

**TOPOI C-6-8: BATHING CULTURE AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF URBAN  
SPACE: CASE STUDY POMPEII  
REPORT OF THE SEVENTH SEASON, MARCH/APRIL 2019**

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*Members of the Team:*

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**Fig. 1:** March/April 2019 Team Photo (© Topoi Project/FU Berlin)

The 2019 field season of the project was focused on studying the finds and cleaning some areas in the Stabian Baths and above all Republican Baths to clarify specific questions. The pottery

team (Cardarelli, Ferrandes, Pegurri) completed the study of the material from the Republican Baths.

### **1. Republican Baths (VIII 5, 36)**

Targeted cleaning in the Republican Baths served to clarify two major questions: a) characteristics and function of certain water management features, which Thomas Heide investigates for his FU dissertation; b) the design and development of southwestern corner of the building, which Maiuri had excavated but barely mentioned in his report (Maiuri 1950). The reconstruction of the western boundary of the original baths and its relationship to the adjacent western house (predecessor of Casa delle Pareti Rosse) remain to be finally determined.

The cleaned parts were fully documented (drawings, photographs, Structure from Motion/ SFM models). The two immersion pools and the praefurnium were also cleaned again for a new georeferenced SFM model (the model made at the end of the September 2015 season was a test run, carried out without georeferenced points).

The development of the lot of the baths had already been reconstructed in its major phases based on the earlier seasons (2015-2016). This development was confirmed by the various measures this year (Trümper 2018, 2020).

1. Construction of the baths around 150 BC.
2. Remodeling of the baths, probably in the 1<sup>st</sup> c BC (several minor and larger measures can be identified, which may not have belonged to one single remodeling phase, however: repairs/changes in the laconicum; remodeling of the deep well and surrounding rooms; remodeling of the praefurnium, several times; renewal of the revetment of the men's immersion pool; enlargement/repair of the men's labrum socle and the women's labrum socle).
3. Abandonment of the baths around 30/20 BC; remodeling of the Casa della Calce, which entailed enlargement of the northern main peristyle of this house and construction of a garden peristyle section with a few lavishly decorated rooms on the terrain of the former baths. Evidence includes second style paintings in various rooms.
4. Remodeling of the garden peristyle section, sometime in the early Imperial period; measures included the construction of a series of small rooms in the south (fig. 2: 39-44), and of a large room in the open courtyard (fig. 2: 12/13)
5. Major destruction of the Casa della Calce and Casa delle Pareti Rosse during the AD 62 earthquake, requiring remodeling and repairs; the main northern peristyle of the Casa della Calce was restricted in size, the garden peristyle section entirely abandoned and transformed into a quarry/building yard; some parts of this section were sold to the owner of the Casa delle Pareti Rosse.

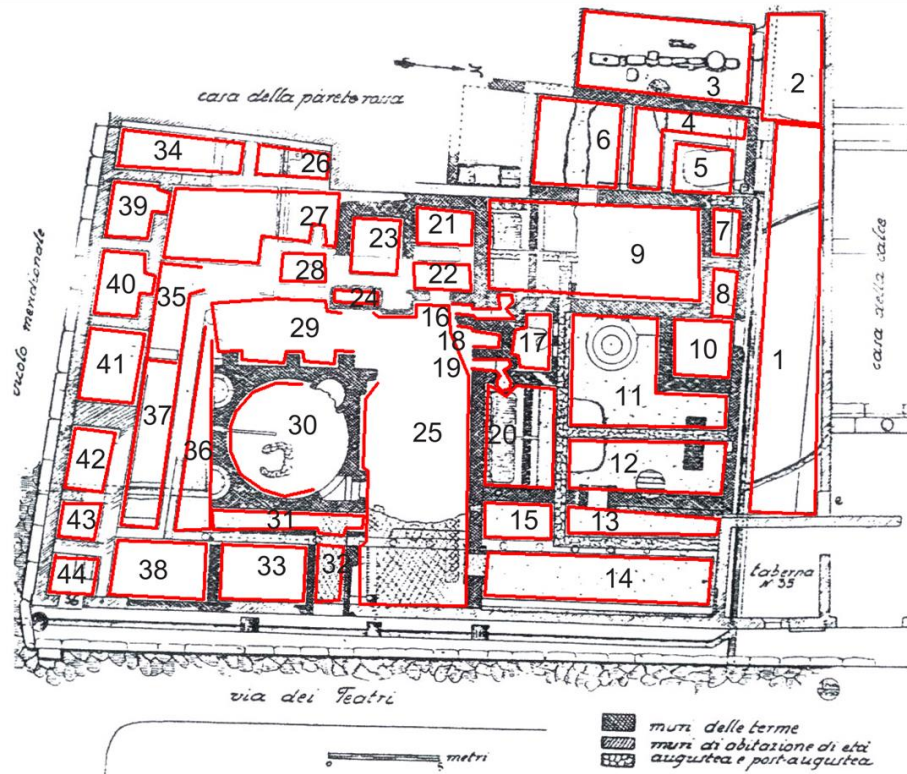


Fig. 2: Republican Baths: plan with room numbering system of the Topoi Project/FU Berlin; (© Topoi Project/FU Berlin)



Fig. 3: Republican Baths: plan with trenches and cleaning; (© Topoi Project/FU Berlin)

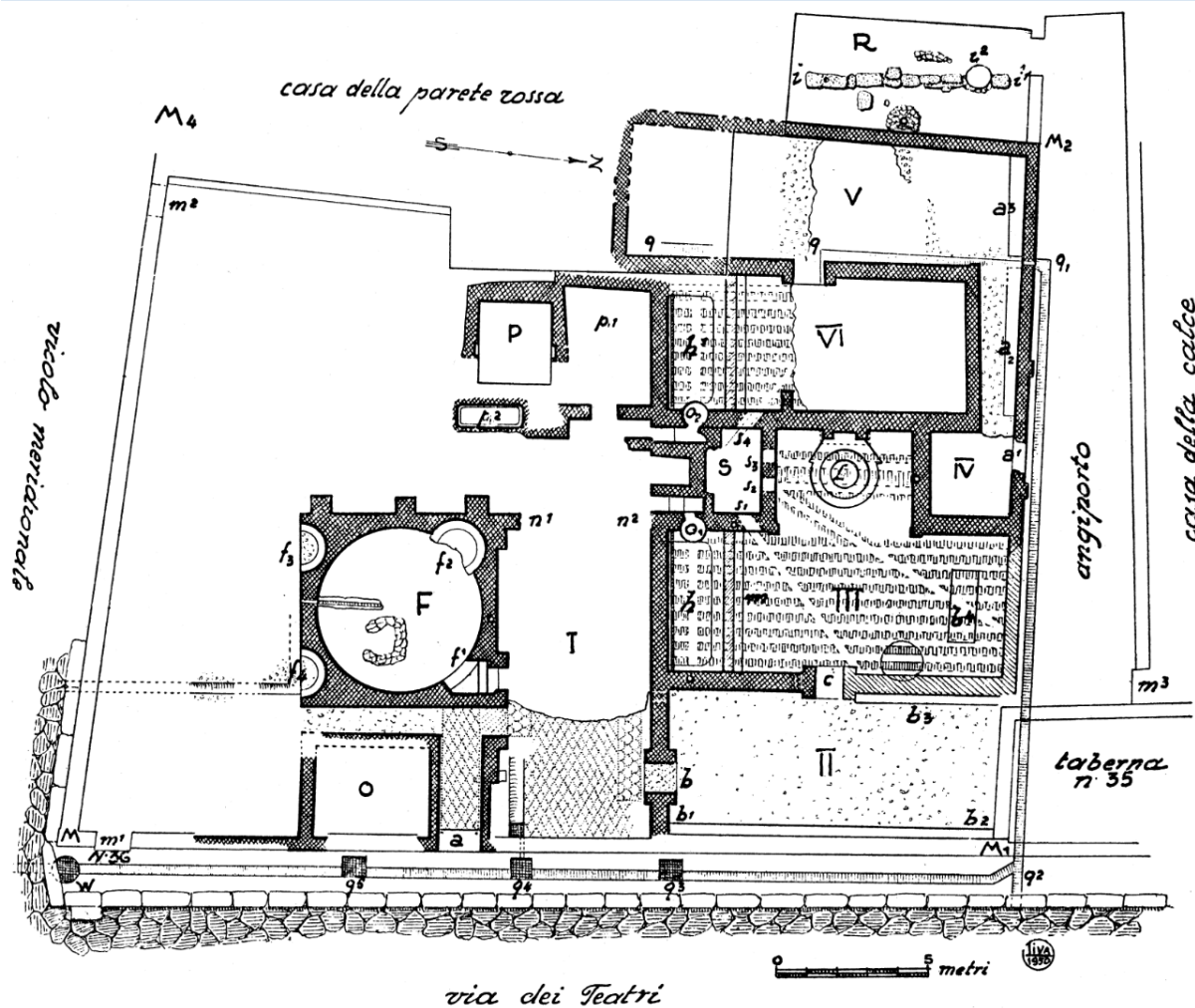


Fig. 4: Republican Baths, reconstructed plan of the baths; Maiuri 1950, 117 fig. 1

### 1.1 Water Management Features

- The southwest corner of the men's tepidarium (figs. 2-3, room 15) was cleaned in order to study the double outlet close to the southwest corner, which served to drain water from the men's caldarium and tepidarium via the apodyterium into the drainage channel in the via dei Teatri. Thick deposits of calcareous concretions were found along the west wall of the tepidarium and on the floor, confirming observations made in other parts of the baths (esp. men's caldarium and immersion pool). Red stucco was well preserved on the west wall of the room. Full cleaning of this part of the men's tepidarium is hindered by a large tree, the roots of which are visible on the photo (fig. 5). Why there were two drainage holes in the south wall, one on top of the other, must remain open for now; a similar situation was found in the wall between the men's caldarium and tepidarium, to the south of the connecting door (fig. 4: wall between rooms II and III).



Fig. 5: Men's tepidarium, SW corner with drain and sinter deposits (© Topoi Project/FU Berlin)

- A deep basin in the southeast corner of the men's apodyterium (fig. 2: room 25; fig. 3: 25b) was cleaned and fully documented. This had already been excavated by Maiuri, but not fully documented (D'Avino 1950 173; Maiuri 1950, 126; Trümper 2018, 99 n. 65). It is 40 x 40 cm large and 40 cm deep. The basin received water from a large shallow open drain, which ran through the southern part of the men's apodyterium (but not exactly along the south wall) and drained water from the men's caldarium, tepidarium and apodyterium. A terracotta pipe in the east wall connected the basin with the large drainage channel in the via dei Teatri. The bottom and walls of the basin are covered with thick layers of calcareous concretions. The size and depth of the basin suggest that a significant amount of dirt and objects were swept away when draining and cleaning the bathing rooms; these had to be filtered and removed before the water entered the street channel. Despite this, a hoard including 90 coins was found in the settling basin q4 in the sidewalk just to the east of the men's apodyterium (fig. 4). This hoard contained Ebusan, Pseudo-Ebusan, and Pseudo-Massaliot, Roman Republican, and Greek coins that were circulating in Pompeii in the early 80s BC. Maiuri and later scholars identified the hoard as a purse that a customer of the baths accidentally dropped when changing in the apodyterium. This scenario is somewhat strange, given the number of coins and particularly when taking the currently accessible features of the drainage system into account. It needs further clarification and assessment. Today, however, the sidewalk outside the baths is covered with modern cement so that the drain and settling basin q4 can no longer be studied (Trümper 2018, 97 n. 57; 101 n. 67).



Fig. 6: Men's apodyterium, SE corner, drain and settling basin (© Topoi Project/FU Berlin)

- In Taberna 35 of the Casa della Calce, the continuation of the drainage channel was cleaned that ran along the north façade of the baths (fig. 2: room/vicolo 1) and served to drain the water from the women's section. The channel was slightly narrower in Taberna 35 than in the vicolo and its covering slabs were also slightly different (fig. 7). While precise history of the channel cannot yet be fully reconstructed, cleaning this year confirms the following preliminary sequence:
  - In the original baths, the channel ran from the northeast corner of the women's apodyterium in the vicolo (fig. 4: room V) to the via dei Teatri. It is unknown, whether and how it was covered at this time because no original cover slabs remain.
  - The channel was extended further west in the vicolo, to drain additional water from an unknown location/building to the west of the baths.
  - After the abandonment of the baths around 30/20 BC, the entire channel was covered by the southern porticus (paved with opus signinum) of the extended main northern peristyle of the Casa della Calce. It was still functioning because water from the main peristyle of this house was drained into this channel.
  - When the Casa della Calce was remodeled after the earthquake of AD 62, the southern porticus of the main peristyle was abandoned and Taberna 35 was built. Since the south wall of the Taberna respects the channel, the latter was most likely still functioning at this time, draining water at least from the peristyle of the Casa della Calce.



Fig. 7: Taberna 35, drainage channel along the south wall (© Topoi Project/FU Berlin)

### ***1.2 Cleaning in the southwest of the baths***

The southwest part of the baths lot is blank on Maiuri's reconstructed plan of the baths (fig. 4). His "state plan" of the lot (fig. 8) shows hatched walls, assigned to the Imperial period house, and white structures, which he did not attribute to any specific phase and did not mention in his report. Assessment of this area is hindered by a large tree, located to the south of rooms 27/28, to the east of rooms 26/34 and to the north of room 39 (fig. 2). While we had cleaned parts of rooms 26-28 in 2015 and 2016, we did not fully understand the sequence of walls and structures. Since this area is crucial for assessing the original extension and layout of the baths, and for understanding the function and accessibility of the later garden peristyle section, cleaning was carried out in two rooms.

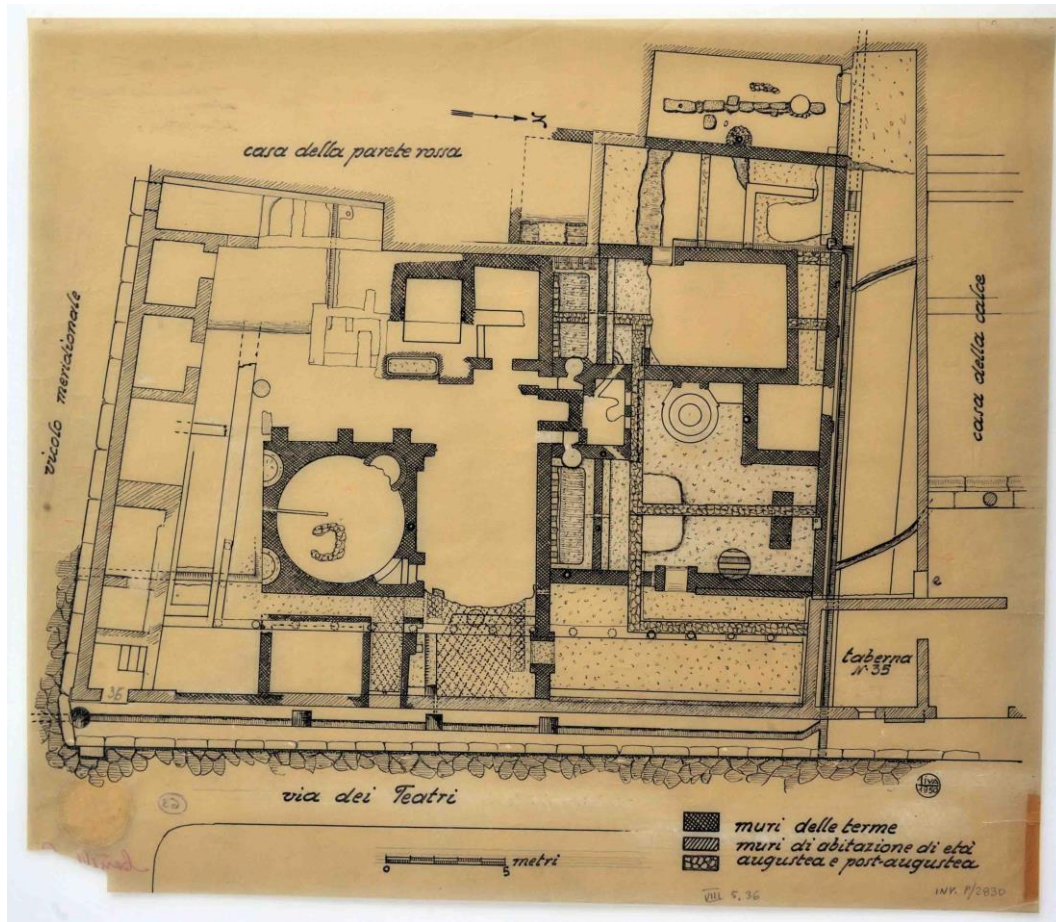


Fig. 8: State plan of the baths lot; Maiuri 1950, 134 fig. 11

- Room 26 was fully cleaned, revealing first the well-like structure and channel that had been found and documented in 2015 (see report 2015). In addition, the structure in the southern part of the room, strangely rounded on Maiuri's plan, was cleaned and identified as remains of a limekiln (figs. 9-10). In agreement with Dottore Francesco Muscolino, responsible archaeologist for the Regio VIII of Pompeii, cleaning was extended into a small trench here, in order to better understand the remains. The kiln had been destroyed in antiquity and was found filled with construction debris, which included many fragments of Sigillata and Ceramica Comune, dated to the 1<sup>st</sup> c AD (US 2). Its southwest part is best preserved, clearly set against the ("double") west wall of room 26 (see below). In contrast, the relationship between the kiln and the south and east walls of room 26 cannot be fully assessed because the above-mentioned tree prevents full excavation and neither wall could be excavated down to its foundation. The south wall abuts the decorated west wall, however. Currently, the following sequence can be reconstructed.
  - West wall of rooms 26/34, covered with Second Style painting (see below, room 34) when the garden peristyle was built.
  - Limekiln, installed for repairs on site: e.g., when the garden peristyle section was remodeled or for repairs after the AD 62 earthquake.
  - Destruction of the limekiln that was no longer needed; filled with debris/ building waste; sometime before AD 79.



Fig. 9: Room 26, limekiln (© Topoi Project/FU Berlin)



Fig. 10: Room 26, limekiln (© Topoi Project/FU Berlin)

- The southern part of room 34 was cleaned in order to study the complicated sequence of walls. While Maiuri had excavated this room, he did not attribute any of its features and walls to the baths and therefore did not discuss it any further in his report (Maiuri 1950). The cleaning significantly clarified the situation and suggests the following development:
  - The south, east and west walls were built for the baths (whether for the original baths or later, needs further study). The south wall includes a threshold, suggesting that room 34 served as a service corridor, accessible from the southern street (vicolo delle Pareti Rosse). The service corridor led to the area around the deep well (fig. 2: room 23) and the praefurnium (fig. 2: rooms 16-17). The west wall of room 34 (and 26) is a kind of “double” wall, but the eastern part of this double wall (visible in rooms 26 and 34) extends only to a height of about 1.70 m above the floor; this correlates with the top of a vault/cover of an adjacent large cistern in the Casa delle Pareti Rosse. Therefore, the west wall of rooms 26 and 34 served as a retaining/supporting wall or reinforcement, to act against the pressure of the adjacent large cistern.
  - The door in the south wall was blocked, and the entire room decorated with Second Style wall painting. This occurred after the abandonment of the baths, when the owner of the Casa della Calce transformed the lot of the baths into a garden peristyle.
  - A latrine was built along the southern wall. The cavity for a wooden seat is visible in the west wall, next to the southwest corner (fig. 11). The latrine may have been built when the garden peristyle section was transformed, sometime in the early Imperial period (see above). Room 34, unfavorably located in the unlit southwest corner of the garden peristyle section, was obviously the most appropriate location for a latrine.
  - The latrine was destroyed and the entire room was filled with debris/ demolition material. This happened most likely after the earthquake of AD 62 when the entire garden peristyle section was transformed into a quarry (for volcanic ash) and building yard (both to extract reusable building material and to deposit rubbish).



Fig. 11: Room 34, latrine in SW corner, from east (© Topoi Project/FU Berlin)

## 2. Stabian Baths (VII 1, 8)

Targeted cleaning in the Stabian Baths served two: a) to clarify characteristics and function of certain water management features, which Thomas Heide investigates for his FU dissertation; b) to make SFM models of certain rooms which had not been documented in this way before.

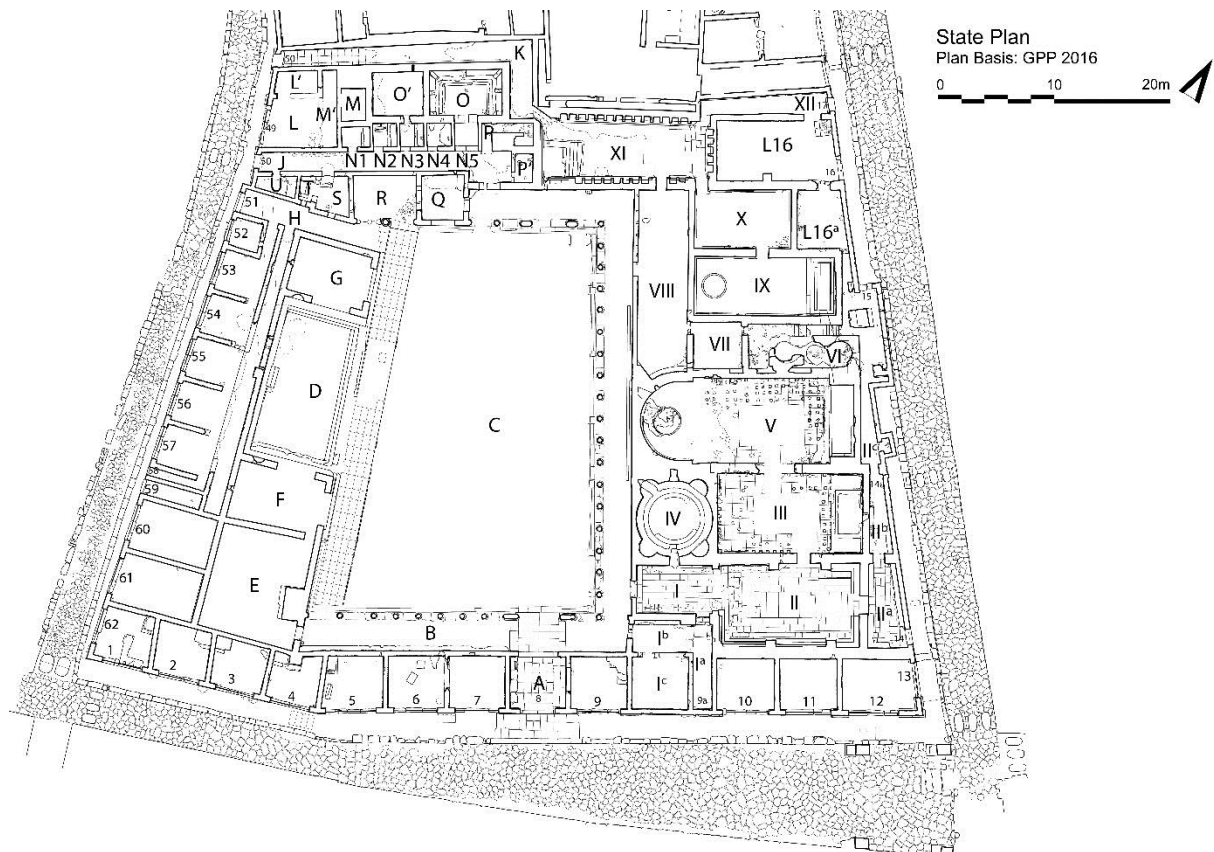


Fig. 12: Stabian Baths, plan with numbering system (© Topoi Project/FU Berlin)

- The pavement and channels of the large latrine O were fully cleaned and documented (fig. 13). The plan and chronology of water management features (supply, drainage) in the latrine is more complicated than suggested in Eschebach's publication (Eschebach 1979) and requires further study and contextualization within the water management system of the Stabian Baths.



Fig. 13: Stabian Baths, latrine O (© Topoi Project/FU Berlin)

- SFM models were made of rooms N1 and N2, which could not be done in 2016, when both were being excavated. The restricted space, the depth of the “bathtubs” and the very limited lighting of these rooms make it difficult to take photos. These models show in an exemplary manner the full stratigraphic sequence in the narrow “bathtub spaces” (figs. 14-15).



Fig. 14: Stabian Baths, N2, SFM model, view from south (© Topoi Project/FU Berlin)



Fig. 14: Stabian Baths, N2, SFM model, view from east with stratigraphic sequence in the “bathtub”  
(© Topoi Project/FU Berlin)

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