Transport of Spin Magnetic Multipole Moments Carried by Bloch Quasiparticles

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Magnetic ordering beyond the standard dipolar order has attracted significant attention in recent years, but it remains an open question how to effectively manipulate such nontrivial order parameters using external perturbations such as electric currents or fields. In particular, it is desirable to have a conceptual tool similar to nonequilibrium spin currents in spintronics to describe the creation and transport of multipole moments. In this context, we present a theory for Cartesian spin magnetic multipole moments of Bloch quasiparticles and their transport based on a general gauge-invariant formula obtained using the wave packet approach. As a concrete example, we point out that the low-energy Hamiltonian of phosphorene subject to a perpendicular electric field has a valley structure that hosts magnetic octupole moments. The magnetic octupole moments can be exhibited by an in-plane electric current and lead to accumulation of staggered spin densities at the corners of a rectangular sample. Our Letter paves the way for systematically seeking and utilizing quasiparticles with higher-order magnetic multipole moments in crystal materials towards the emergence of multipoletronics.

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Introduction.—Antiferromagnets, whose order parameters can be generally described by higher-order electromagnetic multipole moments [1–5], have recently received significant interest in several condensed matter communities [6-31]. For certain collinear or noncollinear antiferromagnets whose magnetic order transforms similarly as the magnetic dipole, it has been established in recent years that they can be measured using experimental setups designed for phenomena in ferromagnets, e.g., the anomalous Hall effect, anomalous Nernst effect, magneto-optical Kerr effect, etc., and be manipulated using uniform magnetic fields coupled through the symmetry-allowed weak net magnetization [32-47]. However, it is imperative now to go beyond this paradigm to fully exploit the potential of antiferromagnets from the perspective of their unique multipolar degrees of freedom, especially considering the establishment of new experimental techniques that can potentially access nondipolar magnetic order parameters directly, such as nitrogen-vacancy imaging [48–50], nonlinear transport [51], etc.

On the other hand, the rapid development of spintronics in the past decades has suggested that quasiparticle currents carrying the appropriate quantum number (spin), even if it is not exactly conserved, can be highly useful both as a conceptual tool and as a practical means for designing experiments and devices [52–59]. This is because arguments based on the spin current language still have the correct symmetry that allows the corresponding effects to occur [60,61]. It is therefore meaningful to discuss transport of nonconserved quantities [62,63] with the purpose of motivating experimental and theoretical searches of new measurable effects. However, an immediate difficulty arises when one tries to generalize quasiparticle spin currents to that of multipole moments. That is, multipole moments being local (both in real and momentum spaces) objects are not as well defined as spin for Bloch electrons due to the appearance of position operator in their definition.

For several low-order electric and magnetic multipole moments of extended equilibrium systems, theories have been developed in recent years to address the apparent origin and gauge dependences [17–20,64–70]. In particular, for multipole moments that do not have an inherent gauge dependence (such as electric polarization), a thermodynamic approach can be used to obtain their gaugeinvariant forms [17–20,68,70]. Such a procedure can also be applied to higher-order spin magnetic multipole moments [71]. However, since it only gives the multipole moments of an extended system in equilibrium, the thermodynamic approach does not address the issue of defining local objects for individual quasiparticles.

Having well-defined multipole moments attached to individual quasiparticles is useful in developing semiclassical pictures of nonequilibrium multipole phenomena that involve boundaries or interfaces. This is in parallel to fully quantum mechanical response theories that rely on physical observables directly determined experimentally (e.g., local spin densities rather than spin currents in spin-Hall-related phenomena [60,61,72–75]) and has its own advantages. For example, in the context of valleytronics [76], one can look for new materials that host well-defined multipole moments at different valleys, similar to the orbital magnetic moments in monolayer 2H transition-metal dichalcogenides [77–79],



FIG. 1. Schematic illustration of a wave packet carrying \mathcal{M}_{xy}^{x} and the corresponding corner spin pattern in a macroscopic monolayer phosphorene sample with Rashba spin-orbit coupling.

so that a selective creation of quasiparticles in such valleys and their currents directly leads to the corresponding multipolar observables.

In this Letter we provide a framework for obtaining arbitrary-order Cartesian spin magnetic multipole moments of Bloch quasiparticles, which is analogous to the wavepacket understanding of spin magnetic dipole moment of Dirac electrons [80,81]. Based on it we introduce a semiclassical Boltzmann theory for the transport of spin magnetic multipole moments and apply it to a prototypical example of monolayer phosphorene. As schematically illustrated in Fig. 1, Bloch wave packets carrying spin magnetic octupole moment \mathcal{M}_{xy}^x (defined below) can be excited by an in-plane electric current, which further lead to accumulation of spins with staggered signs at the four corners of a rectangular sample.

Spin magnetic multipole moments of Bloch wave packets.— 2^{l} th order Cartesian spin magnetic multipole moments of a continuous spatial distribution of spin density are defined classically through Taylor expansion of the Zeeman energy as

$$\mathcal{M}_{i_{1},i_{2},\ldots,i_{l-1}}^{i_{l}} \equiv -\frac{g\mu_{B}}{\hbar} \int d^{3}\mathbf{r} s^{i_{l}}(\mathbf{r}) r_{i_{1}}r_{i_{2}}\ldots r_{i_{l-1}}, \quad (1)$$

where $g \approx 2$ is the Landé *g* factor, μ_B is the Bohr magneton, and $i_{1,2,...l}$ label Cartesian axes. For simplicity in this Letter we ignore the overall factor $-g\mu_B/\hbar$. Promoting the spin density to an expectation value of the spin density operator $\hat{\mathbf{s}}\delta(\hat{\mathbf{r}} - \mathbf{r})$ then converts Eq. (1) to an expectation value of the multipole moment operator

$$\hat{\mathcal{M}}_{i_1,i_2,\ldots,i_{l-1}}^{i_l} \equiv \hat{s}^{i_l} \hat{r}_{i_1} \hat{r}_{i_2} \dots \hat{r}_{i_{l-1}}.$$
(2)

Our first task is to examine its expectation value in a Bloch wave packet state. A wave packet of a nondegenerate Bloch band labeled by *n* at momentum \mathbf{k}_c is defined as $|W\rangle = \int_{BZ} d^3 \mathbf{k} w_{\mathbf{k}} |n\mathbf{k}\rangle$, where $w_{\mathbf{k}}$ is a scalar function localized at $\mathbf{k} = \mathbf{k}_c$. The case of degenerate bands which requires the consideration of non-Abelian gauge transformation [82,83] will be discussed in a future work, but our approach applies to the situation that such degeneracies can be lifted by infinitesimal external perturbations. The naive expectation value

$$(\mathcal{M}^{g})_{i_{1}i_{2}...i_{l-1}}^{i_{l}} \equiv \langle W | \hat{\mathcal{M}}_{i_{1},i_{2},...,i_{l-1}}^{i_{l}} | W \rangle$$
(3)

is, however, clearly dependent on the choice of origin, which is expected since it is the case for classical multipole moments Eq. (1) as well [84]. Nonetheless, the localized nature of a wave packet makes it sensible to define multipole moments by using the center-of-mass position \mathbf{r}_c as the origin [17,18,66–68,80,81]. For the low-order ($l \leq 3$) multipole moments considered in these works the resulting formulas are also gauge invariant, making it meaningful to discuss the transport of such observables by the center-of-mass motion of the wave packets. However, at higher orders (l > 3) simply replacing \mathbf{r} by $\mathbf{r} - \mathbf{r}_c$ does not in general lead to a gauge-invariant expression, nor is the result independent of the wave packet shape [85].

Instead, we introduce the following formula for a general 2^{l} spin magnetic multipole moment of a Bloch quasiparticle:

$$\mathcal{M}_{j_1 j_2 \dots j_{l-1}}^{j_l} \equiv \mathcal{N}^{-1} \operatorname{Re} \sum_{\{j\}_{l=1}^u} \langle u_{n\mathbf{k}} | s_{j_l} \prod_{j \in \{j\}_{l=1}^u} (i\partial_{k_j} - \mathcal{A}_j) | u_{n\mathbf{k}} \rangle |_{\mathbf{k} = \mathbf{k}_c}, \quad (4)$$

where $|u_{nk}\rangle$ is the periodic part of the Bloch state $|nk\rangle$; the Berry connection $\mathcal{A}_j \equiv \langle u_{nk} | i\partial_{k_j} | u_{nk} \rangle$; the summation is over all unique permutations of l-1 elements $\{j_1, ..., j_{l-1}\}$, denoted by $\{j\}_{l-1}^u$. The normalization factor $\mathcal{N} = (l-1)!/(N_x!N_y!N_z!)$, where N_j is the number of times that the Cartesian index j appears in the set $\{j_1, ..., j_{l-1}\}$.

Equation (4) is both gauge invariant and independent of the wave-packet shape w_k . Details of its derivation are relegated to Sec. I of [85]. The central idea is to use the following identity:

$$(i\partial_x - A - i\partial_x \ln|g| + \partial_x \arg g)^n (gf) = g(i\partial_x - A)^n f, \qquad (5)$$

where n > 0 is an arbitrary integer, A, g, f are arbitrary functions of the variable x, with g additionally required to have nonvanishing norm and smooth argument across potential branch cuts. Equation (5) allows one to eliminate terms resulting from smooth transformations of $|W\rangle$ that maintain the center-of-mass crystal momentum \mathbf{k}_c . Alternatively, one can obtain Eq. (4) from a heuristic approach [85] by replacing $\hat{\mathbf{r}}$ by $\hat{\mathbf{r}} - \hat{\mathbf{r}}_c$ in Eq. (3) with $\hat{\mathbf{r}}_c$ the requantized center-of-mass position [81,87].

Equation (4) reproduces the wave-packet contributions in the previous results of spin quadrupole or toroidal moments [85]. As new formulas resulting from Eq. (4) we give below those for the spin octupole (l = 3) and hexadecapole (l = 4) [30] moments:

$$\mathcal{M}_{ab}^{c} = -\langle s_{c}\partial_{a}\partial_{b}\rangle|_{\mathcal{A}=0},$$

$$\mathcal{M}_{abc}^{d} = -\frac{1}{6}\langle is_{d}\partial_{a}\partial_{b}\partial_{c}\rangle|_{\mathcal{A}=0} + \frac{1}{6}\partial_{a}\partial_{b}\mathcal{A}_{c}\langle s_{d}\rangle|_{\mathcal{A}=0}$$

$$+\frac{1}{6}[\partial_{a}\mathcal{A}_{b}\langle s_{d}\partial_{c}\rangle + \partial_{b}\mathcal{A}_{c}\langle s_{d}\partial_{a}\rangle + \partial_{a}\mathcal{A}_{c}\langle s_{d}\partial_{b}\rangle]|_{\mathcal{A}=0}$$

$$+ (a, b, c \text{ permutations}), \qquad (6)$$

where $\langle ... \rangle \equiv \text{Re} \langle u_{n\mathbf{k}} | ... | u_{n\mathbf{k}} \rangle$. Note that $\mathcal{A} = 0$ does not necessarily mean that the derivatives of \mathcal{A} also vanish. Equation (6) can be used together with the explicit formulas of the **k** derivatives of $|u_{n\mathbf{k}}\rangle$ given in Sec. II of [85] in model or first-principles calculations.

Semiclassical transport of spin magnetic multipole moments and its physical consequences.—Since the spin magnetic multipole moments Eq. (4) are properties of individual Bloch quasiparticles $|n\mathbf{k}\rangle$, their creation in real space by external perturbations can be formulated as quasiparticle excitations, i.e., intraband contributions to the nonequilibrium density matrix, induced by the perturbations. The intraband contributions are also expected to be dominant in clean systems with a long relaxation time.

Such intraband contributions can be conveniently obtained from semiclassical Boltzmann theory. For example, up to first order in the electric field **E**, the Boltzmann equation with a constant relaxation time τ gives the nonequilibrium distribution function $f^{(1)} = e\tau(\partial f_0/\partial \epsilon_{n\mathbf{k}})\mathbf{v}_{n\mathbf{k}} \cdot \mathbf{E}$, which leads to the nonequilibrium spin magnetic multipole moment density

$$\langle \mathcal{M} \rangle = e \tau \sum_{n} \int \frac{d^{D} \mathbf{k}}{(2\pi)^{D}} \mathcal{M}_{n\mathbf{k}} \frac{\partial f_{0}}{\partial \epsilon_{n\mathbf{k}}} \mathbf{v}_{n\mathbf{k}} \cdot \mathbf{E},$$
 (7)

where $\mathcal{M}_{n\mathbf{k}}$ is given by Eq. (4) and *D* stands for the spatial dimension of the system. One can similarly define a non-equilibrium multipole current density as

$$\langle \mathcal{M} \otimes \mathbf{v} \rangle = \sum_{n} \int \frac{d^{D} \mathbf{k}}{(2\pi)^{D}} \mathcal{M}_{n\mathbf{k}} \mathbf{v}_{n\mathbf{k}} g_{n\mathbf{k}},$$
 (8)

where g is a general solution of the Boltzmann equation that can include higher-order terms in **E**. Note that one can also use the Berry-curvature-corrected semiclassical Boltzmann theory to account for any anomalous transport coefficients [87,97,98], e.g., a Hall effect for the multipole current.

The above nonequilibrium quantities have corresponding macroscopic observables that can be intuitively understood using coarse-grained macroscopic Maxwell equations [84]. For example, uniform $\langle \mathcal{M} \rangle$ of different order corresponds to different boundary spin density distributions, with one example illustrated in Fig. 1 and discussed in detail below. $\partial \langle \mathcal{M} \rangle / \partial \mathbf{E}$ in Eq. (7) is a crossed susceptibility that can be measured if one can prepare quasistatic magnetic fields of nearly constant spatial gradients of the corresponding order. It is also possible to measure the magnetic multipole moment through the characteristic angular distribution of the multipole fields generated by a macroscopic sample.

In contrast, the nonequilibrium multipole current has similar issues as the spin current [62,63,99–102] since multipole moment is not a conserved quantity and the currents are not directly measured experimentally. It is therefore better used as a conceptual tool for understanding nonlocal transport phenomena. For example, one can use symmetry analysis to know if a Hall component of $\langle \mathcal{M} \otimes \mathbf{v} \rangle$ can be created by a given electric field in a nonmagnetic material, which can flow into a neighboring layer of another material with multipolar order and lead to dynamical responses of the order parameter.

Spin octupole moments in phosphorene.—In this section we give an example of the spin octupole moments in phosphorene subject to a perpendicular electric field. Monolayer phosphorene has a puckered honeycomb structure formed by P atoms as depicted in Fig. 2(a). The buckling reduces threefold symmetries in the honeycomb lattice to twofold D_{2h} symmetry and suggests its potential for Cartesian spin octupole moments. The low-energy Hamiltonian of multilayer black phosphorous has been shown to be [90-93,103-105] $h_0(\mathbf{k}) = [(\hbar^2 k_y^2/2m_y) + \Delta]\sigma_x - \hbar v_x k_x \sigma_y$, where $\boldsymbol{\sigma}$ and \mathbf{s} (appearing below) are the Pauli matrix vectors in the pseudospin and real spin basis, respectively, and Δ is a gap of structural origin.

All bands are doubly degenerate in pristine phosphorene due to spatial inversion symmetry. We therefore consider a Rashba-type spin-orbit coupling induced by a perpendicular electric field. The Rashba term in the continuum model is found to be [85]

$$h_R(\mathbf{k}) = \Lambda_0^R \sigma_y s_y + \Lambda_1^R k_y \sigma_x s_x - \Lambda_2^R k_x \sigma_x s_y, \qquad (9)$$

where $\Lambda_{0,1,2}^R$ are constants depending on the lattice parameters as well as the Rashba spin-dependent hopping in the tight-binding model. h_R is consistent with previous DFT results [94,106]. Ignoring the less important Λ_2^R [85] allows us to diagonalize $h = h_0 + h_R$ analytically and to find two



FIG. 2. (a) Structure of monolayer phosphorene. (b) Contour plot of the eigenenergy (in units of μeV) for the lower conduction band of monolayer phosphorene minus Δ .

extrema of the bands at $\pm \mathbf{K}_v = \pm \Lambda_0^R / (\hbar v_x) \hat{x} \approx \pm 2 \times 10^{-4} \text{ Å}^{-1} \hat{x}$ (estimated based on the DFT results for a 2.6 V/Å electric field in [94]). This is consistent with Fig. 2 which shows a contour plot of the lower conduction band with Λ_2^R included.

We next focus on the center of each valley and consider the octupole component \mathcal{M}_{xy}^k since such a component corresponds to a nontrivial staggered spin accumulation pattern at the corners of a rectangular sample. Equation (6) leads to [85]

$$\mathcal{M}_{ab}^{c} = \operatorname{Re} \sum_{m \neq n} \frac{(s_{c})_{nn} (\partial_{a} H_{\mathbf{k}})_{nm} (\partial_{b} H_{\mathbf{k}})_{mn}}{(\epsilon_{n\mathbf{k}} - \epsilon_{m\mathbf{k}})^{2}} - \operatorname{Re} \sum_{m \neq n} \frac{(s_{c})_{nm} (\partial_{a} \partial_{b} H_{\mathbf{k}})_{mn}}{\epsilon_{n\mathbf{k}} - \epsilon_{m\mathbf{k}}} - \operatorname{Re} \sum_{l \neq n, m \neq n} \left\{ \frac{(s_{c})_{nm} (\partial_{b} H_{\mathbf{k}})_{ln} (\partial_{a} H_{\mathbf{k}})_{ml}}{(\epsilon_{n\mathbf{k}} - \epsilon_{l\mathbf{k}}) (\epsilon_{n\mathbf{k}} - \epsilon_{m\mathbf{k}})} + (a \Leftrightarrow b) \right\} + \operatorname{Re} \sum_{m \neq n} \left\{ \frac{(s_{c})_{nm} (\partial_{b} H_{\mathbf{k}})_{mn} (\partial_{a} H_{\mathbf{k}})_{mn}}{(\epsilon_{n\mathbf{k}} - \epsilon_{m\mathbf{k}})^{2}} + (a \Leftrightarrow b) \right\}.$$
(10)

Still ignoring Λ_2^R and considering the lower conduction band only, we found [85] that at the valley centers only $\mathcal{M}_{xy}^x \neq 0$, which in the limit of $\Lambda_0^R \ll \Delta$ becomes

$$\mathcal{M}_{xy}^{x}(\mathbf{K}_{v}) \approx -\frac{\hbar^{2} v_{x} \Lambda_{1}^{R} \Delta}{4(\Lambda_{0}^{R})^{3}} \approx -1.66 \times 10^{6} \text{ } \text{\AA}^{2} \cdot \frac{\hbar}{2}.$$
 (11)

Such a large result originates from the tiny splitting between the two conduction bands at the valley center, $\delta \epsilon(\mathbf{K}_v) \approx 2(\Lambda_0^R)^2/\Delta$. In practice this splitting must be greater than $\hbar/\tau_{\rm qp}$, where $\tau_{\rm qp}$ is the finite lifetime of Bloch quasiparticles, for Eq. (11) to be relevant. Figure 3(a) plots \mathcal{M}_{xy}^x for the lower conduction band near the Brillouin zone center with Λ_2^R included, which gives $\mathcal{M}_{xy}^x(\mathbf{K}_v) = -1.54 \times 10^6 \text{ Å}^2 \cdot (\hbar/2)$, in good agreement with Eq. (11).

We next discuss creation of the spin magnetic octupole moment in phosphorene driven by electric fields based on the semiclassical Boltzmann theory presented above. The integrand of Eq. (7) for \mathcal{M}_{xy}^{x} with $E_F - \Delta = 0.1$ eV, $k_BT = 0.01$ eV, and $\mathbf{E} || \hat{x}$ is shown in Fig. 3(b). The contribution due to each conduction band can be seen to have a nonzero Fermi surface integral, although the two bands have opposite contributions that largely cancel each other. Taking $\hbar/\tau = 0.1$ eV, the result of Eq. (7) per electric field in the units of V/Å is -1.65×10^{-2} ($\hbar/2$) (assuming the same 2.6 V/Å perpendicular field).

To understand the implication of this result, we note that a rectangular sample with a uniform \mathcal{M}_{xy}^x density has an approximate spatial dependence $\mathcal{M}_{xy}^x(\mathbf{r}) \approx \mathcal{M}_{xy}^x \Theta[\pm(x - x_c)] \Theta[\pm(y - y_c)]$ near a given corner bounded by $x = x_c$



FIG. 3. (a) \mathcal{M}_{xy}^{x} of the lower conduction band of phosphorene in units of Å² · ($\hbar/2$). The regions where its values become too large due to the vanishing spin-orbit splitting between the two conduction bands are crossed out for better illustration. (b) Integrand of Eq. (7) for \mathcal{M}_{xy}^{x} with $E_{F} - \Delta = 0.1$ eV, $k_{B}T = 0.01$ eV, and $\mathbf{E} \parallel \hat{x}$.

and $y = y_c$, where $\Theta(x)$ is the step function. The local spin at a given corner is therefore obtained as [84] $S_c^x = \int_c d^2 \mathbf{r} \partial_x \partial_y \mathcal{M}_{xy}^x(\mathbf{r}) = \pm \mathcal{M}_{xy}^x$, where the integration is in a small region near the corner where the integrand is significant. The positive (negative) sign is taken when the arguments of the two step functions have the same sign (opposite signs), resulting in the corner spin pattern in Fig. 1.

With this understanding, the above current-induced octupole moment in phosphorene is equivalently described as a corner-spin-electric-field response with the rough size of -1.65×10^{-2} ($\hbar/2$) V⁻¹Å. For comparison, one can calculate the current-induced uniform spin density due to the Rashba spin-orbit coupling. The same set of parameters give a *y*-spin density of -4.8×10^{-4} ($\hbar/2$)Å⁻² per 1 V/Å electric field along *x*. However, the octupole-induced corner spin is orthogonal to the uniform spin density and should therefore be able to be isolated using magnetic imaging techniques that are sensitive to local spin orientations, such as Lorentz TEM. In [85] we further show that the boundary spin density due to current-induced quadrupole moment is also orthogonal to that due to the octupole moment and can therefore be separated out.

Finally, we point out that a current along x and carrying the octupole moment \mathcal{M}_{xy}^x can be created by a nonlinear response to E_x . Such a current does not arise from linear response since it is forbidden by symmetry [85], which can also be seen from Fig. 3(b). In general, if a multipole moment vanishing in equilibrium becomes nonzero through linear response to an electric field, a second-order response to the same electric field can drive a current of that multipole moment.

Discussion.—Our Letter only discussed semiclassical transport based on the intrinsic multipole moments of Bloch quasiparticles. Equilibrium and nonequilibrium macroscopic multipole moments of a finite system in general involve more contributions due to boundary and interband terms [71,107]. The former, similar to the situation of spin-orbit torques, depends on the boundary

condition and is entangled with the bulk contribution due to spin nonconservation. Complementary insights may be obtained by the thermodynamic approach (for the equilibrium case) and by explicitly calculating the spin density responses at the boundary (for the nonequilibrium case) [60,61]. The latter, for well-defined susceptibilities (i.e., not involving multipole currents), can be captured by linear or nonlinear response theories and will be left for a future work.

Our Letter shows that gauge dependence and origin dependence can be separate issues in studying multipole moments of quantum condensed matter systems. On the one hand, classical multipole moments in general depend on origin. On the other hand, explicitly fixing the origin does not necessarily fix the gauge for a quantum multipole moment, since the former only sets a linear-in-**k** phase of the gauge transformation.

Separately, higher-order semiclassical theories based on the wave packet approach in general include quantities that depend on the wave packet shape [108,109]. Such shape dependence must be compensated by other contributions to the final macroscopic observable for a given system, although it can also be potentially exposed by experiments on individually prepared wave packets. In this regard, we expect the shape-independent wave packet spin multipole moment given in this Letter to be most suitable for describing diffusive transport among spatially separated subsystems.

Our gauge-invariant formula can also be applied to electric multipole moments of Bloch wave packets. In particular, we note that "composite" contributions to the wave packet spin multipole moments can arise as products of lower-order spin and electric (without the factor of e) multipole moments of the wave packet. Such terms are not considered here but will turn out to be relevant when comparing the wave packet and thermodynamic approaches to the equilibrium multipole moments [71].

For prototypical materials hosting magnetic multipole moments in nonequilibrium, besides phosphorene, multilayer black phosphorus should also work since it has a similar low-energy Hamiltonian [91]. In three dimensions it will be interesting to look for hexadecapole moments with xyz spatial indices, since they lead to staggered corner spins in a cubic sample. We expect orthorhombic materials with either time reversal or inversion symmetry broken to be promising candidates for observing them.

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