

Rachmaninoff's Subdominant

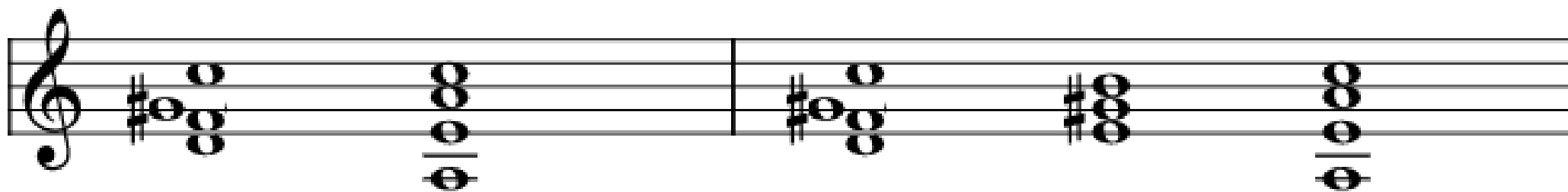
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Rachmaninoff's harmony
(Рахманиновская гармония), later
renamed "Rachmaninoff's
subdominant," as described by Viktor
Berkov (1960)

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Goals:

1. Contextualize Rachmaninoff's chord in modern theories of harmonic function as a functionally mixed harmony
2. Show the chord's role on larger levels of structure
3. Relate the chord to tonal pairing and broad-scale plagalism

Rachmaninoff's subdominant resolving
to I and to V: some common
contrapuntal options

(common tone C can also be
placed in the soprano)

The image displays a musical score for a piano, consisting of two staves: a treble clef staff (soprano) and a bass clef staff (bass). The music is in D major, indicated by two sharps (F# and C#) in the key signature. The score is divided into four measures by vertical bar lines. In each measure, the bass line features a single note: D in the first measure, F# in the second, A in the third, and C in the fourth. The treble line shows various chordal textures. In the first measure, it contains a triad of D, F#, and A. In the second measure, it contains a triad of F#, A, and C. In the third measure, it contains a triad of D, F#, and A. In the fourth measure, it contains a triad of D, F#, and A. The notes in the treble line are positioned such that they can be re-voiced to accommodate the common tone C in the soprano, as mentioned in the text above.

Part 1: Some modern theories of harmonic function

Daniel Harrison (1994):

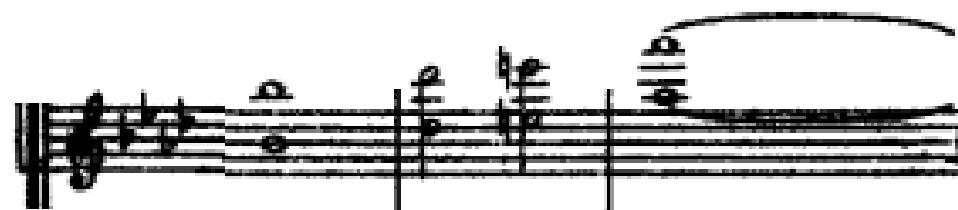
- Scale degrees are understood as bearers of harmonic function
- Root = functional base; third = functional agent; fifth = functional associate
- Functional agents: chordal thirds of the three central triads (T, S, D)
tonic agent: $3/\flat 3$ (*mi/me*); dominant agent: $7/\sharp 7$ (*ti*); subdominant agent: $\flat 6$ (*le*)

Kevin Swinden (2005):

- S^D : subdominant chord with a dominant element (e.g., dominant agent)
- DP^D : dominant-reparation chord with a dominant element
- D^S : dominant chord with a subdominant element

Tchaikovsky. Overture Romeo and Juliet (1872).

Fl.



Corno i.



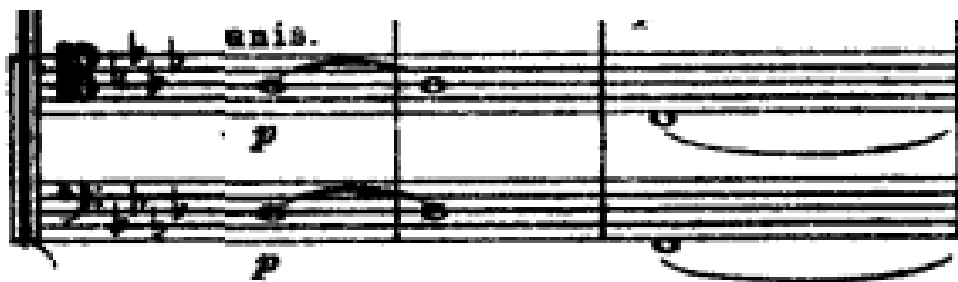
Cl.



Fg.



Archi



Fm: R^S (6)

i

Rachmaninoff's subdominant as a functionally mixed chord

R^S I R^{DP} V I

tonic agent!
 dominant agent subdominant agent

A minor: $S^D(4)$ T $DP^D(4)$ D T

Swinden's nomenclature (2005):

S^D = Subdominant with a dominant element; proceeds to T

DP^D = Dominant preparation with a dominant element; proceeds to D

Arabic numerals refer to the bass note

Rachmaninoff. "Loneliness ("Fragment from Musset"), op. 21 no. 6 (1902), mm. 6-7. R-S and R-DP



6 Вм: PAC

Чем я взвол-но-ван, ис-пу-ган в но-чи?

ff *dim.*

dim.

Bm: i Rs i R^{DP} V i

Rachmaninoff. "Loneliness," mm. 6-7.
Voice-leading graph. R-S locally
prolongs the tonic, R-DP serves as the
pre-dominant chord within the phrase

Bm (local): i R^{DP} V i

“Loneliness,” complete graph.

The image displays a handwritten musical score for the piece "Loneliness." The score is presented on three systems of staves. The top system consists of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The middle system is a single staff containing a melodic line with various ornaments and slurs. The bottom system is a staff containing chord symbols and figured bass notation. Measure numbers 1, 5, 8, 11, 13, 19, 25, and 29 are indicated above the treble staff. The key signature is F#m (one sharp). The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and ornaments. Chord symbols like R^{DP}, IV, V, and i are used throughout. The notation is handwritten and appears to be a complete graph of the piece.

Rachmaninoff
 Prelude in C#
 minor, op. 3 no. 2
 (1892).

A summary of
 progressions that
 accompany the
 le-so-do
 ostinato

m. 3-4 m. 4-5 m. 10-11

c#: $\flat\text{II}_4^6$ V_7 i $\flat\text{II}_3^4$ V_7 i $\text{R}^s(\hat{6})$ V_7 i

m. 12-13 m. 44-46

motive in sopr.

c#: $\text{Ger}_5^{\sharp 6}$ V_7 i iv₆ V_7 i
 (inv.)

m. 5-6 m. 6-7

E: ii₃^{o4} V_7 I g#: ii₃^{o4} V_7 I

Part 2: Rachmaninoff's chord and the pairing of relative keys

Mutability (*peremennost'*, *ladovaia peremennost'*):

Russian term approximately corresponding to the concepts of tonal pairing and directional tonality

Opera *Aleko*, 1892. One act, libretto by Vladimir Nemirovich-Danchenko, based on a poem by Alexander Pushkin.

Rachmaninoff's subdominant as a modulatory pivot

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relative key

parallel key

C:	ii \emptyset 7	I6	A minor: R ^S	i	A: "Till-Sixth"	I
Swinden's symbols:	S (2)	T (3)	S ^D (4)	T	S ^D (4)	T

Rachmaninoff. Prelude in G# minor,
op. 32 no. 12.

R-S as an enharmonic pivot

The image displays a musical score for Rachmaninoff's Prelude in G# minor, op. 32 no. 12. The score is in G# minor (three sharps) and 4/4 time. It features a treble and bass clef. The music is marked with a forte (*f*) dynamic at the beginning, followed by a decrescendo (*dim.*) and a ritardando (*rit.*) marking. The score is divided into two systems. The first system contains measures 10 through 13. The second system contains measures 14 through 17. Below the score, a chord analysis is provided. The key signature is G#m: and the mode is indicated as i. The pivot chord is labeled as R^S in the treble clef and ii^ø6/5 in the bass clef. The pivot chord is highlighted with a red box. The analysis also shows a 7-6 interval in the bass line and a fermata over the final chord, which is marked as I.

10 *rit.*

f *dim.*

G#m: i —————

7-6 *p.*

R^S

B: ii^ø6/5 I —————

Rachmaninoff. *Aleko*, Old Man's Story.
 Summary of progressions with
 Rachmaninoff's chord

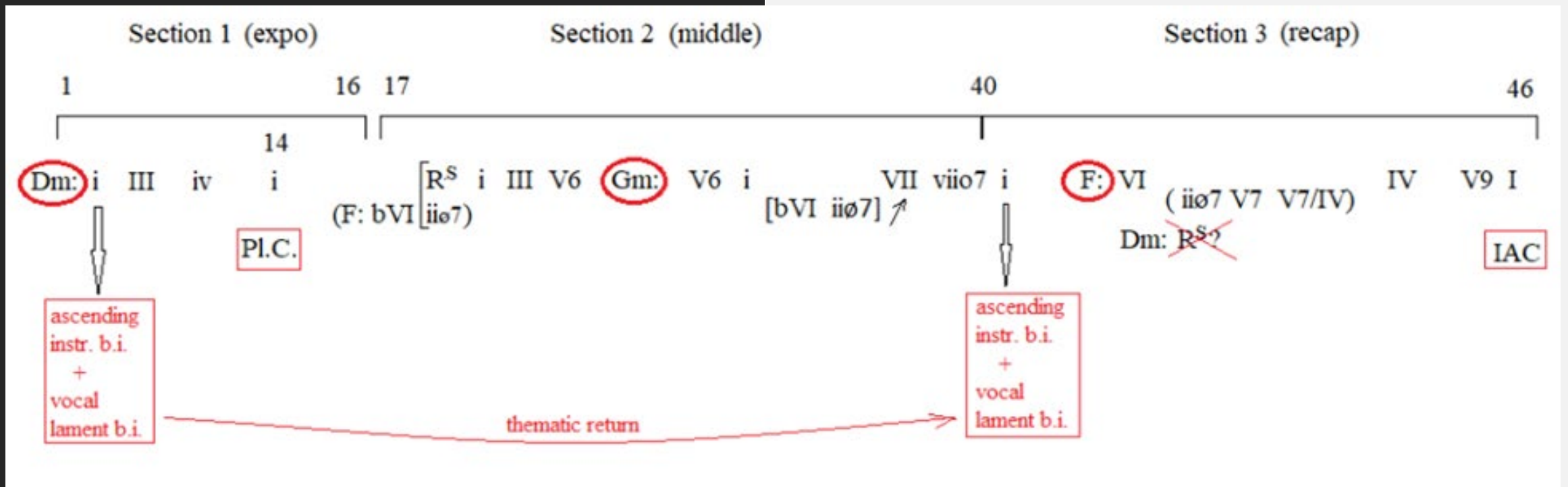
The image shows a musical score for Rachmaninoff's *Aleko*, "Old Man's Story". The score is in D minor and consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The music features a series of chords and melodic lines. A red oval highlights a specific chord in the bass line, labeled "ghost pivot".

Below the score, the following chord progression is listed:

d: R^S i R^{DP} V F: I [iv⁶ d: [R^S (inc.) i F: bVI [ii^σ₇ R^S i F: bVI ii^{σ6}₅ I ii^σ₇ V₇ I

Old Man's Story. Form

(interpreted as a small ternary, A-B-A)



Old Man's Story
Initial phrase

(Piano reduction
by Bakulina)



4 5 // 6

Быст - ро мо-ло-дость мо - я звездой па-дучей промельк

d: i R^S i III VI R^{DP}

7 8 9

ну - ла но ты, по - ра люб - ви,

HC V (pass⁴) III [iv⁶] (R^S) i⁶

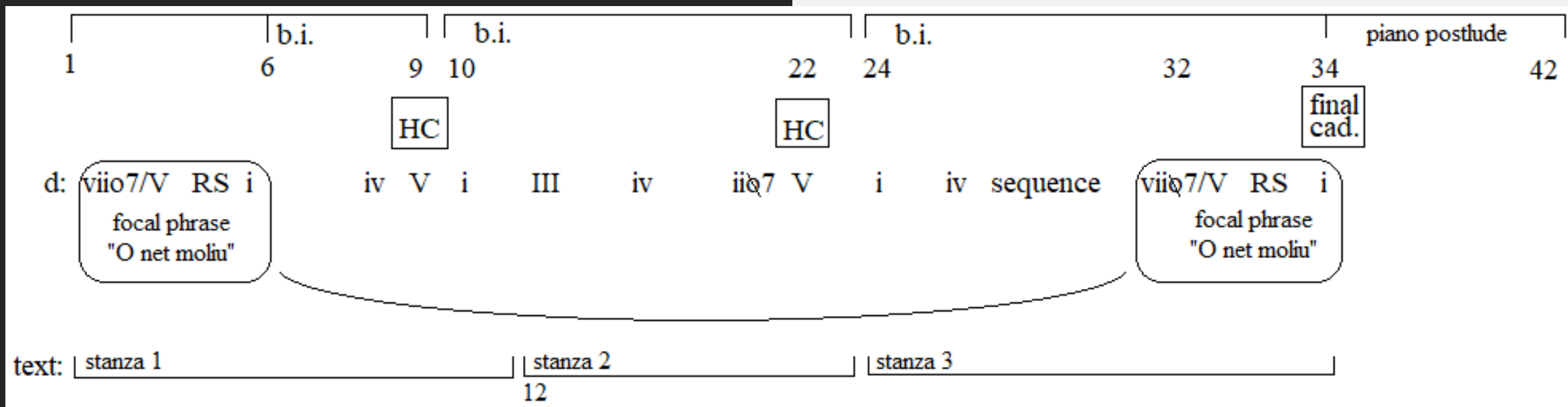
5 5# 6

Detailed description: This is a musical score for a piano reduction of a vocal piece. It consists of two systems of music. The first system covers measures 4, 5, and 6. Measure 4 is marked with a '4' above the staff. Measure 5 is marked with a '5' above the staff. Measure 6 is marked with a '6' above the staff and a double bar line with repeat dots. The vocal line (bass clef) has lyrics: 'Быст - ро мо-ло-дость мо - я звездой па-дучей промельк'. The piano accompaniment (treble and bass clefs) features chords and melodic lines. Below the piano part, Roman numerals are provided: 'd: i R^S i III VI R^{DP}'. The second system covers measures 7, 8, and 9. Measure 7 is marked with a '7' above the staff. Measure 8 is marked with an '8' above the staff. Measure 9 is marked with a '9' above the staff. The vocal line (bass clef) has lyrics: 'ну - ла но ты, по - ра люб - ви,'. The piano accompaniment continues. Below the piano part, Roman numerals are provided: 'HC V (pass⁴) III [iv⁶] (R^S) i⁶'. Above the piano part, a line with numbers '5 5# 6' indicates a fingering or intervallic structure.

Part 3: Rachmaninoff's subdominant and background plagalism

Rachmaninoff. "O Stay My Love,"

op. 4 no. 1 (1892). Form



“O Stay My Love.” Motivic material:
Focal phrase and basic idea

Con Allegro. *mf* *rit.*

O net, mo - liu, ne u - kho - di!

agitato

p *colla parte*

(d) vii°_3 / V RS i

This musical score shows the vocal line and piano accompaniment for the first system. The tempo is marked 'Con Allegro'. The vocal line begins with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic and includes a ritardando (*rit.*) over the first two measures. The piano accompaniment starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic and includes a 'colla parte' instruction. The system concludes with an *agitato* marking. Below the staff, a circled 'd' is followed by the Roman numeral vii°_3 / V , and the letters 'RS' and 'i' are positioned under the respective measures.

Vsia bol' nich-to pe - red raz - lu - koi,

mf *dim.* *p*

This musical score shows the vocal line and piano accompaniment for the second system. The vocal line continues with the lyrics 'Vsia bol' nich-to pe - red raz - lu - koi,'. The piano accompaniment features a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic, a decrescendo (*dim.*) over the second and third measures, and a piano (*p*) dynamic at the end. The piano part is characterized by triplet patterns in both hands.

“O Stay My Love”

Mm. 6-22, voice-leading graph

The image displays a musical score for the piece "O Stay My Love" from measures 6 to 22. The score is presented in three systems, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major/D minor). The time signature is common time (C).

Measure numbers are indicated at the top: 6, 9, 10, 12, 17, and 22. The piano accompaniment features several voice-leading graphs. The first graph spans measures 6-10, showing a progression from a tonic triad (i) to a supertonic triad (ii7), then to a dominant triad (V), and back to the tonic (i). The second graph spans measures 10-17, showing a progression from the tonic (i) to a mediant triad (III), then to a subdominant triad (IV), and finally to a supertonic triad (ii7). The third graph spans measures 17-22, showing a progression from the supertonic triad (ii7) to the dominant triad (V). A dashed line indicates a voice-leading path from the tonic (i) in measure 6 to the supertonic triad (ii7) in measure 17. A box labeled "HC" is present at the end of the piano part in measure 22. The vocal line includes a note marked "UN" in measure 17.

"O Stay My Love"

Mm. 24-34, voice-leading graph

This corresponds to the song's overall structure.

Notice the plagal background, I-IV-I

The image displays a musical score for the piece "O Stay My Love", focusing on measures 24 through 34. The score is presented in a four-staff format, with two systems of two staves each. The top system consists of a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). The bottom system consists of a piano accompaniment line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). Above the vocal staff, measures 24, 26, 29, 31, 32, and 34 are circled. The piano accompaniment in the top system includes a box labeled "Pl. cad." at the end of measure 34. The piano accompaniment in the bottom system includes a box labeled "ant." above measure 32. Below the piano accompaniment staves, Roman numerals indicate the chord progressions: the top system shows "Dm: i", "iv", "(VI)", "R^S", and "i"; the bottom system shows "i", "iv", "R^S", and "i".

Lori Burns
(1995).
Exs. 14, 32, 32

Plagal
Background
structures for
Phrygian
chorales

Example 14: Contexts for PH-IV

Suggested plagal background progressions. An alternative to Schenker's authentic background progressions, *Free Composition*, fig. 16

P LN UN P
 (C:) I IV I. I ii⁶/₅ I. I IV I. I ii⁶/₅ I.
 (or ii⁶/₅)

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