EXCAVATION COINS
A Hoard of Mamlūk, Ottoman and Venetian Coins (Fifteenth to Sixteenth Centuries) from Apollonia-Arsuf, Israel

by
OREN TAL and ISSA BAIDOUN
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PLATES 25 – 27

Abstract. This article documents and discusses a hoard of 80 silver Mamlūk and Ottoman coins and two gold and one silver Venetian coins dated to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries with a burial date of AD 1566. It was discovered in Apollonia-Arsuf, Israel, which is renowned in the medieval history of the Holy Land as the place where Richard I of England led the crusaders to victory over the army of Saladin in 1191 in the Third Crusade (Battle of Arsuf).

INTRODUCTION

APOLLONIA-ARSUF, located on the Mediterranean coast of Israel some 17 kilometres north of Jaffa (ancient Joppa, south of Tel Aviv) and 34 kilometres south of Caesarea, has been excavated continuously during the last thirty years. Once a modest coastal settlement, Apollonia-Arsuf became the urban centre of the southern Sharon plain as early as the Persian period (late sixth century BC) and remained important until the crusader period, and its destruction in the mid-thirteenth century AD.

Crusader Arsuf’s (then named Arsur) last days are well documented in the historical sources. In April 1265, in the course of a siege of some forty days, the entire site of Arsur (the town’s fortifications and other structures, and eventually its fortified castle) was razed to the ground and is said to have been in ruins ever since. This final destruction is confirmed by thick destruction layers and ruins that were uncovered in the excavated areas all over the fortified site, particularly in the castle.

The current study is supported by the German-Israeli Foundation — Young Scientists’ Program (Grant no. 2190) to whom one of the authors (O. Tal) is indebted. We are grateful to the late I. Roll for entrusting us with the hoard for publication. We are indebted to R. Cool of the Israel Antiquity Authority (henceforth IAA) for his preliminary cataloguing of the coins discovered at Apollonia-Arsuf during 18 seasons of excavations.


3 A refuse pit from the besieged castle containing numerous local and imported pottery vessels, plain and luxury glass vessels, metal and stone artefacts has been found provide ample evidence for
After the destruction of Arsur by the Mamlūks the town is next mentioned by Abu el-Fida who said, in AD 1321, that it was ruined and uninhabited. After the destruction of Arsur by the Mamlūks the town is next mentioned by Abu el-Fida who said, in AD 1321, that it was ruined and uninhabited. A few Mamlūk coins have been found on the site. 13 can be securely dated to the time of Baybars I (AH 658–76/AD 1260–77), but others are either thirteenth or fourteenth century AD, and in cases too illegible to be dated securely to either century. These coins may have been used by the crusaders or subsequently by a Mamlūk garrison stationed at the site. Alternatively they may have been lost by people scavenging for building materials. The Mamlūks intentionally left the coast in ruins in order to discourage any further incursions by the Christians. Following the Ottoman conquest in 1517, a slow process of resettlement along the coast began. A small community of farmers settled at Sayyiduna ‘Ali some 800 metres south of the ruined castle of Arsur.

The hoard was found beneath a fallen stone outside the southern town wall, inside a broken neck of a ceramic amphora. It contained 80 silver Mamlūk and Ottoman coins and two gold and one silver Venetian coins. Seven of the coins were pierced (nos 6, 10, 37, 38, 53, 56, 72). The latest coin is Ottoman and is dated to this episode whose importance lies in its absolute dating to the period of March to April 1265, see O. Tal (ed), *Arsur: A Mid-13th Century Crusader Castle and Its Finds*, Salvage Excavation Reports / Apollonia-Arsuf – Related Studies 2 (Tel Aviv, forthcoming).

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5 IAA nos. 3108, 117022, 117036, 117126, 117153, 117162, 117164, 117188, 117224, 117226, 117230, 117235, 117236.

6 IAA nos. 3109/1, 117109, 117168, 117178, 117186, 117200, 117212, 117222, 117225, 117304.


10 The hoard was discovered in the seventh season of excavations in 1990 (license no. G-71/1990). It came from Area E, Square G23, Locus 1201, Basket 12019 (opened on 17.10.1990). The amphora (which preserved one handle only) is of a fairly well known late crusader-Mamluk period type, cf. M. Avissar and E.J. Stern, *Pottery of the Crusader, Ayyubid, and Mamluk Periods in Israel*, IAA Reports 26 (Jerusalem, 2005), pp. 105-6, Type II.3.2.2-3. Alternatively it may well be that the fragmented handled neck originally belonged to a jug (id. pp. 110-11, Type II.4.2.2-3). The hoard is currently kept with the coin department of the IAA, together with the hundreds of coins found during the site excavations. Thanks go to Tel Aviv University, Institute of Archaeology technical staff, namely N. Halperin for cleaning the coins and P. Shargo for photography.
AH 974 / AD 1566. This suggests the hoard was buried then or soon after. The most recent coin, no. 83, is nearly 40 years later than the other early Ottoman coins which were all struck during a period of 11 years (the latest Ottoman coins could otherwise be dated to AH 933/AD 1527 (nos 77–81); or nearly 30 years when compared to the second latest coin in the hoard, a lira of Venice (no. 3), dated to AD 1538. No less surprising is the fact that the hoard could be divided into three different values; two high value Venetian gold and silver coins, and 80 low value half dirhams and akçes. Given the secure provenance of the hoard we find no satisfactory explanation for both enigmas – although one could always argue that originally two (or more) different cashes were buried together (one Venetian, the other Mamlûk and Ottoman). The diversity of the mints of the low value half dirhams and akçes may hint at a merchant as the original owner of the hoard, whereas the seven pierced coins could suggest that it may have been buried by a woman who, in a moment of distress, hid it at a deserted and ruined place and never returned to retrieve it. The hoard is summarised on table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Authority and date</th>
<th>Mint</th>
<th>Denomination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1–2.</td>
<td>Doge Agostino Barbarigo 1486–1502</td>
<td>Venice</td>
<td>Ducat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Doge Andrea Gritti 1523–38</td>
<td>Venice</td>
<td>Lira</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>AH 916/AD 1511</td>
<td>Dimashq</td>
<td>Half-dirham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>AH 918/AD 1513</td>
<td>No mint / missing</td>
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<td>6–10.</td>
<td>Undated</td>
<td>No mint</td>
<td>Half-dirham</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ottoman. Selîm I (AH 918–26/AD 1512–20)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Akçe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
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<td>Bilghrâd</td>
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<tr>
<td>12–13.</td>
<td>AH 922/AD 1516</td>
<td>Halab</td>
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<td>19–20.</td>
<td>AH 924/AD 1518</td>
<td>Misr</td>
<td>Akçe</td>
</tr>
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<td>21.</td>
<td>AH 925/AD 1519</td>
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<td>Ottoman. Sulâyman II (AH 926–74/AD 1520–66)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>29–37.</td>
<td>AH 926/AD 1520</td>
<td>Amid</td>
<td>Akçe</td>
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<td>38–45, 47–51.</td>
<td>AH 926/AD 1520</td>
<td>Halab</td>
<td>Akçe</td>
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<td>52.</td>
<td>AH 926/AD 1520</td>
<td>Hisn Keyfî</td>
<td>Akçe</td>
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<td>53.</td>
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<td>Kharbîrût</td>
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<td>AH 926/AD 1520</td>
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<td>Akçe</td>
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<td>68–75.</td>
<td>AH 930/AD 1524</td>
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<td>Akçe</td>
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<tr>
<td>76.</td>
<td>AH 932/AD 1526</td>
<td>Misr</td>
<td>Akçe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77–81.</td>
<td>AH 933/AD 1527</td>
<td>Misr</td>
<td>Akçe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
82. Missing Missing Akçe
Ottomans. Selim II (AH 974–82 / AD 1566–74)

83. AH 974/AD 1566 Amid Akçe

Table 1.

CATALOGUE

No. Die axis Diam. Wt IAA no. Comments

Venice
Obv. St Mark holding book of Gospels and presenting banner to Doge. AVG BARBADICO S M VENETI DVX vertically down flag.
Rev. Christ in mandorla. SITX PEDATOT V REGISISTEDV
CNI VII, p. 199, no. 146 var.; Gamberini 226; Paolucci, p. 53, no. 1.

1. 11:00 h 21 mm 3.45 g IAA122250
As no. 1, but SIT T XPEDAT Q TV REGIS ISTE DVCAT

2. 01:00 h 22 mm 3.48 g IAA122251
Andrea Gritti 1523–38. Lira.
Obv. Christ standing, facing on platform with PL inscribed. Around: GLORIA-TIB-P-SOLI.
Rev. Doge with gonfalon kneeling left, before St Mark standing r., raising hem of his robes.
Around: SM-VENET-ANDREAS-GRITI DVX vertically down flag.
Paolucci, p. 59, no. 5.

3. 06:00 h 32 mm 6.18 g IAA122252
Mamluks
Al-Ashraf Abu al-Nâṣr Qânsûh al-Ghûrî (AH 906–22/AD 1501–16)
Half dirham
Dimashq دمشق
Obv. Field, three segments divided by two horizontal lines: .... السلطان ... قاصصوء ... بالدمشق سنة 916 (numerals are reversed 916).
Rev. Field (missing border), in centre: 916 بالدمشق (Balog, MSES, cf. no. 883).

4. 02:30 h 16 mm 0.92 g IAA122253
No mint or mint missing, 918/1513
Obv. Field, two segments divided by a horizontal dotted line: ... الإمام رسول الله ... لا إله إلا الله [Balog, MSES, cf. no. 887].
Rev. Field, three segments divided by two zzz-shaped horizontal lines: 918 محمد رسول الله بالدمش EQE QEN....

5. 09:00 h 13 mm 0.91 g IAA122254
No mint, undated
Obv. Field (missing border), in centre, within an octalobe linear: ϩϮμϧΎϗ
Rev. Field (missing border), in centre, within an octalobe linear: ϱέϮϐϟ΍
Balog, MSES, cf. nos 892, 892A.

6. --h  15 mm  0.90 g  IAA122255  Pierced.
7. --h  15 mm  0.87 g  IAA122256
8. --h  14 mm  0.96 g  IAA122257
9. --h  13 mm  0.88 g  IAA122258
10. --h  16 mm  0.82 g  IAA122259  Pierced and effaced.

Ottomans
Selim I (AH 918–26 / AD 1512–20). Akçe
Bilghrād بلغراد
Field type
Obv. Field, within an ornamented border: سلطان سليم شاه بن بايزيد خان
Rev. Field, within an ornamented border: عز نصره ضرب بلغراد...
Pere, OMP, cf. no. 124.

11. 07:00 h  15 mm  0.89 g  IAA122260
Halab حلب 922/1516
Field type
Obv. Field (border missing): سلطان سليم شاه بن بايزيد خان
Rev. Field (border missing): حلب سنة 922...
Pere, OMP, cf. no. 130.

12. 02:30 h  15 mm  0.85 g  IAA122261
13. 11:00 h  11 mm  0.76 g  IAA122262

Mint and date missing

14. 11:00 h  13 mm  1.15 g  IAA122263
15. 11:30 h  13 mm  0.88 g  IAA122264

Miṣr مصر 923/1517
Field type: heart ornamentation on both sides
Obv. Field: ضارب النصر صاحب العز والنصر في البر والبحر
Rev. Field: سلطان سليم خان بن بايزيد خان عز نصره بعصر سنة 923
Ghalib, TMU, cf. no. 190.

16. 05:30 h  14 mm  0.88 g  IAA122265
17. 03:30 h  12 mm  0.86 g  IAA122266
18. 08:30 h  13 mm  0.88 g  IAA122267

Miṣr مصر 924/1518

19. 02:00 h  13 mm  0.87 g  IAA122268
20. 12:30 h  14 mm  0.85 g  IAA122269  Numerals of date reversed 492.

Miṣr مصر 925/1519
EXCA V ATION COINS 489

21. --h 12 mm 0.86 g IAA122270 Crude. Numerals of date reversed 592.

Mint and date missing

22. 09:00 h 13 mm 0.76 g IAA122271
23. 08:30 h 12 mm 0.79 g IAA122272
24. 08:30 h 14 mm 0.91 g IAA122273
25. --h 16 mm 1.26 g IAA122274
26. --h 16 mm 0.90 g IAA122275
27. --h 12 mm 0.81 g IAA122276
28. --h 14 mm 0.83 g IAA117096

Sulaymān II (AH 926–74 / AD 1520–66). Akçe
Āmid ʿAmīd 926/1520
Cartouche type: both sides
Obv. Field, in centre, within an ornamented cartouche, with bezel-shaped hearts into two edges: سلطان سليمان بن سليم شاه above and below, two-line inscription:...
Rev. Field, within an ornamented cartouche, with bezel-shaped hearts into two edges: ام overview and below, two-line inscription: 926 عز نصره ضرب سنة
Edhem, MO, no. 799; Pere, OMP, no. 204; Artuk, KSSABS, no. 46.

29. 11:00 h 16 mm 1.15 g IAA122277
30. --h 15 mm 1.17 g IAA122278

Obv. Field, in centre, within an ornamented cartouche: سلطان سليمان above and below, two-line inscription: سلطان العدل بن سليم شاه
Rev. Field, within an ornamented cartouche: عز نصره ضرب سنة 926 counter-clockwise marginal inscription:...
Artuk, KSSABS, no. 47.

31. 12:00 h 14 mm 1.12 g IAA122279
32. --h 14 mm 1.22 g IAA122280 Obverse and date effaced but same type.
33. --h 13 mm 0.73 g IAA122281 As no. 32.
34. --h 15 mm 1.16 g IAA122282 With a date.

Cartouche type: one side
Obv. Field, within an ornamented border: سلطان سليمان بن سليم شاه
Rev. Field, within an ornamented cartouche, with bezel-shaped hearts into two edges: ام overview and below, two-line inscription: عز نصره ضرب سنة...

Date effaced but 926/1520

35. --h 13 mm 1.12 g IAA122283

Cartouche type: double square
Obv. Field, in centre, within an ornamented cartouche: سليمان شاه above and below, two line-inscription: سلطان العدل بن سليم شاه
Rev. Field, within a double square: ام overview counter-clockwise marginal inscription: عز نصره ضرب سنة 926 (سنة)

36. 04:00 h 15 mm 1.20 g IAA122284

Field type
Obv. Field, within a dotted circle inside double circle: سلطان سليمان بن سليم شاه
Rev. Field, within a dotted circle inside double circle, in centre: عز نصره ضرب سنة

Date effaced but 926.

37. 02:30 h 17 mm 1.08 g IAA122285 Pierced.

Հալաբ حلب 926/1520

Cartouche type: both sides
Obv. Field, in centre, within an ornamented cartouche, with bezel-shaped hearts into two edges: سلطان بن سليم خان
Rev. Field, within an ornamented cartouche, with bezel-shaped hearts into two edges, three-line inscription: عز نصره ضرب حلب سنة 926

38. --h 16 mm 1.15 g IAA122286 Pierced.

39. 05:00 h 15 mm 1.15 g IAA122287

40. 05:00 h 16 mm 1.15 g IAA122288

Arabesque type

41. 12:00 h 15 mm 1.14 g IAA122289

42. 04:00 h 16 mm 1.15 g IAA122290 Date missing.

Rosette type

43. --h 14 mm 1.17 g IAA122291

44. --h 14 mm 1.16 g IAA122292

45. --h 15 mm 1.18 g IAA122293

46. --h 15 mm 1.14 g IAA122294 Date missing.

Field type: heart ornamentation on both sides
Obv. Field, within a dotted circle inside double circle: سلطان سليمان شاه بن سليم شاه
Rev. Field, within a dotted circle inside double circle: عز نصره حلب سنة 926

47. 03:00 h 14 mm 1.19 g IAA122295

48. 12:00 h 15 mm 1.19 g IAA122296
49. 08:00 h 14 mm  1.08 g  IAA122297
50. --h 15 mm  1.18 g  IAA122298
51. 07:00 h 14 mm  0.87 g  IAA122299 bin salîm Khân on obv. and with fi on rev. Date effaced. Artuk, KSSABS, cf. no. 118.

Hisn Keyfâ 926

Field type: heart ornamentation on both sides
Obv. Field (border missing): Sultan Sâliman Shâh ibn Sâlim Shâh

52. 03:00 h 14 mm  0.95 g  IAA122300 Kharbert خریبّت Date missing

Field type
Obv. Field (border missing): Sultan Sâliman Shâh ibn Sâlim Shâh
Rev. Field (border missing): 926 /1520 Pere, OMP, cf. no. 207; Artuk, KSSABS, cf. no. 123.

53. 08:30 h 16 mm  1.16 g  IAA122301 Pierced Dimashq دمشق 926/1520

Field type: heart ornamentation on both sides
Obv. Field, within a dotted circle inside double circle: Sultan Sâliman Shâh ibn Sâlim Shâh

54. 12:00 h 14 mm  1.17 g  IAA122302
55. 02:00 h 15 mm  1.21 g  IAA122303 Pierced, two holes.
56. 07:00 h 17 mm  1.17 g  IAA122304
57. 12:00 h 14 mm  1.18 g  IAA122305
58. 08:00 h 13 mm  1.19 g  IAA122306
59. 07:00 h 15 mm  1.18 g  IAA122307 Crude.

Field type: rosette on both sides

60. --h 15 mm  1.30 g  IAA122308 Rosette and date missing.

Cartouche type: one side
Obv. Field, in centre, within an ornamented cartouche with bezel-shaped hearts into two edges: Sultan Sâliman Shâh ibn Sâlim Shâh حکم ملكه و يد... above and below, two-line inscription: 926/1520 Rev. Field, in centre: ornamentation. Around: Sultan Sâliman Shâh 1 Ben Sâlim Khan Date missing.

61. 09:00 h 16 mm  1.19 g  IAA122309 Mar'âsh مرعش 926/1520
Cartouche type: both sides
Obv. Field, in centre, within an ornamented cartouche with bezel-shaped hearts into two edges: 

\[ \text{سليمان بن سليم خان} \]

Rev. Field, within an ornamented cartouche, with bezel-shaped hearts into two edges, three-line inscription: 

\[ \text{عز نصره صرب} \]

Artuk, KSSABS, no. 143.

62. 04:00 h 15 mm 1.16 g  IAA122310
63. --h 16 mm 1.16 g  IAA122311
64. --h 15 mm 1.19 g  IAA122312
65. 04:00 h 14 mm 1.15 g  IAA122313

Field type: heart ornamentation on both sides
Obv. Field, within a dotted circle inside double circle: 

\[ \text{سليمان بن سليم خان} \]

Rev. Field, within a dotted circle inside double circle: 

\[ \text{عزمصره صرب مرعش سنة} \]

Pere, OMP, cf. no. 210; Artuk, KSSABS, no. 143A.

66. 12:00 h 13 mm 1.19 g  IAA122314

Miṣr مصر 926/1520

Field type: two stars flanked with heart
Obv. Field (border missing): 

\[ \text{سليمان بن سليم خان} \]

Rev. Field (border missing): 

\[ \text{عزمصره صرب مصر} \]


67. 08:00 h 14 mm 1.14 g  IAA122315

Field type: star ornamentation
Obv. Field, within a dotted circle inside double circle: 

\[ \text{سليمان بن سليم خان} \]

Rev. Field, within a dotted circle inside double circle: 

\[ \text{عزمصره صرب مصر} \]

Artuk, KSSABS, cf. no. 166.

930/1524

68. 03:00 h 14 mm 1.18 g  IAA122316  Star on rev.
69. 05:30 h 15 mm 1.09 g  IAA122317  As no. 68.
70. 03:00 h 21 mm 1.18 g  IAA122318  As no. 68.
71. 02:00 h 15 mm 1.18 g  IAA122319  As no. 68.
72. 12:00 h 15 mm 1.17 g  IAA122320  Pierced.
73. 08:30 h 15 mm 1.14 g  IAA122321  As no. 68 but not pierced.
74. 03:00 h 16 mm 0.86 g  IAA122322  Star on obv., date effaced.
75. 09:00 h 17 mm 1.19 g  IAA122323  Two stars on obv. and rev.

932/1526

76. --h 14 mm 1.14 g  IAA117095  Star on rev.

933/1527

77. 11:00 h 14 mm 1.21 g  IAA122324  Two stars on obv. and rev.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>No.</th>
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<th>Diameter (mm)</th>
<th>Weight (g)</th>
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<td>1.17 g</td>
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<td>03:30 h</td>
<td>17 mm</td>
<td>1.15 g</td>
<td>IAA122327</td>
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<td>81</td>
<td>03:00 h</td>
<td>15 mm</td>
<td>1.15 g</td>
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</table>

Field type: central circle
Obv. Field, in centre, within a plain circle: ...
Rev. Field: badly worn.

Mint and date missing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Diameter (mm)</th>
<th>Weight (g)</th>
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<td>01:00 h</td>
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</table>

Selim II (AH 974–82 / AD 1566–74). Akçe
Amid
Field type: central circle
Obv. Field, in centre, within a plain circle: [ن سليمان شاه] سليمان around: ...
Rev. Field, in centre, within an ornamented cartouche with bezel-shaped hearts into two edges: [ن سليمان] above and below, two-line inscription (date 984 for 974): عز نصره ضرب سنة 984.
Artuk, IAM, cf. no. 1582.

974/1566

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Diameter (mm)</th>
<th>Weight (g)</th>
<th>Reference</th>
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<td>14 mm</td>
<td>1.19 g</td>
<td>IAA122330</td>
</tr>
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