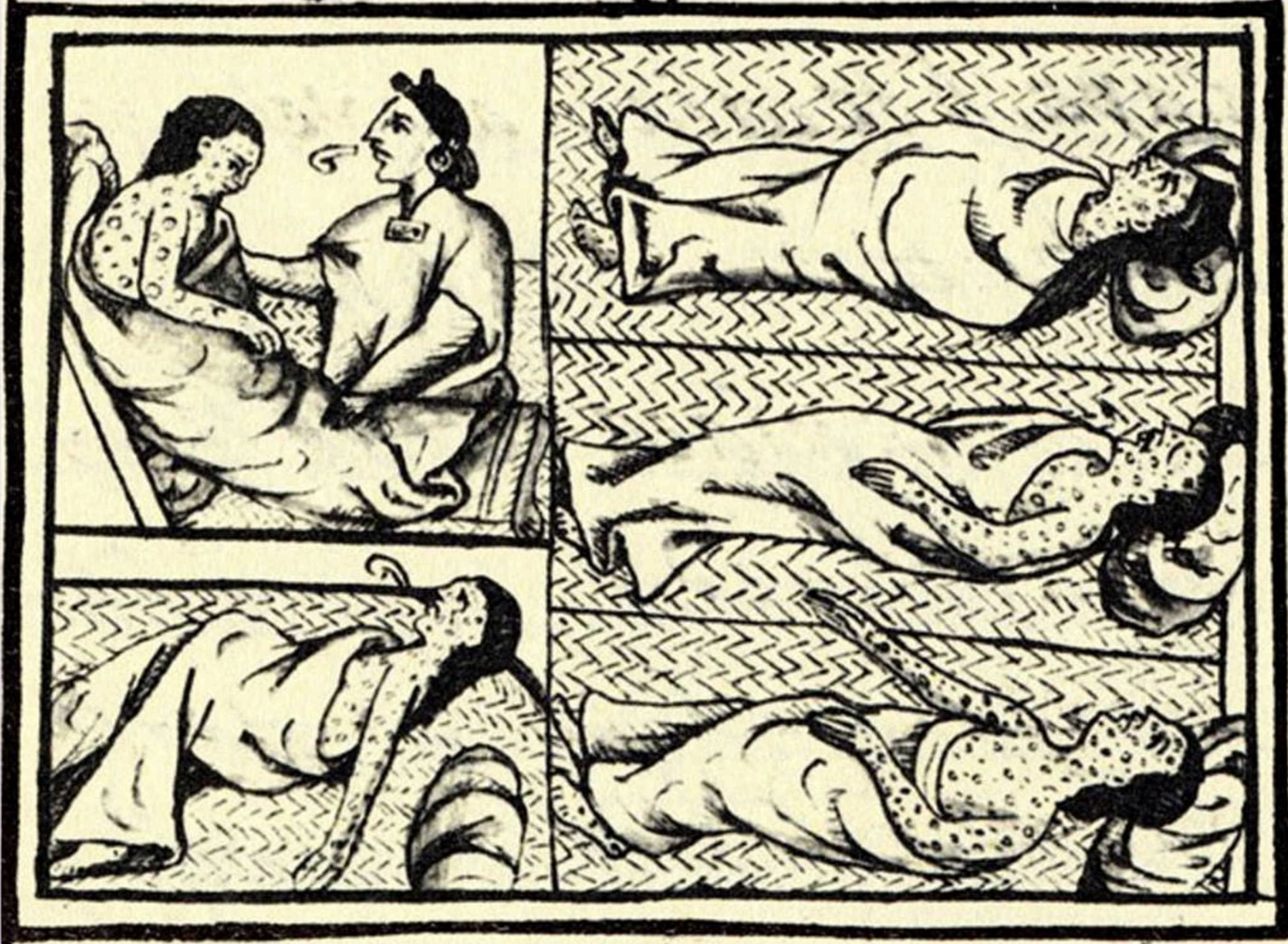


Death of the New World

An interdisciplinary study into the effects of disease and maltreatment on the indigenous peoples of the Americas 1492-1800CE



Depiction of smallpox in the Florentine codex, compiled in 1640.

With this project we sought to assess and explain the demographic collapse of Indigenous populations in the Americas from 1492 to 1800.

By combining mathematical and historical methods our evaluation became interested in identifying trends and correlations across our source material.

Executing mathematical method upon intangible historical sources was our principle complication, but acknowledging this issue allowed us to create estimates that accounted for discrepancy.

30 identifiable diseases were brought to the Americas from Europe and Africa during this period; amongst these smallpox was the definitive infection and accounted for the greatest reduction in population, which fell by 75-95%. We found that by assessing and comparing demographic change across smaller separate environments we could build a more sophisticated conclusion around the nature of population decline as a whole in this period.

Unlike with disease, assessing the impact of maltreatment using demographics proved ineffective as little statistical record exists in this regard. We relied on more traditional historical practice, making inference from European and Indigenous primary source material.



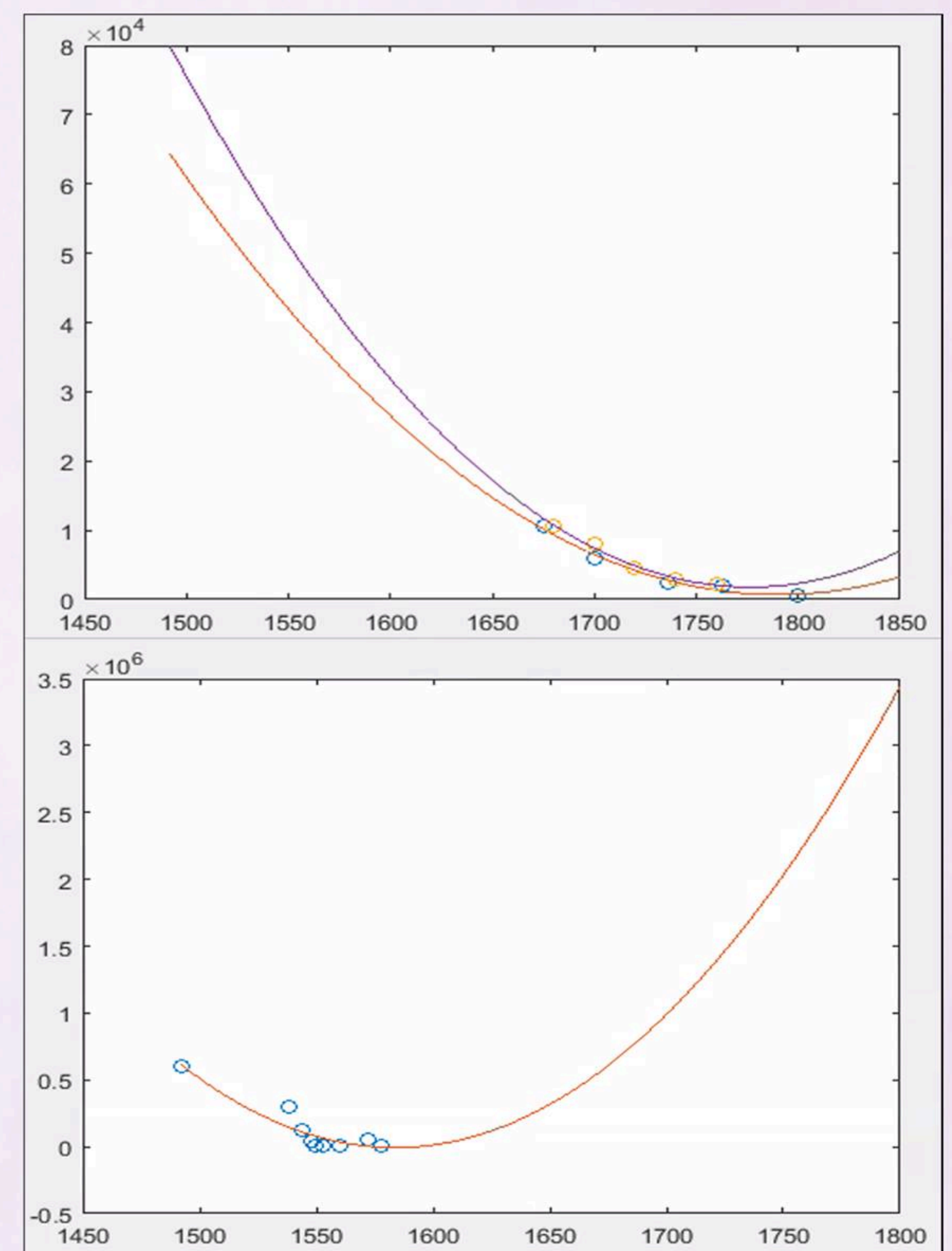
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In the article much work goes toward comparing how differences in factors such as geography, culture, and trade affected the impact of disease and maltreatment upon various Indigenous peoples.

Our long time frame lets us survey how responses evolved over time to these new adversities as the extent of their dangers become more greatly understood.

Our evaluation is not only statistical but also includes judgement on the psychological effects of European colonisation and maltreatment, alongside other factors which are tricky to quantify.



Interpolated population estimates for Illinois (above) and Nicaragua (below).

The above graphs exemplify the trend we found across the Americas in which there was a dramatic population decline following European intervention.

Our starting population statistics are low because of a lack of supportable evidence for population size before the arrival of census records.

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