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The cultural and historical memory of the Hungarians in Telep (Novi Sad)

Abstract. The paper deals with the analysis of informants' narratives about Telep, the neighborhood of the city of Novi Sad, which used to be inhabited predominantly by the Hungarians. The informants directly associate the urbanization with the changes in their lifestyle, as well as with weakening of the Hungarian language in everyday life. At the same time, the functioning of the Hungarian language is closely related to Telep as the 'most Hungarian place' on the map of Novi Sad.

Keywords: Novi Sad, narratives, cultural memory, historical memory, Hungarians, Hungarian languages, Serbs, city

The Hungarians are the most numerous minority in the autonomous province of Vojvodina, which is part of the Republic of Serbia. Per the census of 2011, the Hungarians comprise 13 % of the region residents from the total number of about 2.000.000 people¹. The province itself is notable for its extremely cosmopolitan character – Romanians, Croats, Bunjevci, Rusyns, Macedonians, Ukrainians, Slovaks also live here. All rights are preserved for the national minorities (education is provided in their national language, there are also mass media in certain languages); Hungarian, Slovak, Romanian, Rusyn and Croatian languages are recognized as official languages together with the Serbian one; and in the communities where the numbers of the minority exceed 15 %, there are road signs and signs on the administrative buildings in two languages.

In general, the Hungarian community lives in the north of the province along the border with Hungary, as well as in Potisje. However, there are small groups of Hungarians in the south of Vojvodina, such as in Banat in the villages of Skorenovac and Ivanovo, where the Hungarian-Szekeleys, migrants from Bukovina live. In the historical region of Srijem, the Hungarians live in Maradika, Satrinca, Dobrodol, Irig, Nikulinc, Pliticev. Both Banat and Srijem communities are the southernmost on the Hungarian ethnic map of the province. In the main city of Vojvodina, Novi Sad, the

¹*Popis stanovništva, domaćinstava i stanova 2011. u Republici Srbiji. Nacionalna pripadnost. Podaci po opštinama i gradovima.* Beograd, 2013, p. 20.

Hungarians comprise 3.88 % (9,735 people). The Hungarian population is mainly concentrated around Telep, which was originally founded as a Hungarian settlement, as well as in the adjoining neighborhoods – Liman, Adamovicevo Naselje, in the center of the city. The way the Hungarians were settling down in the above-mentioned Banat and Srijem villages, as well as in Novi Sad itself, was insular: the Hungarians did not form any compact area of settlement in the southern Vojvodina. Under such conditions, the language assimilation was boosted greatly. Moreover, the urban environment, promoting the better involvement of national communities into the social and cultural life, had its influence as well. There are several schools in the city, where the studies are conducted in the Hungarian language; and at the local University, there is Department of Hungarology, where education can also be received in the Hungarian language.

Main body

To study the linguistic characteristics of bilingualism in the Hungarian community, as well as to consider the folk traditions of the national minorities of the province, systematic field studies have been performed in the communities of Vojvodina since 2012. The research has been carried out as part of collaboration between the Institute of Slavic Studies of Russian Academy of Science and the Institute of Balkan Studies of Serbian Academy of Science and Arts. In 2012, the villages of southern Banat (Skorenovac, Vojlovica) were studied; in 2013, the research of the Hungarian community in Novi Sad was performed; in 2014 it became possible to visit the Hungarians in the region of Potisje (Ada, Adorjan); in 2015, a field study was carried out in central Banat (Zrenjanin, Mahajlovo, Belo Blato); in 2016 – the same was done in the historical region of Srijem (Maradik, Satrinca, Dobrodol), as well as in Irig and Ruma.² The conversations on sociolinguistic and ethnolinguistic topics are held with the informants, where the method of a half-structured interview is used. The main objec-

² More details about the results of the expedition to Vojvodina, as well as to other contact Hungarian-Slavic regions can be found in the following: Pilipenko G.P. Vtorojazychnaja rech' zakarpat-skikh vengrov: sociolingvisticheskiy I strukturnyj aspekt [The L2 speech of Transcarpathian Hungarians: sociolinguistic and structural aspects]. *Ukrains'ko-ugors'ki mizhnovni kontakty: mynule i suchasnist'*. Az ukrán-magyar nyelvi kapcsolatok múltja és jelene. Uzhgorod, 2014, pp. 246–265; Pilipenko G.P. Nekotorye aspekty izuchenija slovenskoj rechi prekmurskih vengrov [To some aspects of Slovenian Prekmurian speech of Hungarians]. *Slovenica II. Slavjanskij mezhkul'turnyj dialog v vospriyatii russkikh i slovencev*. Moscow, 2012, pp. 251–257; Pilipenko G.P. Kontaktnye osobennosti v jazyke vengrov goroda Novi-Sad [The contact features in the speech of Hungarians in Novi Sad]. *Materialy 44 Mezhdunarodnoj filologicheskoy nauchnoj konferencii 11-16 marta 2014 g. Uralistika* [Materials of the 44th International Scientific Conference 11–16 March 2014. Uralistika]. Ed. D-r N.N. Kolpakova. St. Peterburg, 2015, pp. 76–82; Pilipenko G. The Russian language among the Hungarians in Transcarpathia region (Ukraine): sociolinguistic features. *Empires and Nations from the 18th to the 20th century*, vol. 1. (Ed.): A. Biagini, G. Motta. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014, pp. 169–181.

tive was to obtain the narratives that were afterwards analyzed for their linguistic, linguo-pragmatic and ethnolinguistic characteristics. However, in the process of the conversation, some issues, which are not part of the paradigm of the linguistic research, came to the foreground. One of the issues is the history of the community and its place on the ethno-cultural map of the province. The article discusses the cultural and historical memory of the informants of the Hungarian neighborhood Telep in the city of Novi Sad.

The individual memory is the result of connections of individuals within a social group, starting from a family and ending with religious and national groups; it is always individual in the sense that it is unique³. The relation between the communicative and the cultural memory can be structured as the difference between the everyday and festive, secular and religious, ephemeral and solid, individual and common, dynamic and fixed⁴. Since the informants' narratives are used as the main source of analysis, it is essential to define them. Thus, the narratives can be understood as stories with the beginning, the middle and the end, which contains a conclusion or some experience of the narrator⁵. As part of the narrative, a certain narrative structure which is characterized by the time organization as well as its structural parts are also considered⁶. The most important linguistic means of expressing the collective memory would be the collective narratives about the common past, which are repeated by most people⁷. M. Ilich assumes that the narratives are produced by individuals or a group of individuals from their individual memory, while a collective narrative is repeated by most people or a significant group of community members; narratives from individual experiences form the collective memory, whilst collective narratives are referred to the cultural memory⁸. T. Petrovich claims that we can recognize a wider context of events via the analysis of individual utterances and can include it into the social context due to the social nature of the utterance itself⁹.

An interview is used in a number of humanitarian sciences as means of getting explicit and implicit information. We were interested in the cultural practices of the past and the informants' experience in the process of socialization, as well as the facts

³ Assmann J. Cultural memory and early civilization. Writing, remembrance and political imagination. Cambridge et al., 2011, p. 22.

⁴ Ibid, pp. 5–6.

⁵ Titscher S., Meyer M., Wodak R., Vetter E. *Metody analiza teksta i diskursa* [Methods of text and discourse analysis]. Harkov, 2009, p.172.

⁶ Ćirković S. *Stereotip vremena u diskursu raseljenih lica sa Kosova i Metohije*. Beograd, 2012, p. 88.

⁷ Ilić M. Discourse and ethnic identity. The case of the serbs from Hungary. Berlin-Munich, 2014, p. 243.

⁸ Ibid, p. 289.

⁹ Petrović T. *Srbi u Beloj Krajini. Jezička ideologija u procesu zamene jezika*. Beograd, 2009, p. 179.

about the modern linguistic reality. During the interviews, when the purpose was to learn more about informant's biographies, "the subjects had to structure their story themselves as 'experts of their life and experience'"¹⁰; through their recollections they reconstructed the events, actions and experience. U. Wolf-Knuts says the following about the process of recollection, which would be the main aspect in our informants' discourse:

"When we remember and tell others about our life choices, we reconstruct the events in our psychic; we establish a contact with ourselves as well as with the other person, whose decisions and actions we judge from the 'outside'. We judge this life choices and talk with ourselves in the process of such judgement".¹¹

To serve our purposes, it was essential to make clear how the events, which were distant in the time, were judged; as well as what kind of verbal and non-verbal means were used for that purpose. Due to our informants' recollections, we can find out how settlements, regions and places, where the expedition took place, looked in the past. The use of the retrospection evokes an image that is close to everyone; the image that relates to their childhood and early years. The informants share their knowledge about the external appearance of those places, their infrastructure, architecture and planning that reproduces the atmosphere of the place itself, and at the same time enable us to get some data about the linguistic situation.

Below we will give excerpts from the conversations with the informants about Telep, the neighborhood of the city of Novi Sad, which was inhabited predominantly by the Hungarians in the past, as they remember it for the timeline since approximately end-1940s until early 1970s. The excerpts from the interviews with the Hungarian informants are given in Serbian and Hungarian; the Serbian permanent residents produce them in the Serbian language and the Ukrainian informants provide them in Ukrainian.

Telep itself was founded on the outskirts of Novi Sad at the end of the 19th century per the plan of the Hungarian minister of agriculture *Ignác Dorányi*. The surname of the minister gave the name to the settlement (*Dorányi telep – Dorányi settlement*). The settlers were given land for planting vinery and building a house. Alexandr Adamovic, the wine seller, provided his vineland for planting (the neighborhood *Adamovićevo naselje* adjoining Telep was named after him).¹² The Hungarians¹³ inhabited Telep. They started farming and grew grapes:

¹⁰ Vavti Š. Lebenswestliche Rahmenbedingungen und ihr Einfluss auf die Selbstpräsentation in biografischen Erzählungen: Fallstudie Katja. *Razprave in gradivo, Revija za narodnostna vprašanja*, 67, April, Ljubljana, 2012, s. 58.

¹¹ Wolf-Knuts U. Would I have been better off there? Comparison, need and conduciveness in Finnish emigrant's account. *Journal of Ethnology and Folkloristics*, vol. 8, no. 1, 2014, p. 3.

¹² Dragin A. *Životna priča kao metod beleženja rodnih aspekata istorije žena: Mađarica sa Telepa Novi Sad*, 2015, s. 17.

[1] *Telep az úgy keletkezett hogy azt a részt fölszabdalták, és akkor kaptak egy szőlőt az emberek, és egy házhelyet, nem tudom, hány ezer család kapott így, az első világ háború előtt ... szőlőművések, sokkal jártak át csónakkal, a Fruska Gorára, ott volt szőlőjük, és akkor itt is volt, nagyon sokan szőlősgazdák voltak* (Telep appeared as this part was cut, and the people got vineyards and a plot for a house; I don't know how many families got it before the World War I ... vinegrowers, they were rowing boats a lot to Fruska Gora, where they had their vineyards; and then here there were also **a lot of people who were vinegrowers**) (NS)¹⁴.

Another informant tells us about his impressions from his childhood (1950s). In his story, he reconstructs the atmosphere of a provincial, practically rural way of life, when the streets were not coated with asphalt, which enabled the children to spend more time outdoors with their peers, whilst their parents did not worry about their safety due to the traffic. An image of informant's grandmother sitting in front of the house is provided to deepen the impression of the rural character of Telep at that time. The residents of Telep were growing vegetables in their gardens, which is difficult to imagine now under the conditions of a modern city, due to growing urbanisation and demolition of private houses. An informant recalls that time with nostalgia:

[2] *Telep je naravno nije izgledao ovako urbano, ulice nisu sve bile asfaltirane, ali po meni je to bilo jako lepo, zato što su se deca igrala na ulici, nije bilo tolko saobraćaja, više se družilo, znam, da i roditelji su se više družili, moja baka je onako još sedela ispred kuće sa komšinicama i pričala tako da ovaj, mislim, dobro, to su bila takva vremena, autobusom smo išli do grada, nije bilo tolko automobila, bile su velike bašte, svi su oko svoje **okućnice**, imali ono osnovno povrće, voće, meni je bilo jako lepo u ono vreme* (**Of course, Telep didn't look like a city**, not all the streets were covered with asphalt, but I think it was very good because children played outdoors, there wasn't such heavy traffic; they communicated more, I know parents also communicated more, my grandmother was sitting in front of the house in this way with her neighbors and was talking, so I think it was good that there were such times when we went to the city by bus, there were not so many cars, there were big

¹³ Hungarian population also lived in Novi Sad; however, the Hungarians did not predominate in the urban area. Thus, in the 18th century in the city there was only one professional Hungarian workshop – the workshop of shoemakers (Érdújhelyi M. *Újvidék története, 1894*, Újvidék: Agapé, 2002, 228 o.), though other workshops were owned by the Germans and the Serbs. The data of censuses testify to the multi-confessional character of Novi Sad at the end of the 19th century: in 1891, there were 9581 of Catholics, 8908 Orthodox Christians (mainly Serbs), 2449 Evangelists (mainly Germans and Slovaks), 1928 Reformats (mainly Hungarians), 1507 Jews [Ibid 168 o., 172 o., 188 o., 189 o., 192 o].

¹⁴ Individual characteristics of informants were shown in the transcripts. After each example, the place of the recording is given.

vegetable gardens, everything was around one's own **vegetable garden**, there were basic vegetables and fruit, I felt very good at that time) (NS).

In the third excerpt [3], another period is depicted – informant's childhood, which was in 1960s. We can see that the children could safely go down the hill sleighing until it got dark:

[3] *Szóval mi történik a Telepen? amikor én gyerek voltam, nem éreztem semmit, mentünk szánkózni, téli szünet volt, együtt mentünk az egész utca, nem volt hogy vártuk azt a hét órát este hogy leessen a sötét, az egész utca, gyerekek* (So, what is happening in Telep? what is the life like? **when I was a child**, I didn't feel anything, we went sleighing down the hill, we had winter vacations, we were going along the street together, it was not that we were waiting until seven o'clock in the evening when it was dark, the whole street and the children) (NS)

However, recently Telep has been changing. The changes in the cityscape are noticed in the fourth excerpt [4]: the agricultural lands have been developed, and the city is expanding. The informant says that their old house was demolished, and then they got an apartment in a new building:

[4] *P. Most nincs, mert lebontották a házakat, építették azt a ...
G. Ez új?*

P. Persze, ez most lett felépítve, mennyi? egy éve hogy behozták az embereket, itt volt nekünk a házuk, szóval itt volt a szomszédnak a háza, itt voltunk mink, és a ház névébe kaptam eztet ahol dolgozok.

P. Now they are not here because **the houses were demolished**, this one was built...

G. A new one?

P. Of course, it was built now, how long? one year after the people started living here, there was our house here, so there was neighbors' house here, we were here, and for my house I got this [a room], where I work (NS).

A Ukrainian informant residing to the north from Telep is telling about the rural character of the surrounding landscape. The testimonies related to the postwar time are given below:

[5] *Град, Нові-Сад, кад смо приїхали сюди тут було, все бїли хатї, дома, не буїли оцї такї двоетáжнї, óвай, не є було, було хатї, пóсля, сад два рóка, як зрóбїли оцї хатї там, отї дома, етáжнї, все бїли поля, там, Хфúтошки, Хфúтошка дорóга, тáмо все буїли хатї и поля, все су люди сїяли жїто, пше-*

*ницю, все су тамо сјали люди, **није** е **було** **тако*** (The city, Novi Sad, when we moved here; here it was, **all the houses were small**, there were no two-storeyed houses; no, there were not, **there were houses**, now it has been two years since they built these houses there, these houses, multi-storeyed; **all of them were fields** there, Futoshki, Futohski put, there were houses and fields over there; the people were growing wheat, the people were planting, **it was not like that**) (NS)

In the context of our research, it is important that the changes in the architectural scape and urbanisation cause changes in the ethnic composition of the population and, as a result, changes in the linguistic situation. We understand the linguistic situation as the “linguistic provision of communication in the society”¹⁵. In the neighborhood of Telep, there are still private houses left with the typical planning; however, gradually, the practice of demolishing old houses and replacing them with multi-storeyed apartment buildings is coming here. Nowadays, the neighborhood of Telep is one of prestigious neighborhoods in Novi Sad.¹⁶ Before the industrial enterprises appeared here, this part of Novi Sad had preserved the Hungarian environment’, then Serbs started moving here. According to the statistics, in 2005 there were 17,000 residents in the neighborhood; most of them were Serbs¹⁷. A. Dragin writes that many Serbs moved to this part of the city within the last two decades¹⁸. Nevertheless, Telep still continues to be the center of Hungarian cultural life; the Hungarian cultural society named after Petöfi Sándor is still functioning here; there are two eight-year schools, which have Hungarian classes (lately, the number of students studying there has decreased) – Jožef Atila School and Nikola Tesla School.

Telep was considered to be the place where there the city would end and the rural area would begin. The tram went up to the border lands. The residents of Telep remember that it was not easy to get to the center of Novi Sad. The feeling of social and national isolation was also overlapped with the feeling of geographical isolation of Telep residents that had been created because it was so remote and hard to reach. Regular transport connection with the center of Novi Sad was established only in 1958¹⁹. Below are the informants’ testimonies about transport availability in Telep:

¹⁵ Neshhimenko G.P. *Jazykovaja situacija v slavjanskih stranah* [The language situation in Slavic countries]. Moscow, 2003, p. 15.

¹⁶ Dragin A. *Životna priča kao metod beleženja rodnih aspekata istorije žena: Mađarica sa Telepa Novi Sad*, 2015, p. 17.

¹⁷ Uri F. Telep. *Enciklopedija Novogo Sada* [Encyclopedia of Novi Sad], book 28, Novi Sad, 2007, p. 63.

¹⁸ Dragin A. *Životna priča kao metod beleženja rodnih aspekata istorije žena: Mađarica sa Telepa Novi Sad*, 2015, p. 18.

¹⁹ Dragin A. *Životna priča kao metod beleženja rodnih aspekata istorije žena: Mađarica sa Telepa Novi Sad*, 2015, p. 17.

[6] *Cara Dusana, igen, kétharmada akkor magyar, de akkor még családi házak voltak, most már alig van belőlük négy, öt (Cara Dusana (Tsar Dusana Boulevard), yes, **two-thirds were Hungarians at that time**, but there were private houses then; and now there are hardly four or five [private houses]) (NS)*

[7] *K. Ezen a nagy sugárúton valamikor is ment a vasút, ez vasút volt, és ment a postáig, egy kis posta, piac, Limáni piac, ott van egy kis posta, az volt a vasútállomás, s akkor erre ment a vasút, még részei megvannak, arra vége felé ... itt volt a városnak a vége, a villamos, tramvaj, az itt fordult meg, ezen a sarkon, és itt volt a kórház, ez akkor a városnak a széle volt, **Telep az már ilyen falunak számított.***

G. Tehát nem volt a város része?

K. Igazán nem, különállónak tekintették, olyan külváros, amit hát külön tekintettek.

K. There used to be a railroad on this big avenue; it was a railroad, it was running up to the post-office, a small building of the post-office, a market, Liman market; there is a small building of the post-office; it used to be a station, and there was a railroad up to that place; there are its parts even now there, up to the end... there was the city boundary, the tram would turn round here at this corner, and there was a hospital, and it was the city boundary; **Telep was considered to be a big village.**

G. Do you mean it was not part of the city?

K. Actually not, it was considered a separate part, a suburb, which, well, can be considered as a separate one (NS)

[8] *Nem, **Telepen nagyon nehéz volt a közlekedés**, amikor én idekerültem, akkor is nehéz volt, kellett erre busszal és utána mentél valahova, Telepről bussz (No, **it was difficult with transportation in Telep**, when I got there, and it was hard at that time; you had to go by bus up to this place, and then you had to walk to your destination, taking a bus from Telep) (NS).*

The past is associated with the predomination of the Hungarian population in the neighborhood of Telep, with a bigger role of the Hungarian language in the local community²⁰. The symbolic end of this period is connected with industrialisation, urbanisation and influx of Serbian population. The informant from the ninth excerpt [9] characterizes the change of these epochs with a phase verb (*utána már kezdődött*

²⁰ An informant in the study of A. Dragin mentions the Hungarian character of Telep in the past: *Mađarska. Mađarska deca, uglavnom su Mađari bili na Telepu. Na Telepu je... je, je retko ko bio... a da nije bio Mađar. Mađarska, mađarska, ceo Telep je bio mađarski* (Hungarian. Hungarian children, mainly Hungarians were in Telep. In Telep...there were hardly any of those who were not Hungarian. Hungarian, Hungarian, all Telep was Hungarian): Dragin A. *Životna priča kao metod beleženja rodnih aspekata istorije žena: Mađarica sa Telepa Novi Sad*, 2015, s. 87.

– and then it already started). S. Ćirković, analyzing the time markers in the speech of Kosovo refugees, also notices the frequent use of the verb ‘start’ in the narratives (*počelo je*), which “symbolizes the start of the war [the war in Kosovo] as the time boundary, in relation to which the interlocutors locate the events they are talking about”²¹.

[9] *Telepen java rész magyarok voltak, akkor a mestereim magyarok voltak, java részt, mondjuk rá, huszonöt, harminc évig, utána már kezdődött, nagyobb vállalat, több szerb jött, akkor már nem, sokkal többet beszélünk akkó így a néppel, mert sokkal több magyar volt, az üzletekbe is még a környezetbe, szomszédok, a gyerekkorban még a legénykorban mint már ma (There were mostly Hungarians in Telep, at that time my foremen were Hungarians, mostly, say, twenty-five, thirty years ago, then it all started, big enterprises, many Serbs came, at that time no, we used to talk more because there were many more Hungarians, in stores and around you, neighbors, in my childhood and youth than now) (NS).*

The information in the tenth excerpt [10] is telling about the special environment, where everyone knew each other and owing to this fact, there was a feeling of more security. These recollections are in contrast with the current situation, when the connection with the acquaintances is lost because of migration and generational change:

[10] *Jako dugačka ulica, ona ide skroz do Futoga, moji su negde tu na polovini, ja sam nekad znala u svakoj kući ko stanuje (A very long street, it goes to Futoga, my people are somewhere there in the middle, I used to know those who lived in every house) (NS).*

Conclusion

Thus, Telep and the neighborhoods of Novi Sad adjoining to it (Detelinara, Adamovicevo Naselje, Grbavica) are exposed to intense urbanization²². The rural lifestyle, which was witnessed by the informants, has been changing for a city with its own laws of development. Gradually, the old environment, the feeling of geographical isolation, the feeling that Telep is located on the outskirts of Novi Sad (and to some degree does not belong to it), is disappearing. Compare, for example, the opinion of an informant about the changes around Grbavica:

²¹ Ćirković S. *Stereotip vremena u diskursu raseljenih lica sa Kosova i Metohije*. Beograd, 2012, p. 88.

²² Dragin A. *Životna priča kao metod beleženja rodnih aspekata istorije žena: Mađarica sa Telepa Novi Sad*, 2015, p. 18.

[11] *Az úgy nevezett Grbávicának nevezik, ez a Limán mellett, szóval, nem tudom megmagyarázni, a Limáni piac mögotti része, ahol földszintes házak voltak, tíz évvel ezelőtt és most kezdődött a földszintes családi házak lebontása* (So called, **it is called Grbavica**, it's next to Liman, I can't explain, it's the area behind the Liman market, **where there used to be one-storey houses**, ten years ago, and they started to pull down the private houses) (NS).

As a result, the linguistic situation has also been transforming: together with the patriarchal character, the rural way of life in the isolated Hungarian world is also disappearing; the industrial enterprises and accomodation facilities overlap with the Hungarian foundation, which is more difficult to be recognised in the cityscape, and to which only the toponymy testifies (including the street names)²³: *Kiš Ernea, Senteleki Kornela, Petefi Šandora, Adi Endrea, Karas Pala, Đorđa Mikeša*, etc., also cultural institutions (cultural society named after Petöfi Sándor) and confessional objects (Catholic and Reformed churches). Interlocutors directly associate the urbanization and the changes in their lifestyle, as well as the weakening of the Hungarian language in everyday life of Telep. At the same time, the functioning of the Hungarian language is closely related to the neighborhood of Telep as 'the most Hungarian place' on the map of Novi Sad.



Fig. 1. Novi Sad. The Hungarian theatre

²³ It is important to mention that in the Serbian toponymy as well as in the names of the institutions (libraries and schools) in the Serbian language, the Hungarian names and surnames are given per the word order in the Hungarian language, when the surname precedes the first name (Hung. *Ady Endre*, Rus. *Endre Ady*, Serb. *Adi Endre*), whereas proper Serbian names and surnames are given in a different order (cf. *ulica Jovana Popovića*).



Fig. 2. The neighborhood of Telep

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