

This new column of the TMT will occasionally publish selected papers in English, German or Russian. The selection will include actual topics on librarianship and information science in Hungary expected to arouse international interest.

A TMT ebben a rovatában időnként világnyelveken – angolul, németül vagy oroszul – közöl olyan cikkeket, amelyek a magyar könyvtár- és tájékoztatásügy egy-egy külföldi érdeklődésre számot tartó témáját dolgozzák fel.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT IN LIBRARY SCIENCE – Some Considerations –

István Papp

National Széchényi Library,
Centre for Library Science and Methodology,
Budapest, Hungary

Introductory remarks

May I first of all ask my readers not to regard the following observations as of general validity. They merely reflect the background of librarianship in a country of average economic development with a socialist system. It is important to emphasize both factors because they directly or indirectly influence research in library science. I might as well say that the stage of economic and social development of a country, its infrastructure determine the subjects and volume of research. Educational, cultural and information policy, however, within certain limits, have a modifying effect, it may hinder or promote library supply, influencing also research in librarianship. My conviction is that a policy, emphasizing public interest in harmony with the individuals' prosperity – by indicating its priorities – may result in a librarianship, the level of which is above the country's average stage of financial and infrastructural development.

I do not intend to describe either the organizational framework or the main directions of research in library science carried out in Hungary (outlined in a previous article),¹ however, the following considerations are based mainly upon Hungarian experiences in research organization.

I always feel a little embarrassed when talking about research in library science. Indeed, may we judge the investigations carried out in our field by the same criteria as those in other, traditionally established sciences? Evidently I do not doubt the expertise, knowledge and capacity of our research workers, but I have scruples about the scientific value of the achievements originating from the character of the research subject itself. My scruples are the same as those of LÁSZLÓ MÁTRAI, expressed at the Liverpool General Council Meeting of IFLA.² On the other hand, if it is not the library but information and its movement within and impact on society that we consider as our research subject, then SARACEVIC is entirely right to compare the quality and significance of this subject to those of matter or energy.³ In this case we should by no means be faint-hearted about the results of research.

R + D + M

Regarding either strictly the library or in a wider sense information as the research subject, these activities should be marked by the R + D formula, because of the

¹ Papp, István: Research in library science: the Hungarian scene. *Unesco Bull. Libr.*, vol. XXX. no. 4. 1976, p. 199–205.

² Mátrai, László: Practice, knowledge and science. Liverpool, 1971, IFLA Council, 9 p.

³ Saracevic, Tefko: Relevance: a review of the literature and a framework for thinking on the notion in information science. *Advances in Librarianship*. New York, 1976, Academic Press, p. 79–138.

numerous and close connections in practical implications. What is more, experiences indicate that the emphasis is laid on D.

The institution I work at is called *Centre for Library Science and Methodology*. Colleagues from abroad often ask me what "methodology" means. I would answer in short that all activities have their own methods, ways, technology, and so has library service and operation. It is the investigation, analysis and improvement of these methods that we are engaged in. It is development work, you may say, and you are right. Still, for us methodology includes an element which perhaps is not sufficiently emphasized in development, namely the dissemination and instruction of methods and know-hows.

Therefore perhaps it is worth adding *M* to the traditional *R + D* formula, because it stresses application, the element of a feed-back to practice. And as it was difficult to draw a clear line between *R* and *D*, it is at least as difficult to separate from *D* activities not aimed at developing new technology but at introducing well-known ones.

What is all this useless hair-splitting good for? It may perhaps be useful to call attention once again to the practice – research (development) – dissemination (development, methodology, education, extension training) – practice (application) cycle, the smooth functioning of which is a guarantee for appropriate library services. Tasks of political and practical character come to the foreground especially at the early stage of librarianship and they are inclined to hide the importance of research. Permanent success, particularly development cannot, however, be expected if librarians are lost in their daily work, if they do not meditate on and reflect upon their own activity. One of the advanced ways of this reflection is research which promotes not only the development of professional conscience but provides also the basis for the high standard of education. Thus it could be expected that research results will influence and improve practice.

This sounds very well, but can every country afford research on a large scale? This question must be raised also by countries which – though small – are rich and have a well-developed librarianship; not to speak of those which are at an early stage of library development and possess limited financial means.

It is obvious that an emerging librarianship can hardly afford doing costly and extensive research work for the sake of further development. "Soup would cost more than meat" – as we Hungarians used to say. Our profession being international, we need not again and again find out new ways and methods, but we should learn from the experience and practice of other countries. That is why it seems reasonable to organize first of all an information service on librarianship instead of starting own research. In lucky countries, where there is no language barrier, librarians can use foreign literature and abstracting services.

In many countries, however, it is necessary and justified to transform world literature into the librarians' mother tongue. Translation of basic monographs, mainly of those that might be used as textbooks, compilation of chrestomathies, publication of digests, launching an abstract journal⁴ for current awareness purposes – these are the activities that seem desirable.

A special feature of *R + D + M* activity is to develop and to put into action such regulating factors which determine the level of library provision on the one hand, and improve the functioning of the library-information system on the other. It has to be underlined that solid and satisfying guidelines, norms and standards must be preceded by research work.

In the initial phase of planning and running a library system tasks falling in this field indicate mostly the principal objectives and contents of research activity. The primary condition of integration into international librarianship and making use of international information services is that the national set of norms and standards of library technology must be compatible with the international ones. Obviously, librarianship in each country has a vital interest to participate in the international flow of information and not to exclude itself by adhering to outmoded or individualised technological standards. The application of internationally accepted standards at a national level is not simply a problem of translation but it requires considerable theoretical and practical investigations. However, it is the most inexpensive way of applying and making full use of an up-to-date library and information know-how.

When starting research

At a later stage every country will inevitably start its own research work on librarianship, too. A bit simplified it can be stated that the character of tasks changes first from *M* to *D*, and later from *D* to *R*. It seems to me that there are some common features which are from this aspect equally characteristic of small and rich countries with developed librarianship and of developing countries, no matter whether they are ahead or behind regarding the organization of library supply. These features are the following:

⁴ Some examples:
Bibliotekarske novosti: Referativnij bilten. Biblioteka Matica Srpske, Novi Sad;
Buletin de informare in bibliologie. Biblioteca Centrala de Stat, Bucuresti;
Novinky knihovnické literatury. Statni Knihovna ČSR, Praha;
IREBI Indices de revistas de bibliotecologia. Oficina de Educación Iberoamericana, Madrid. (An improved current contents service: besides the table of contents abstracts in foreign languages are also provided and the titles in other languages than Portuguese, Italian, English and French are translated into Spanish).

- They are not self-supporting, they do not and cannot follow the fashionable research trends in every respect, as they must be aware of their more or less limited financial possibilities and manpower as well as of the level and the current problems of their librarianship. This disadvantage is in a way advantageous, because a lot of deadlocks, self-centred, fruitless work can thus be avoided.
- They receive many ready research results and just because of the phase delay they can make use of proved and evaluated solutions. (This should be especially emphasized from the aspect of automation of library and information services.)
- It is, however, a mistake to believe that this is an easy task. The adaptation of research results can also be regarded as a research activity requiring great intellectual and financial inputs.
- They do not have a chance to launch research in all possible directions. They should select with sober self-control the key subjects for their librarianship, keeping always in mind whether the necessary means for successful research are available or not.
- In other fields where no active research is possible, at least the chances for knowledge and intellectual preparations must be ensured. Thus we have returned to the importance of organizing an information service.

The selection of research subjects is influenced by a number of facts and it is varied by countries due to the circumstances mentioned in the introduction. Still, there seem to be some fields which fall within the national responsibility of librarianship in each country, and similar activities abroad do not release librarians from doing their own research. In these fields methods are to be taken over and not results; research aims must prefer comparison to adaptation. Such "national" research fields are as follows:

- The impact of the country's economic, social and cultural conditions upon the library and information system; conditions and trends of development in building up an information infrastructure.
- The demand and need of the population on a library and information system, the level of and the changes in reading culture; information habits; the function and influence of information within society.
- The development of natural language information retrieval systems.
- In the framework of the country's cultural history the study of book and library history, including great retrospective bibliographic ventures requiring erudition.

In one word, all fields which – from any reason – are closely connected with a country, a nation, a language, and their research serves both national interests and international cooperation. It is interesting to observe

that while in other research fields international cooperation is limited mostly to keeping an eye on each other's activity and to adaptation, in national research topics comparative methods have gained ground. What is more, the main objective of comparative library science – now developing into an independent discipline – is the comparison of national specialities, i. e. the examination of general features in individual cases. It is just in these fields that actual international research is making good progress. Perhaps the most impressive example of this can be found in the field of bibliographic work (*Gesamtkatalog der Wiegendrucke*). In other fields this tendency appears on a much smaller scale for the time being. Our Centre has also made some modest steps in this direction when we examined with identical methods the reception of the same literary works in similar social strata together with Soviet, Polish and Bulgarian partners; or when in cooperation with our British partner the readers' areas of interest in Manchester (UK) and Miskolc (Hungary) were investigated.

To strengthen this tendency, the competent library organs of each country should supply relevant information about their research activity to the international pool. I am afraid it is not sufficient if a country relies merely on the great abstracting services of international interest and leave it to them what they consider worth presenting to the world from the national literature. The selection is determined by the service's policy that may limit – as regards both contents and quality – the processing of documents, especially in the case of smaller countries with relatively less-developed librarianship. In this respect the joint ISORID programme of UNESCO and FID does not promise a satisfactory solution either, not even when fully developed. On the other hand, we gained favourable experiences with our semi-annual abstracting journal appearing in English and Russian since 1972. Each issue includes about 50–60 items and covers the best of Hungarian library science literature.⁵ Living in a small country with an isolated language we felt it our duty to make ourselves known at the international level and we have found it well awarded. Our journal awoke wide interest (we distribute 320 copies of the English, 170 copies of the Russian version upon request) and in exchange our Library Science Library receives valuable documents. The most important compensation has still to be waited for: we expected that other countries in similar situation will also launch a corresponding service. A national library agency taking this responsibility is more reliable in its selection and recommendations than any foreign agency.

⁵ Hungarian library and information science abstracts (*Ven-gerskaá literatura po bibliotekovedeniü i informatike*). Published by the Centre for Library Science and Methodology, Budapest.

Organizing research

Talking about research in library science, we cannot avoid the problems of organization and financing. A really significant research activity can take place only on the basis of well-developed librarianship, parallel to the realization of a division of labour. At the beginning the theoretical-research function is not separated from practice and, as a result of the character of our profession, their close connection is maintained even at later stages. Still, sooner or later beside the full-time librarian who does research work almost as a hobby, appears the full-time research worker or at least the librarian who is part-time lecturer, part-time research worker. In a rapidly developing librarianship as was e. g. ours in the 50s, even extreme ideas fed by temporary enthusiasm emerged, according to which all librarians with higher education can and must do research, too. This is a fully unfounded expectation: what is reasonable is the requirement of reflecting upon one's own practice, an activity falling within *M* if you like. Similar statement could be made on libraries, too: although libraries are the solid institutional bases of research, a library must attain a certain size and development level to be able to afford *R + D* activity.

Where and when, however, library schools appear – either as independent institutions or as academic departments –, they naturally play an increasing, later dominant role in the research scene. It is explained partly by the teaching staff's own research work and partly by the research centres attached to these schools.

It is either the necessity of coordination and guidance of wide-spread research (in developed librarianship) or the opposite: stimulating research work (in starting librarianship) that call for a central agency to undertake research organizing tasks. These bodies are maintained or supported in an increasing number of countries by the state library authority in order to ensure that research serve the national information and cultural policy. It is entirely justified to develop this role within the division of labour and to establish a corresponding organization which – as mediating between the profession and the state library policy – elaborates recommendations for long- and middle-range research programmes, promotes the utilization of research results, commissions research according to accepted plans, launches ad-hoc research works, finances research in libraries and educational institutions, registers ongoing research, maintains a personal file of research workers, cares for the training of young researchers, conducts competitions, organizes team-work, holds conferences, acts as a publishing house, edits journals. More or less of these functions can be found all over the world attached to library associations, to national libraries and to other central organs of librarianship.

The happy times, when there was no difficulty in financing library research, are over, either because research was done by enthusiastic and ambitious librarians in their spare time or because the adopted methods were inexpensive. Nowadays library research is in need of money, for such reasons as e. g. the growing importance of experiments, the application of sociological methods, the interdisciplinary character of subjects, the organization of research groups, extensive data processing, the use of computers etc. Consequently, it must be seriously considered how much personal, material, financial and technical energy a librarianship can or should afford for research. I hardly believe that anybody dares to give exact figures about how much should or must be spent on this purpose. It would be difficult to sum up exactly, even inside the borders of one country, the costs of *R + D + M* during a period, among other reasons because in many cases it is a problem which programmes should be qualified as such. (I risk the hypothesis that research funds should be allocated proportionally to the entire funding of librarianship as it is done in the national economy – say, about 3–4 per cent). The situation is further complicated by the various sources of financing: the libraries' own budget, central research funds, the support of other agencies. Obviously we need all these three sources, just because they provide for research activities of different aims: the improvement and development of the given libraries' services and functioning; the promotion of all ventures which are of key importance for the development of the national library and information system; subjects of primary interest for the financing agency including the library services.

The human factor is equally if not more decisive than financing. Probably, it does not have such a significance in countries with established librarianship as in those at an earlier stage of development. This is related to the social prestige of the librarian profession, its financial and moral attraction power, the level of library education. In our experience other professions exert such a brain-drain upon the most talented, newly graduated librarians that we find our recruitment of research workers seriously threatened. Young people of other professions, on the other hand, who are employed by libraries and are able to do research work, insist upon their original subject and can hardly be persuaded to change over to library science after post-graduate studies.

The members of a library staff who wish and are able to do research are not to be envied. As a result of the tight staffing, everybody is supposed to take full-time part in the everyday routine of the library. When can one have time to do research work? The only possibility, – apart from sacrificing one's leisure time – is that the library's management includes research in the library's work schedule and regards it as a part of normal library

activity. Obviously, this can be done only in case of research topics somehow related to the profile, services and functioning of the library. In Hungary it is in the powers of library directors to allow 4–8–12, exceptionally even more hours a week for those who are engaged in research. It is, however, questionable whether this support is sufficient. Therefore the idea has come up to set up small R + D departments in large libraries where staff members could be delegated to perform research tasks for longer or shorter periods.

When talking about research in library science we must realize that librarianship is a part of or is closely related to other fields and disciplines. The results and methods of a great number of disciplines (e. g. sociology, psychology, pedagogy, computer science, communication theory, cultural history, economics etc.) are amply applied and used in library science research. That is why it is necessary that library research and its institutions should establish relations also with the forums and organs of the relevant disciplines.

Traditionally the task of libraries included not only services for scholars, but librarians have also been carrying out research work in fields other than library science. Though a great differentiation and division of labour has taken place in the scientific life and the establishment of specialized research institutes overshadowed the role of libraries even in the field of humanities, it is not fully terminated: in bibliographic work, in the processing of holdings and sources according to scientific needs libraries remained full-right partners of specialized scientific research institutes.

PAPP István: Néhány észrevétel a könyvtártudományi kutatásokról

A cikk kiindulópontját két megállapítás képezi. Az első az, hogy a szerző mondanivalóját a magyar tapasztalatokra építi, azaz egy gazdaságilag közepesen fejlett, szocialista társadalmi rendszerű ország könyvtári szolgálatának fejlődési jellegzetességeire, s különösen a fejlődéshez hozzájáruló kutató–fejlesztő munkálatok tanulságaira; álláspontja az, hogy a szocialista társadalmi viszonyok előnyös feltételeket teremtettek a könyvtári ellátás fejlesztéséhez. Második előrebocsátott megjegyzése a könyvtártudományi kutatások tárgyát illeti, támaszkodva más szakírók véleményére is, a kutatás tárgyának nem a könyvtárt, hanem az információt, s annak társadalmi mozgását tekinti. E két koordinátatengely síkjában foglalja a könyvtártudományi kutatások jellegével, tartalmával és szervezetével.

A könyvtártudományi kutatások szembevetendő jellegzetessége, hogy szorosan és közvetlenül kapcsolódnak a könyvtári gyakorlathoz. Következésképpen a könyvtári kutatásban–fejlesztésben a fejlesztési mozzanatra esik a hangsúly. Minden bizonnyal ez az oka annak, hogy Magyarországon is, más szocialista országokhoz hasonlóan, az ún. módszertani munka társult a K + F tevékenységhez. A „módszertan” a K + F egy olyan elemét kívánja kiemelni, ami ugyan beleérthető a fejlesztésbe, ám fontossága miatt érdemes külön is jelölni; ez pedig az eredmények elterjesztésének és alkalmazásának a feladata, az oktatás és a gyakorlatra való visszahatás mozzanata. Így célszerűnek látszik a K + F + M formula alkalmazása, érzékeltetvén azt a ciklust, amelynek zavartalan funkcionálása egyik garanciája a kielégítő könyvtári szolgálatnak: gyakorlat – kutatás (fejlesztés) – elterjesztés (fejlesztés, módszertan, oktatás, továbbképzés) – gyakorlat (alkalmazás). A K + F + M tevékenység sajátos feladatának tekinthető a könyvtári fejlesztést és gyakorlatot szabályozó irányelvek, normatívák és szabványok előállításának.

A kutatások tartalmát az adott ország lehetőségei határozzák meg. Fejlődő vagy közepesen fejlett országok (de ide sorolhatók a gazdag, fejlett könyvtárúggal rendelkező kis országok is) nem engedhetik meg maguknak, hogy minden kutatási területen önálló munkát folytassanak. Józan önmérséklettel kell kiválogatni azokat a témákat, amelyek kulcsfontosságúak a könyvtárügyük szempontjából, s ugyanakkor rendelkezésre is állnak az eredményes kutatómunkához szükséges személyi, tárgyi és anyagi feltételek. Ilyen „nemzeti” kutatási területnek tekinthető elsősorban az illető ország könyvtári és információs infrastruktúrája fejlesztési céljainak meghatározása, a könyvtár- és olvasásszociológiai vizsgálódás, a természetes nyelvhez kötött információvisszakereső rendszerek kifejlesztése, a könyv- és könyvtártörténet művelése, s végül a művelődéstörténeti jelentőségű, nagy erudíciót megkívánó retrospektív bibliográfiai vállalkozások gondozása. Más területeken ezeknek az országoknak nyomkövető, adaptációs kutatásokat – amelyek egyébként ugyancsak nagy szellemi és anyagi energiákat igényelnek – kell folytatniuk, vagy éppen megelégedniük a szakirodalmi tájékozódással. Az előbbi kategóriába tartozó kutatások terén érvényesülhetnek leginkább az összehasonlító módszerek, valamint az együttes vagy azonos metodikával felfolytatott nemzetközi vizsgálódások.

A nyomkövetés és az adaptáció szempontjából különösen fontos a hazai szakirodalmi információs bázis és szolgáltatások megteremtése; esetenként nem elegendő csupán a nagy, nemzetközi anyagot világnyelven feldolgozó referálólapok beszerzése és rendelkezésre bocsátása, hanem a világirodalmat a hazai könyvtárosok számára anyanyelven, a hazai igényekhez igazodó válogatással közvetítő referálólap megjelenítése is szükséges lehet. Elszigetelt nyelvű, kis országok pedig

jól teszik, ha hazai szakirodalmuk javáról világnyelveken is tájékoztatják a nemzetközi szakmai közönséget. (Magyar példa erre: *Hungarian Library and Information Science Abstracts – Vengerskaá literatura po bibliotekovedeniü i informatike.*)

A kutatásszervezés különböző problémái a könyvtárügy fejlődésének függvényében jelentkeznek. Jelentős kutatási tevékenység csak fejlett könyvtárügy talaján bontakozhat ki, akkor, amikor az elméleti–kutatási funkcióra külön tekintettel van a könyvtárügyön belüli munkamegosztás. (Ez általában az önálló könyvtárosképző intézmények megjelenéséhez fűződik.) Nem minden felsőfokú szakképzettségű könyvtáros végezhet vagy képes végezni napi munkája mellett K + F + M tevékenységet is. Ugyanígy csak bizonyos nagyságrendet elérő könyvtáraktól várható, hogy K + F + M feladatokra vállalkozzanak. Ezek esetében azonban kérdéses, hogy célravezető-e a jelenlegi magyar gyakorlat, amely heti, szerény mérvű munkaidőkezdésményt biztosít egyes munkatársaknak, s nem volna-e célszerűbb külön K + F részlegeket – ha csak keret jelleggel is – felállítani, amelyekben huzamosabb időt töltenének el az adott feladatok megoldásával megbízott könyvtárosok. Mindemellett szükség van olyan központi szervre, amely a kutatásszervezés egész könyvtárügyet érintő tennivalóit látja el (javaslatok hosszú- és középtávú kutatási programokra, a kutatási eredmények alkalmazásának előmozdítása, kutatási megbízások kiadása, a folyamatban levő kutatások nyilvántartása, pályázatok kiírása, konferenciák szervezése, folyóirat megjelentetése stb.). Egyre súlyosabb problémát jelent a kutatások finanszírozása, mivel a hagyományos, filológiai jellegű módszerek mellett mind elterjedtebb a szociológiai adatfelvétel, a kísérletezés, a számítógépek alkalmazása stb. Egyelőre hiányzanak a pontos adatok arra vonatkozóan, hogy egy könyvtárügy mennyit fordított kutatásokra, s csak hipotézist lehet megkockáztatni arra, hogy a könyvtári kiadások hány százalékát kellene kutatásra fordítani. Állandó gondot okoz a kutatói utánpótlás, mivel Magyarországon nagyon erős a más, hagyományos tudományágak vonzása a már könyvtárban dolgozó, sőt könyvtárosnak tanult fiatal szakemberekre.

A szerző befejező megjegyzése a könyvtári kutatások mind tartalmi, mind módszerbeli interdiszciplinaritására mutat rá. Ezért tartja szükségesnek, hogy a könyvtári kutatásokat folytató intézmények s maguk a kutatók is kapcsolatot teremtsenek más tudományterületekkel. Ugyanakkor tudomásul kell venniük más, főleg humán és társadalomtudományi kutatásokat szervező intézményeknek, hogy saját kutatási programjaik teljesítésében a könyvtáraktól és munkatársaiktól mindinkább csak a bibliográfiai apparátusról való gondoskodást, valamint a könyvtári állományok és források tudományos igényű feltárását várhatják el; ami nem kevés.

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ПАПП, И.: Несколько замечаний к исследованиям в библиотечном деле

В статье рассматриваются характер, содержание и организация исследований в библиотечном деле с точки зрения библиотечного развития, определяемого общественно-экономическими факторами, в данном случае для среднезажитой в экономическом отношении страны социалистического лагеря. Из-за практического характера библиотечных исследований к ним относится и методическая работа с целью подчеркнуть ее влияние на практике. Формирование тематики исследований исследуется на примере развитых или среднезажитых стран, и устанавливается, что они только в некоторых областях, определяемых национальными особенностями (общественная среда, язык и т.д.) могут предпринять самостоятельные исследования, в остальных же случаях ограничиваются адаптацией. В связи с организацией исследований статья рассматривает вопросы, касающиеся выделенных на них ресурсов рабочей силы, органа, выполняющего обязанности центрального координатора исследований, их финансирования.

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PAPP, I.: *Einige Bemerkungen zur bibliothekswissenschaftlichen Forschung*

Charakter, Inhalt und Organisation der bibliothekswissenschaftlichen Forschung werden aus dem Aspekt der durch wirtschaftliche und soziale Faktoren bestimmten Entwicklung des Bibliothekswesens, im vorliegenden Fall des Bibliothekswesens in einem sozialistischen Land mittleren wirtschaftlichen Entwicklungsstandes, untersucht. Zuzufolge des praktischen Charakters von Forschung und Entwicklung (F + E) in Bibliotheken wird zwecks Betonung ihrer Rückwirkung auf die Praxis, als dritter Faktor die methodische Arbeit hinzugenommen (F + E + M). Die Frage der Forschungsthematik behandelt Verfasser aus der Sicht der Entwicklungsländer und der Länder mittleren Entwicklungsstandes und stellt fest, dass in diesen selbständige Forschungen in erster Linie auf Gebieten unternommen werden können, die durch die nationalen Eigenarten (gesellschaftliche Umgebung, Sprache usw.) definiert sind, auf sonstigen Gebieten zweckmässiger Forschungsergebnisse übernommen und adaptiert werden sollten. Im Zusammenhang mit der Organisation der Forschung werden Fragen der Arbeitskräfte, das zentrale Organ für die Organisation der Forschung, die Finanzierung der Forschung behandelt.

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