beauty, functionality and durability still requires a thorough theoretical basis, as well as long-standing design and construction practice from the architect. Theoretically, such rhetorical considerations should result in full effectiveness, and the modern reality should abound in human-friendly environments with good architecture and urban planning, where the creators would proudly walk around, bathed in glory.

However, this is not what happens in practice. In fact, designers of permanent forms “fight” for spatial order and the timeless beauty of architecture, move between not always clear the provisions of law, demanding customers, inconvenient land division, budget restraints, deadlines and contractors.

As a result, the state of higher necessity forces the creator to make the choice between the aforementioned links of the seemingly inseparable Vitruvian chain and the execution by way of eliminating it. This sort of practice is not a reason for pride or glory, because architecture needs to be complete to fulfil its goals:

*Architecture is our primary instrument in relating us with space and time, and giving these dimensions a human measure. It domesticates limitless space and time to be tolerated, inhabited and understood by humankind. As a consequence of this interdependence of space and time, the dialectics of external and internal space, physical and spiritual, material and mental, unconscious and conscious priorities concerning the senses as well their relative roles and interactions, have an essential impact on the nature of the arts and architecture<sup>2</sup>.*

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<sup>1</sup> Vitruvius, *The ten books on Architecture*, Morris Hicky Morgan, (prepared under the direction of Herbert Langford Warren), Harvard University Press, Cambridge, London: Humphrey Milford/Oxford University Press 1914, [https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Ten\\_Books\\_on\\_Architecture/Book\\_I](https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Ten_Books_on_Architecture/Book_I) (access on 23.05.2018).

<sup>2</sup> J. Pallasmaa, *The eyes of the skin. Architecture and the senses*, John Wiley & Sons Ltd., Great Britain 2005, p. 17.

## 2. Temporary architecture

As opposed to permanent architecture, temporary architecture is not burdened with so many conditions. The provisions of construction law and ministerial regulations apply to such architecture to a limited extent, thanks to which it has so many faces. We are talking here about all sorts of about pop-up<sup>3</sup> interiors, mobile booths, exhibition pavilion, favelas and more. It is varied, but it has one common element: no rules. This is exactly what opens the way to free creation, both with regard to the form and materials used. Works created in this way may have their function or may allow for the introduction of some predetermined purpose. They are supposed to “have a short life”, but the history shows us that they are able to become an inherent part of the space and remain there for a long time.

### 2.1. Rationalist aspects

Nowadays, temporary architecture is trying to solve many problems affecting people and the cities where they live. Examples include the shrinking cities, help for the poorest countries, victims of war and natural disasters with regard to ensuring the basic subsistence level, as well as mitigating the symptoms of “the disease of our times”, which is the increasing pace of life, visible very well in the developed countries.

As we can see, the need for simple, quick and reliable solutions is huge and it is observed in many planes of life and across all social classes around the world. In the absence of new plans for the shrinking cities or districts, temporary architecture allows for creation of a city and adapting new buildings and new functions through trial and error. Many German cities may serve as an example, as they are subject to gradual revival<sup>4</sup>. Social aid with regard to social building is another experimental ground of a kind. Many famous architects who operate on a global scale, like e.g. Shigeru Ban, are deeply involved in the work aiming at creating low-budget residential forms adapted to the local needs and conditions<sup>5</sup>. Such solutions, e.g. involving local materials in design, are also implemented by many global companies, such as World Habitat, or some of the well-known corporations, such as IKEA with its *Better Shelter* foldable house which ensures not only shelter for those in need, but also returns to them the lost privacy of life<sup>6</sup>. One example of large-scale spontaneous residential architecture, which at the same time escapes the control of administrative and planning authorities, are favelas,

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<sup>3</sup> pop-up – coming into view suddenly from a concealed position, <https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/pop-up> (access on 07.06.2018), in architecture: e.g. pop-up store – temporal store.

<sup>4</sup> P. Schönhöfer, *Temporary Architecture, Freedom and Space for ideas*, tłum. Chris Cave, Goethe-Institut e.V., Internet-Redaktion, July 2017, <http://www.goethe.de/en/kul/arc/21014850.html> (access on 31.05.2018).

<sup>5</sup> Author unknown, *Nagroda Pritzker 2014 – Shigeru Ban, architekt wrażliwy*, Sztuka architektury, 09.04.2014, <http://sztuka-architektury.pl/article/7952/nagroda-pritzker-2014-shigeru-ban-architekt-wrażliwy> (access on 31.05.2018).

<sup>6</sup> O. Wainwright, *Why Ikea's flatpack refugee shelter won design of the year*, The Guardian, 27.01.2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2017/jan/27/why-ikea-flatpack-refugee-shelter-won-design-of-the-year> (access on 31.05.2018).



which emerge practically in every corner of the world – unfortunately, this is an example of highly “unstable” architecture<sup>7</sup>.

When talking about the social and sociological aspects of temporary architecture, we have to mention design projects which are popular in the countries at the other extreme, those which oppose the rush of life and connect municipal communities in the spirit of “slow-life” philosophy. Temporary architecture – in this case, buildings with elements of street furniture erected from e.g. shipping containers, scaffoldings or fibreboard – gives new life to these construction materials, but also helps users of such creative spaces find it, even if they were lost in time for a while. The examples include: *POP Brixton*<sup>8</sup>, *Brixtonpark*<sup>9</sup> or *Southwark Lido* in London<sup>10</sup>, the pop-up restaurant on *Ridley Road Market* in Hackney<sup>11</sup> and the *Doki gastrobar* in Łódź<sup>12</sup>. Creation of temporary local restaurant branches is another new trend in global temporary architecture and catering. This is how NOMA functions, opening its “restaurant” under the bridge in Copenhagen or in the Mexican jungle<sup>13</sup>. The cheaper counterparts of pop-up catering outlets are popular food trucks, which are a mobile version of a market booth. However, when discussing the rationalist aspects of temporary architecture, we have to mention some commercial

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<sup>7</sup> Ch. Costa, *Niedokończony jako kategoria ontologiczna; Architektura niezrównoważona*, Fundacja Bęc Zmiana, Warszawa 2016, p. 364.

<sup>8</sup> Author unknown, <https://www.popbrixton.org> (access on 11.06.2018).

<sup>9</sup> Author unknown, <https://www.boxpark.co.uk> (access on 11.06.2018).

<sup>10</sup> C. St Hill, *This is temporary. How transient projects are redefining architecture*, RIBA Publishing, UK, 2016, p. 117.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 53.

<sup>12</sup> K. Drożdż, *Restauracja Doki na OFF Piotrkowskiej: ruchoma nieruchomość*, MAGAZIF, 04.09.2017, <https://magazif.com/ludzie/doki-w-lodzi-ruchoma-nieruchomosc/> (access on 11.06.2018).

<sup>13</sup> B. Fletcher, *Noma Mexico: The \$ 750 pop-up experirnce*, CNN, 19.06.2017, <https://edition.cnn.com/travel/article/noma-mexico-rene-redzepi/index.html> (access on 01.06.2018).

G. Z. Price, *What Noma's Under the Bridge pop-up reveals about Noma 2.0*, CNN, 13.12.2017, <https://edition.cnn.com/travel/article/noma-under-the-bridge/index.html> (access on 01.06.2018).

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- III.1. Houses made of paper tubes/ Shigeru Ban, Bhuj, photo: K. Shodhan; source: <http://sztuka-architektury.pl/article/7952/nagroda-pritzkera-2014-shigeru-ban-architekt-wrazliwy/>; (access on 10.06.2018)
  - III.2. Better Shelters/ IKEA, Lesbos, photo: Better Shelter; source: <https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2017/jan/27/why-ikea-flatpack-refugee-shelter-won-design-of-the-year>; (access on 10.06.2018)
  - III.3. Ridley's pop-up restaurant/ The Decorators, London, photo: n.p.a.; source: <http://the-decorators.net/Ridley-s-Temporary-Restaurant/>; (access on 10.06.2018)
  - III.4. Doki gastrobar, Łódź, photo: n.p.a.; source: <https://magazif.com/ludzie/doki-w-lodzi-ruchoma-nieruchomosc/>; (access on 10.06.2018)
  - III.5. Noma, pop-up restaurant, Mexico, photo: Adriana Zehbrauskas; source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/23/dining/noma-tulum-pete-wells-mexico-rene-redzepi.html>; (access on 10.06.2018)
  - III.6. Hy-fi/ The Living, New York, photo: Kris Graves; source: <https://www.designboom.com/architecture/hy-fi-the-living-david-benjamin-moma-ps1-young-architects-program-2014-07-01-2014/>; (access on 10.06.2018)
  - III.7. Water Cathedral Pavilion/ GUN Architects, Santiago, photo: Guy Wenborne; source: <https://www.designboom.com/architecture/gun-architects-water-cathedral/>; (access on 10.06.2018)
  - III.8. The Lullaby Factory/ Studio Weave, London, photo: n.p.a.; source: <https://www.dezeen.com/2013/02/20/lullaby-factory-by-studio-weave/>; (access on 10.06.2018)



facilities, including exhibition pavilions of brand stores or pavilions for global exhibition, e.g. EXPO or Serpentine galleries. This area also embraces wide-scale design activities with regard to commercial interiors, the so-called pop ups functioning both in permanent buildings and as free, usually mobile booths. The examples of temporary architecture from the commercial sector mentioned above are characterised by the rationalist dimension, but are also distinguished by original ideas aesthetic solutions, which is why they remain on the borderline of the categories discussed here.

## 2.2. Intuitive aspects

Intuitive aspects which are characteristic of some of the examples of temporary architecture place it very near the arts. This is one of its advantages, both from the perspective of the designer and spectator. The designer, unhampered by commonly binding rules, limited only by the properties of the material used and his/her own vision, has a chance to create a complete and consistent form which will convey the creator's idea hidden inside it. Examples of such creations can be found in the history of architecture, e.g.: Archigram with its *Walking-City* from 1964, as well as Haus-Rucker-Co and *Oase Nr. 7 (Oasis No. 7)* from 1972, who were undoubtedly the precursors of the pioneering solutions in architecture, urban planning and modern temporary architecture with their concept of moving cities or the transparent installation on the building facade. Although it originated in the previous century this thought is still sustained nowadays in the buildings and installations which are created in order to surprise and encourage reflection and be aware, by e.g. The Living with their *Hi-Fy* towers designed for the New York branch of MOMA PS'1 Young Architects Program. The design (or rather installation, to be more precise) treats the subject of the transitory nature of temporary forms in a rather literal way. The Living created biodegradable bricks and used them to erect the building, with a predicted durability of only several months<sup>14</sup>. Another example of temporary

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<sup>14</sup> C. St Hill, *op.cit.*, p. 15.

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- Ill. 9. Paleys upon Pilers/ Studio Weave/ London, photo: n.p.a.; source: <http://www.studioweave.com/projects/paleys-upon-pilers/>; (access on 10.06.2018)
  - Ill. 10. The Jellyfish Theatre/ Köbberling & Kaltwasser, London, photo: n.p.a.; source: <http://www.koebberlingkaltwasser.de/jellyfish.html>; (access on 10.06.2018)
  - Ill. 11. Aeropolis/ Plastique Fantastique, Copenhagen, photo: n.p.a. ; source: <https://www.archdaily.com/425590/aeropolis-inaki-echeverria>;(access on 10.06.2018)
  - Ill. 12. The Roaming Market/ Aberrant Architecture, London, photo: n.p.a.; source: <https://www.dezeen.com/2013/05/31/roaming-market-by-aberrant-architecture/>; (access on 10.06.2018)
  - Ill. 13. Try-On Truck/ The True & Co., photo: Bruce Damonte; source: <http://wwd.com/fashion-news/fashion-scoops/true-co-launches-mobile-try-on-truck-10339041/>; (access on 10.06.2018)
  - Ill. 14. Fast Food Aid/ Kaibutsu, Tokyo, photo: n.p.a.; source: <https://www.dezeen.com/2016/05/12/fast-food-aid-vitamin-supplements-junk-food-lovers-tokyo-japan/>; (access on 10.06.2018)
  - Ill. 15. As Good As New/i29, Amsterdam, photo: n.p.a.; source: <https://www.dezeen.com/2012/09/26/as-good-as-new-pop-up-shop-at-sprmrkt-by-i29/>;(access on 10.06.2018)
  - Ill. 16. Tube Tank Triwa/mode:lina, Poznań, photo: n.p.a.; source: <http://www.modelina-architekci.com/project/tube-tank-triwa/>

architecture, or the construction touching upon the problem of climate changes which creates community-friendly microclimate in the city centre, are the *Water Cathedral* and *Rainforest Pavilion* built in Santiago and London, both designed by the young architectural design studio GUN Architects<sup>15</sup>. The following installations or even sculpture forms can also serve as an example of temporary architecture on the border of arts: *Lullaby Factory* and *Paleys upon Pilers* from Studio Weave, *The Jellyfish Theatre* designed by Köbberling & Kaltwasser, or various forms made of pneumatic coating, such as: *Aeropolis*, *Soundwaves*, *RINGdeLUXE* or *Space Invaders* designed by Plastique Fantastique. The first of these projects is an installation or sculpture on the building façade, imitating the elements of musical instruments and at the same time surrounding the building that is due to be demolished soon<sup>16</sup>. *Paleys upon Pilers* is a wooden rustic form, resembling a gate or a house on piles, in the heart of London. It undoubtedly enhanced the aesthetic attractiveness of the place and intrigued the passers-by<sup>17</sup>. Another example is the theatre, so the function, but with unusual “packaging” made of wooden waste, boards and pallets, which are all combined in a one-of-a-kind spatial form<sup>18</sup>. On the other hand, Plastique Fantastique creates inflatable structures functioning independently or in close contact with the existing buildings as a cooperating space, a form placed between permanent structures or, as in *RINGdeLUXE*, as the surrounding installation<sup>19</sup>.

In the case of the aforementioned designs, we can see that the boundary between architecture and art is lost, because these works strongly correspond with the fruit of the avant-garde art of the second half of the 20th century. Works that are worth naming here include e.g. the designs by Daniel Spoerri and his assemblage, e.g. *Il Bistrot di Santa Marta of 2014* or works for *Exhibition in Galerie Hanndschin near Hammerstraße of 1978*, which presented a new point of view on art, stretching its boundaries into some previously unknown directions. Temporary land art installations and emballages by Christo and Jeanne-Claude, and ephemeral works by Jim Denevan, in which one can easily find similarities with the modern temporal architecture are some other examples. *The Iron Curtain* from 1962, *Wrapped Reichstag* from 1971–95, *Surrounded Islands* from 1982 or *The Umbrellas* from 1984–91 are only several titles of installations of the aforementioned authors – they may be fleeting, but at the same time remain in memory for a long time. *Nimbus* by Berndnaut Smilde from 2014/2015, *Rockaway!* by Kathrina Grosse, as well as Felice Varini’s colourful optical illusions from 2016 which decorate Le Corbusier’s *Unité d’habitation* in Marseille are good examples of art in public spaces which utilizes architecture in a non-direct, or even direct manner and temporarily changes its meaning and the way of its perception. Based on the aforementioned examples and similarities between them, one could describe temporary architecture as the avant-garde of modern architecture.

Referring back to the topic of creation of mobile booths, interiors and pavilions, we cannot forget about *Roaming Market* by Aberrant Architecture. It is an example of a new outlook on multifunctional fair spaces, which are both a platform of events and a venue for inspiring meetings<sup>20</sup>. Another interesting solution is the design of a mobile store of a famous lingerie

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<sup>15</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 25.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 90.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 93.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 157.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 167.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 77.

brand, True & Co, the so-called: *Try-on Truck*<sup>21</sup>. On the other hand, the pop-up *The Push Button House* shows how a sea container used by Illy as a coffee stand is transformed into a full-blown apartment with a kitchen, bedroom, dining room, living room and library<sup>22</sup>. When talking about temporary interiors, one should not forget about several interesting pop-ups: *Fast Food Aid* designed by Kaibutsu, offering supplements providing fast-food nutrients<sup>23</sup>; *As Good As New* pop-up in SPRMRKT designed by i29, where the whole interior was covered with homogenic grey plastic<sup>24</sup>; *Tube Tank*, or Triwa pop-up store<sup>25</sup>, designed by the mode:lina group, is an example of a stand built of 900 cardboard tubes fastened with seatbelts, and Agata Wojtkiewicz's pop-up store designed by OSHI, made of cardboard.

Pavilions deserve a mention here as well. Just as in the case of other examples mentioned before, there is a great diversity of various kinds of pavilions, and just like other temporary structures, they manage to maintain their aesthetic value despite the transient function they are assigned. Good examples would be wooden pavilions such as: *Uchronia* by Arne Quinze, *Research Pavilion* by ICD/ITKE, *Swoosh Pavilion* by Architectural Association or *The Reading Nest* by Mark Reigelman, which bring to mind some more or less organic structures<sup>26</sup>, as well as P<sup>3</sup> pavilion, which is a completely parameterized form built on a human scale as a result of Lodz University of Technology Science Club actions, called KA<sup>T</sup><sup>27</sup>. Another interesting example are pavilion-installations, such as e.g. the pavilion designed by DP Architects for Archifest 2016, made of the materials taken from the construction site, including the safety net in various colours suspended from the steel scaffolding, which create a colourful and multi-dimensional sculpture<sup>28</sup>. Such "large-sized functional sculptures" are created cyclically in the international arena, also during EXPO exhibitions or for Serpentine Gallery in London, and the projects presented there, as well as their creators, compete with regard to the idea, form and recognition.

### 3. Summary

As we can see, temporary architecture is a multi-layered architecture, where rational principles of shaping architecture go hand in hand with intuitive ones, also beauty and an

<sup>21</sup> M. McDowell, *True & Co. Launches Mobile Try-on Truck. The mobile fit-shop will provide bra fittings throughout United States*, WDD, 03.02.2016, <http://wwd.com/fashion-news/fashion-scoops/true-co-launches-mobile-try-on-truck-10339041/> (access on 02.06.2018).

<sup>22</sup> M. Nati, *10 Coolest Pop-Up Shops*, Oddee, 17.08.2014, [https://www.oddee.com/item\\_99054.aspx](https://www.oddee.com/item_99054.aspx) (access on 02.06.2018).

<sup>23</sup> A. Frearson, *Fast Food Aid is a laboratory – like shop that serves vitamin supplements to junk food lovers*, dezeen, 12.05.2016, <https://www.dezeen.com/2016/05/12/fast-food-aid-vitamin-supplements-junk-food-lovers-tokyo-japan/> (access on 02.06.2018).

<sup>24</sup> A. Frearson, *As Good As New pop-up shop at SPRMRKT by i29*, dezeen, 26.09.2012, <https://www.dezeen.com/2012/09/26/as-good-as-new-pop-up-shop-at-sprmrkt-by-i29/> (access on 02.06.2018).

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.modelina-architekci.com/project/tube-tank-triwa/> (access on 02.06.2018).

<sup>26</sup> L. Grozdanic, *10 Temporary Wooden Pavilions – That Push Timber to the Limits*, Architizer, b.d.w., <https://architizer.com/blog/inspiration/collections/wooden-pavilions/> (access on 02.06.2018).

<sup>27</sup> Author unknown, <http://czerwonepufy.blogspot.com/p/warsztaty-p3.html>.

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idea can not function without logic at the same time. Such actions require proficiency in the artistry of an architect, which was described by Vitruvius, who was referred to at the beginning of this article:

*Since, therefore, the possession of such talents due to natural capacity is not vouchsafed at random to entire nations, but only to a few great men; since, moreover, the function of the architect requires a training in all the departments of learning; and finally, since reason, on account of the wide extent of the subject, concedes that he may possess not the highest but not even necessarily a moderate knowledge of the subjects of study. I request, Caesar, both of you and of those who may read the said books, that if anything is set forth with too little regard for grammatical rule, it may be pardoned. For it is not as a very great philosopher, nor as an eloquent rhetorician, nor as a grammarian trained in the highest principles of his art, that I have striven to write this work, but as an architect who has had only a dip into those studies<sup>29</sup>.*

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<sup>29</sup> Vitruvius, *The ten books on Architecture*, Morris Hicky Morgan, (prepared under the direction of Hebert Langford Warren), Harvard University Press, Cambridge, London: Humphrey Milford/ Oxford University Press 1914, [https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Ten\\_Books\\_on\\_Architecture/Book\\_I](https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Ten_Books_on_Architecture/Book_I) (access on 23.05.2018).

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