

Minimum Documentation Fiche

composed by regional working party of CAMPANIA, Italy

01. Picture of building



Depicted item: Entrance from courtyard

Source: Archivio Fondazione de Felice, ph. Paolo Monti

Date: 1964

1. Identity of building

1.1 current name of building

Museo Archeologico Provinciale di Salerno

1.2 variant or former name

Complesso conventuale di San Benedetto

1.3 number & name of street

Via San Benedetto, 28

1.4 town

Salerno (Sa)

1.5 province/state

Campania

1.6 zip code

84122

1.7 country

Italy

1.8 national grid reference

40°40'44"N 14°45'45"E

1.9 classification/typology

Museum

1.10 protection status & date

The building is subject to architectural restrictions by Ministerial Decree of 08.05.2000.

2 History of building**2.1 original brief/purpose**

The restoration project and adaptation to Provincial Archeological Museum of part of the Conventual Complex of S. Benedetto in Salerno, carried out between 1956 and 1964 by Prof. Arch. Ezio Bruno De Felice, represents a very significant episode in the history of restoration and Italian museography, which, regarding one of the most extraordinary architectural episodes of the city of Salerno, has created a work that has become part of the history of the Italian museum experience of the twentieth century, with the works of Scarpa, Albini, Gardella, Minissi, undisputed international starting point of modern museography. The discovery of the remains of the four-sided portico in front of the abbey of San Benedetto, incorporated into a series of factories from later periods, suggests to the Superintendence of Monuments of Campania and the Provincial Administration of Salerno the hypothesis of restoring the complex and transferring the Archaeological Museum to it.

2.2 dates: commission/completion

Commission 1956 - Completion 1964

2.3 architectural and other designers

Ezio Bruno De Felice

2.4 others associated with building

Riccardo Pacini (Superintendence of Monuments of Campania), Venturino Panebianco and Mario Napoli (arrangement of works), ing. Ennio Amodio (Structural calculations). Building company: Fratelli Ronga, Displays: Ronga (Salerno) and Carlo Azzi (Napoli)

2.5 significant alterations with dates

The building has not been substantially altered in its structural elements. During the first decade of XXI century, the interior setting has undergone some changes with the introduction of some display cases and the affixing of colored panels on the ceiling. The Apollo's Room has been greatly altered.

2.6 current use

The building has retained the original destination until now.

2.7 current condition

Medium. The general conditions are satisfying, except for the Apollo's Room, and the ceiling. The conservation of the works requires a revision of the air conditioning and lighting systems.

3. Description

3.1 general description

The building is composed of parts dating back to different eras, highlighted through a work of liberation from superimpositions that have stratified over time and reconnected through modern inserts, necessary for the purposes of structural consolidation, but also of the exhibition logic and the enhancement of the most significant parts. The project is characterized by the frank and expressive use of construction elements of industrial derivation, steel profiles, prefabricated panels, sheet metal floors, plywood and security crystal showcases, which are integrated into an inseparable whole with the oldest parts of the factory, collaborating to the enhancement and the action of revealing the lived stratifications.

3.2 construction

The construction was preceded by removing all superimpositions and freeing the oldest parts, the remains of the quadriportico in front of the Romanesque abbey church and the fortification walls of the Norman Palace. The building integrates and connects the historic walls with structural steel elements, including the trestles that free the walls from the weight of the roof and at the same time counteract the outward rotation of the main facade, these strongly characterize the space and mark the rhythm already suggested by the surviving side of the cryptoporticus, also lending itself to holding display cases. The volume that covers the entrance portico is built from a steel structure and closed by prefabricated panels, it contains the room intended to the bronze head of Apollo and is structurally autonomous, protecting the underlying colonnade and lifting it from its structural function. The new roof, made up of steel trusses, rests on the southern masonry and on the steel trestles which simultaneously stabilize the southern side of the quadriporticus at the lower level and the loggia at the upper level.

3.3 context

The restoration and adaptation project of the San Benedetto complex to a new use constitutes a moment of extraordinary technical and expressive experimentation in the culture of restoration and museography. The intervention has a significant urban dimension, as the Project was subsequently completed with the restoration of the Church of San Benedetto, with which, before the construction of the homonymous street, it constituted a unitary body. Also from a functional point of view, in De Felice's intentions the Church should have been connected to the Museum, having been conceived as a space for conferences or temporary exhibitions. The volume that covers the entrance and which houses the Apollo's Room ideally leans towards the Church and visually reconstructs the void of the four-sided portico.

4. Evaluation

4.1 technical

The technical equipment is not adequate for the current needs of an exhibition space, however the large gap between the roof and the ceiling underlying the trusses could meet the needs of an adaptation. Even the windows could be adapted to the need for greater insulation, however respecting the accesses of natural light provided by the original project.

4.2 social

The Project contributes to the enhancement of the entire ancient part of the city, subject to multiple stratifications. The authentically modern meaning of restoration makes the surviving parts recognizable without mystification and thanks to the frank introduction of modern parts it reassembles them in a new organism, suitable for museum function.

4.3 cultural & aesthetic

This Building represents a point of extraordinary synthesis between the needs of restoration, modernly understood, and the museographic ones. The ancient is an object of exploration, knowledge and respect, but it also becomes a matter of design, involved in the compositional processes with the modern materials that De Felice puts alongside with frankness, in order to build a new space, on a human scale, at the same time revealing the lived stratifications and the exhibited works. The architecture resulting from this attitude is such that it cannot separate the restoration from the project of the new building, the consolidation action from that of revealing the historicity of the parts, the organization of spaces and paths from ostensive actions, that involve the entire spatiality up to the minute design of the showcases. Confirming a way of working typical of the museography of the second half of the twentieth century, the shape of the space revolves around the needs of exhibiting, where the exhibition plays a role that is not neutral but interpretative, assuming a generative function and structuring the meaning of the entire project despite its fragility.

4.4 historical

Following the approval of the reconstruction plan for the unhealthy districts of the city of Salerno, the Superintendency, in the person of Eng Antonino Rusconi, started a series of essays that led to the rediscovery of the complex, the first news of which was given at the IV Congress of the History of Architecture in June 1939 in Milan by Armando Schiavo. The place had been completely transformed and incorporated by a series of factories destined for different uses. On the initiative of Prof. Venturino Panebianco, Prof. De Felice was commissioned in 1956, thanks to funding from both the Cassa per il Mezzogiorno and the Provincial Administration.

4.5 general assessment

The exceptional quality of the restoration intervention led in 1966 to the attribution to the architect of the InArch National Award "For the Conservation and Enhancement of the National Architectural Heritage", as "Designer and Works Director of the Provincial Museum of Salerno in the Abbey of San Benedetto". The importance of this work, which testifies to Ezio De Felice's contribution to the research and design experimentation conducted in those years on a national and international level, is also testified by the attention paid by the most authoritative protagonists of the scientific and cultural debate.

5. Documentation

5.1 principal references

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Enrico De Marinis, tutor Pasquale Belfiore, "L'opera di Ezio Bruno De Felice", final degree thesis in History of Architecture dell'Architettura, Facoltà di Architettura di Napoli, a.a.1991-92

Luigi Longobardo, tutor Benedetto Gravagnuolo, "Teorie e pratiche della conservazione museale nell'Italia del secondo dopoguerra; un caso campano: Ezio Bruno de Felice", PhD thesis in History of Architecture, Università degli Studi di Napoli, XXIII ciclo

Archives

Archivio della Fondazione Culturale Ezio De Felice

5.2 visual material attached

- 01 Ground floor view 1964
- 02 Reconstructed building from the courtyard 1964
03. Quadriporticus from the upper level 1964
04. Display cases on the upper level 1964
05. Internal staircase 1964
06. Walkway that allows access to the loggia seen from below
07. Entrance main portal 1964
08. Sculpture garden 1964
09. Apollo's Room 1964
10. Cross section of San Benedetto Church and Museum 1964
11. Cross section of the quadriporticus, drawing by the author 1964
12. Detail of steel trestles, drawing by the author
13. Display cases among the steel trestles, drawing by the author
14. View of the ground floor
15. Ground floor plan, drawing by the author
16. Upper level plan, drawing by the author

5.3 rapporteur/date

Gioconda Cafiero, Diarc

6. Fiche report examination by ISC/R







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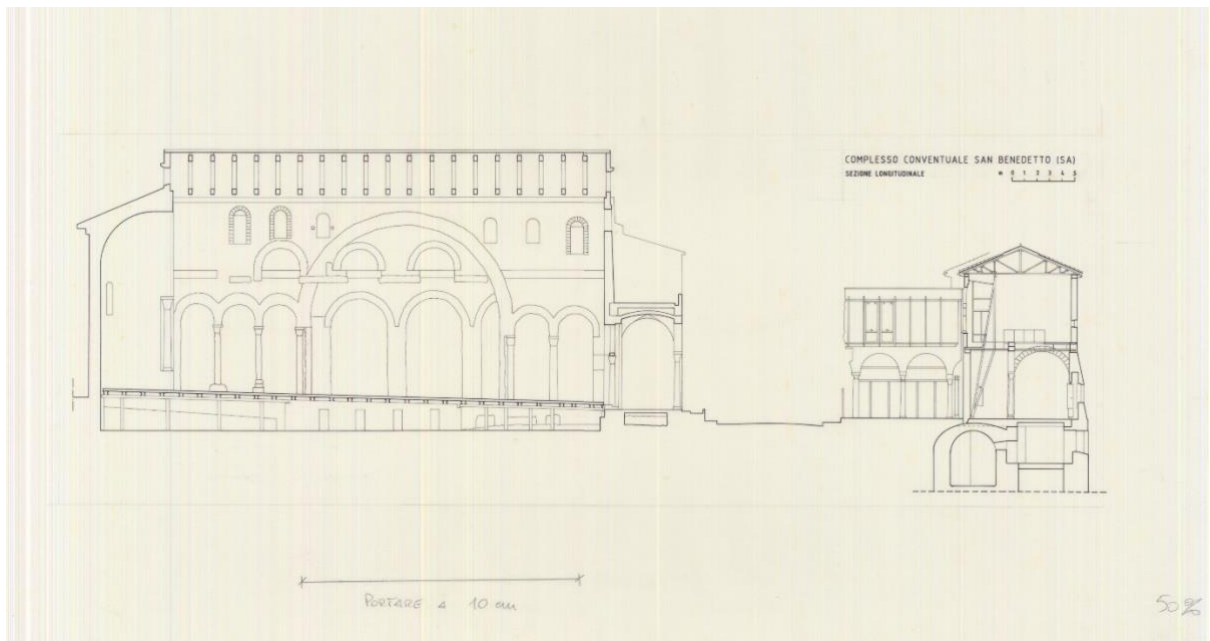




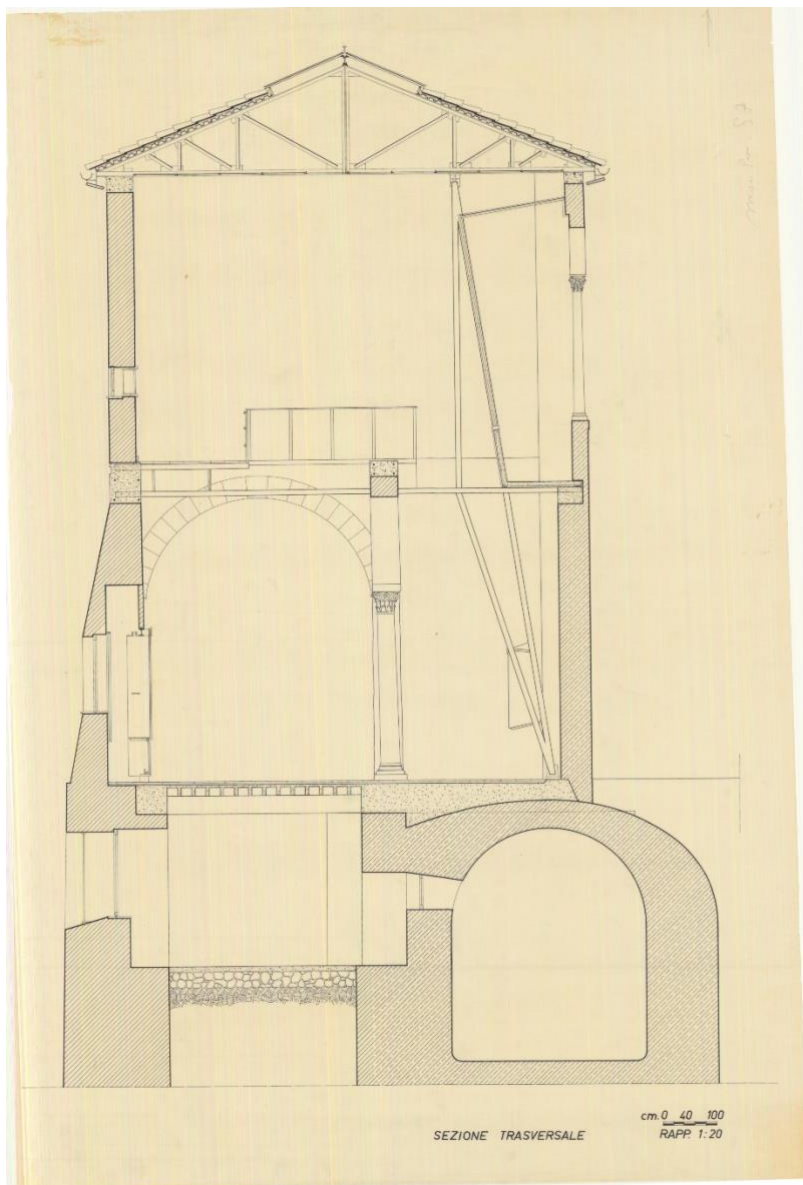




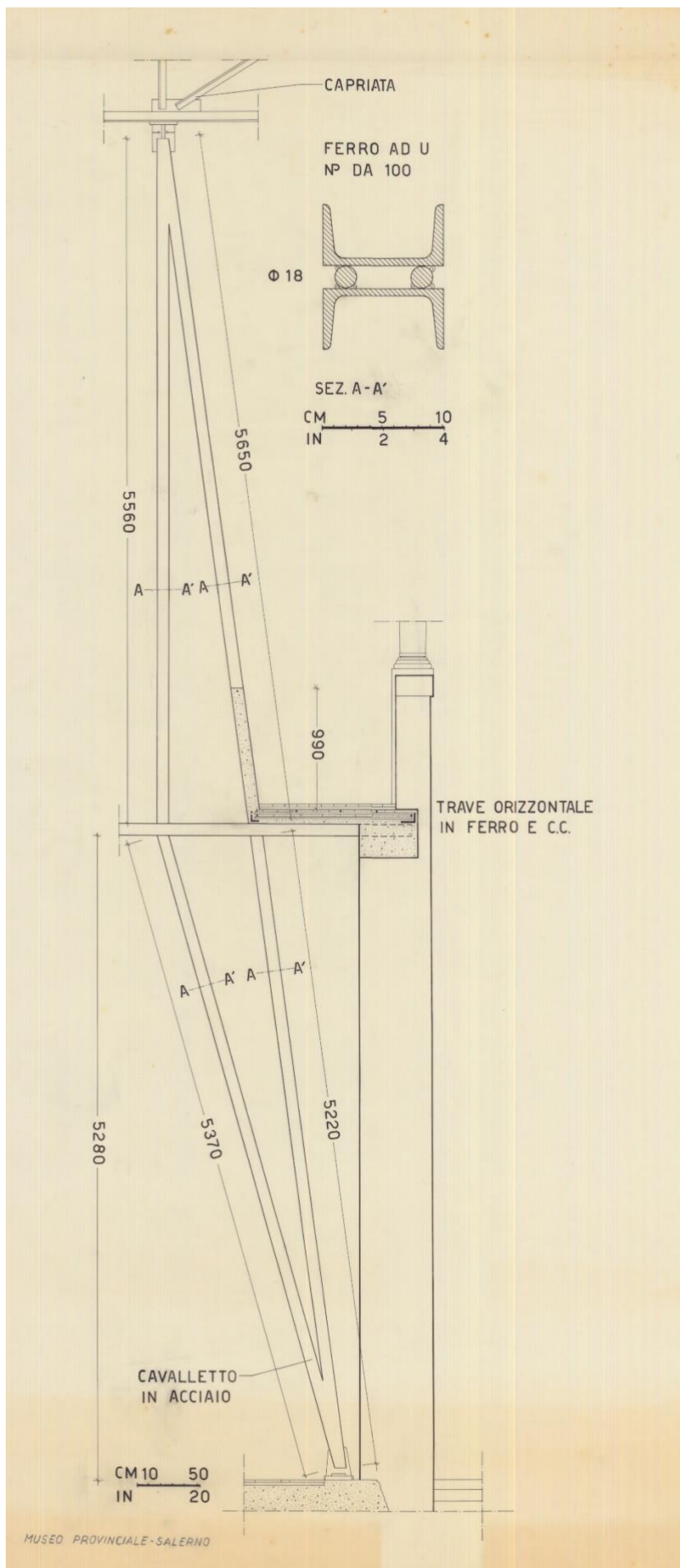




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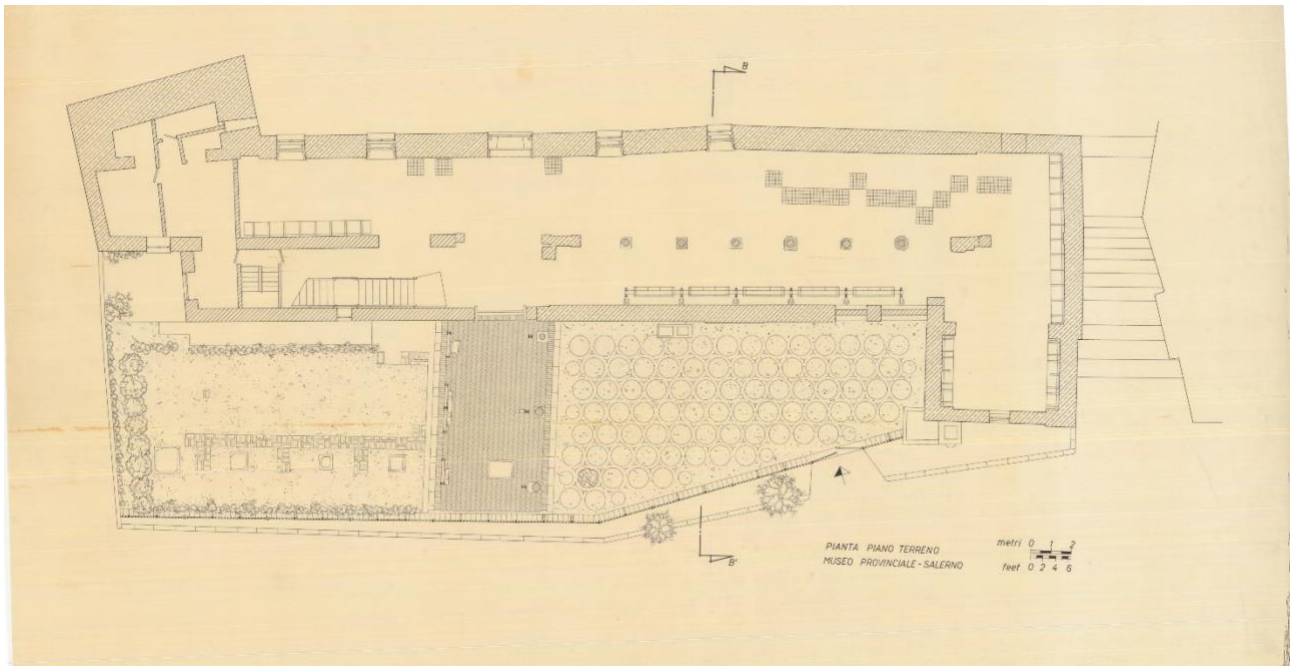


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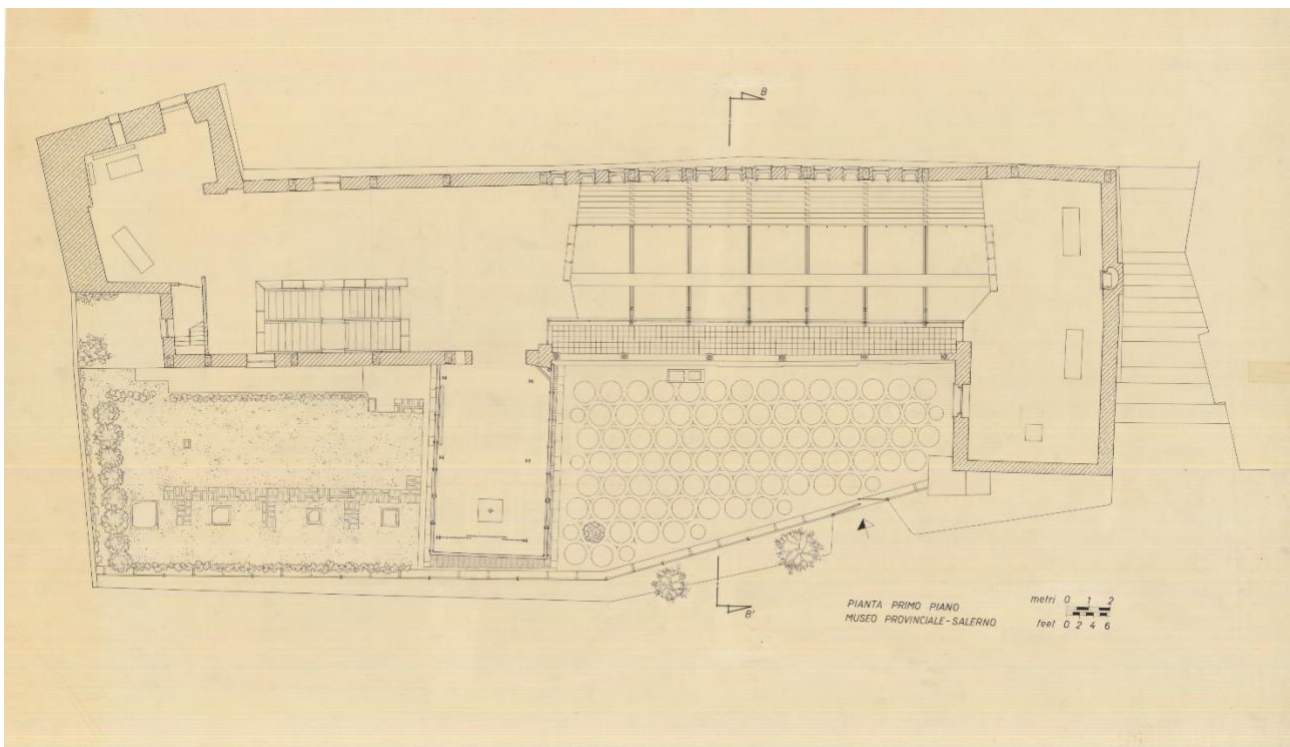








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