

Symplectic Plücker Transformations

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Abstract: *Plücker transformations of symplectic spaces with dimensions other than three are induced by orthogonality-preserving collineations. For three-dimensional symplectic spaces all Plücker transformations can be obtained - up to orthogonality-preserving collineations - by replacing some but not necessarily all non-isotropic lines by their absolute polar lines.*

1. Introduction

In this paper we discuss bijections of the set \mathcal{L} of lines of a symplectic space, i.e. a (not necessarily finite-dimensional) projective space with orthogonality based upon an absolute symplectic¹ quasipolarity. Following [1], two lines are called related, if they are concurrent and orthogonal, or if they are identical. A bijection of \mathcal{L} that preserves this relation in both directions is called a (symplectic²) Plücker transformation. We shall show that any bijection $\mathcal{L} \rightarrow \mathcal{L}$ taking related lines to related lines is already a Plücker transformation. Moreover, a complete description of all Plücker transformations (cf. the abstract above) will be given.

2. Symplectic spaces

Let $(\mathcal{P}, \mathcal{L})$ be a projective space, $3 \leq \dim(\mathcal{P}, \mathcal{L}) \leq \infty$. Assume that π is a symplectic quasipolarity [11], [12]. Thus π assigns to each point X of \mathcal{P} a

¹Instead of 'symplectic' some authors are using the term 'null'.

²We shall omit the word 'symplectic', since we do not discuss other types of Plücker transformations in this paper. Cf., however, [1], [2], [4], [5], [8,p.80ff], [9], [10] for results on other Plücker transformations.

hyperplane X^π with $X \in X^\pi$; furthermore $Y \in X^\pi$ implies $X \in Y^\pi$ for all $X, Y \in \mathcal{P}$. Cf. also [6] for an axiomatic description of projective spaces endowed with a quasipolarity.

We define a mapping from the lattice of subspaces of $(\mathcal{P}, \mathcal{L})$ into itself by setting

$$\mathcal{J} \mapsto \bigcap \{X^\pi \mid X \in \mathcal{J}\} \text{ for all subspaces } \mathcal{J} \neq \emptyset \text{ and } \emptyset \mapsto \mathcal{P}. \quad (1)$$

This mapping is again written as π and is also called a quasipolarity. If $(\mathcal{P}, \mathcal{L})$ is finite-dimensional, then it is well known that π is an antiautomorphism of the lattice of subspaces of $(\mathcal{P}, \mathcal{L})$. In case of infinite dimension the mapping (1) still has the properties

$$\begin{aligned} (\mathcal{J}_1 \vee \mathcal{J}_2)^\pi &= \mathcal{J}_1^\pi \cap \mathcal{J}_2^\pi, & (\mathcal{J}_1 \cap \mathcal{J}_2)^\pi &\supset \mathcal{J}_1^\pi \vee \mathcal{J}_2^\pi, & \mathcal{J} &\subset \mathcal{J}^{\pi\pi} \\ \mathcal{J}_1 \subset \mathcal{J}_2 &\Rightarrow \mathcal{J}_1^\pi \supset \mathcal{J}_2^\pi \end{aligned}$$

for all subspaces $\mathcal{J}_1, \mathcal{J}_2, \mathcal{J} \subset \mathcal{P}$. Note that in the last formula strict inclusions are not necessarily preserved, if \mathcal{J}_1 and \mathcal{J}_2 both have infinite dimension³. Moreover, it is an easy induction to show for all finite-dimensional subspaces $\mathcal{J} \subset \mathcal{P}$ that $\mathcal{J}^{\pi\pi} = \mathcal{J}$ and that every complement of \mathcal{J}^π has the same finite dimension as \mathcal{J} .

$(\mathcal{P}, \mathcal{L}, \pi)$ is a **symplectic space** with **absolute quasipolarity** π [7, p.384ff], [11]. In terms of an underlying vector space \mathbf{V} of $(\mathcal{P}, \mathcal{L})$ the symplectic quasipolarity π can be described by a non-degenerate alternating bilinear form of $\mathbf{V} \times \mathbf{V}$ into the (necessarily commutative) ground field of \mathbf{V} . If $(\mathcal{P}, \mathcal{L})$ is finite-dimensional, then it is well known that $\dim(\mathcal{P}, \mathcal{L})$ is odd.

We are introducing two binary relations on \mathcal{L} : Given $a, b \in \mathcal{L}$ then define a and b to be **orthogonal** (\perp), if $a \cap b^\pi \neq \emptyset$. The lines a and b are called **related** (\sim), if $a \perp b$ and $a \cap b \neq \emptyset$, or if $a = b$. Given orthogonal lines a, b there exists a point $R \in a \cap b^\pi$. Therefore

$$R^\pi \supset (a \cap b^\pi)^\pi \supset a^\pi \vee b^{\pi\pi} = a^\pi \vee b.$$

The line b has a point in common with a^π , since R^π is a hyperplane and a^π is a co-line. Consequently, \perp and \sim are symmetric relations.

Each line $a \in \mathcal{L}$ either is contained in a^π or is a complement of a^π , since $a \cap a^\pi$ being a single point would imply that $X^\pi = a \vee a^\pi$ for all points $X \in a \setminus a^\pi$, in contradiction to $\pi|_{\mathcal{P}}$ being injective. A line $a \in \mathcal{L}$ is **isotropic** (self-orthogonal) if, and only if, a is **totally isotropic**, i.e., $a \subset a^\pi$. We shall write \mathcal{I} for the set of all isotropic lines.

If Q is a point, then $\mathcal{L}[Q]$ stands for the star of lines with centre Q and

³There are, e.g., hyperplanes $\mathcal{H} \subset \mathcal{P}$ with $\mathcal{H} \neq X^\pi$ for all $X \in \mathcal{P}$. For all such hyperplanes $\mathcal{H}^\pi = \mathcal{P}^\pi = \emptyset$, although $\mathcal{H} \neq \mathcal{P}$.

$\mathcal{I}[Q] := \mathcal{L}[Q] \cap \mathcal{I}$ for the set of all isotropic lines through Q . In the following Lemma 1 we state two simple properties of isotropic lines that are well known in case of finite dimension [3,p.181ff], [7,p.384ff] but hold as well for infinite dimension:

Lemma 1. *If $Q \in \mathcal{P}$, then all isotropic lines through Q are given by*

$$\mathcal{I}[Q] = \{x \in \mathcal{L} \mid Q \in x \subset Q^\pi\}.$$

Let $a \in \mathcal{L} \setminus \mathcal{I}$ be non-isotropic. The set of isotropic lines intersecting the line a equals the set of all lines intersecting both a and a^π .

Proof. Let a line x with $Q \in x \subset Q^\pi$ be given. This implies $Q^\pi \supset x^\pi$ so that x and x^π are in the same hyperplane Q^π . Since x^π is a co-line, x and x^π cannot be skew, i.e. $x \in \mathcal{I}[Q]$. On the other hand, from $x \in \mathcal{I}[Q]$ follows immediately that $x \subset x^\pi \subset Q^\pi$.

Next let $a \in \mathcal{L} \setminus \mathcal{I}$. If $b \in \mathcal{I}$ intersects a at a point Q , say, then $Q \in b \subset b^\pi$ implies $b^{\pi\pi} = b \subset Q^\pi$, whereas $Q \in a$ tells us $a^\pi \subset Q^\pi$. Thus, as before, b and a^π are not skew. Conversely, given points $Q \in a$ and $R \in a^\pi$ then $R \in a^\pi \subset Q^\pi$ and $Q \in a \subset R^\pi$, whence $Q \vee R \subset Q^\pi \cap R^\pi = (Q \vee R)^\pi$. ■

We apply this result to show

Lemma 2. *Distinct lines $a, b \in \mathcal{L}$ with $a \cap b \neq \emptyset$ are related if, and only if, $a \in \mathcal{I}$ or $b \in \mathcal{I}$.*

Proof. If one of the given lines is isotropic, then $a \sim b$. Conversely, if $a \sim b$ and $a \notin \mathcal{I}$, say, then $b \in \mathcal{I}$ by Lemma 1. ■

As an immediate consequence we obtain

Lemma 3. *Let \mathcal{M} be a set of mutually related lines. Then at most one line of \mathcal{M} is non-isotropic.*

Given lines $a, b \in \mathcal{L}$ then there is always a finite sequence

$$a \sim a_1 \sim \dots \sim a_n \sim b:$$

This is trivial when $a = b$. If $a \cap b =: Q$ is a point, then there exists a line $a_1 \in \mathcal{I}[Q]$ so that $a \sim a_1 \sim b$ by Lemma 2. If a and b are skew then there exists a common transversal line of a and b , say c , whence repeating the previous construction for a, c and then for c, b gives the required sequence. Thus (\mathcal{L}, \sim)

is a **Plücker space**⁴ [1,p.199]. A (symplectic) **Plücker transformation** is a bijective mapping $\varphi: \mathcal{L} \rightarrow \mathcal{L}$ preserving the relation \sim in both directions. We say that φ is **induced** by a mapping $\kappa: \mathcal{P} \rightarrow \mathcal{P}$, if

$$(A \vee B)^\varphi = A^\kappa \vee B^\kappa \text{ for all } A, B \in \mathcal{P} \text{ with } A \neq B.$$

The group $\text{P}\Gamma\text{Sp}(\mathcal{P}, \pi)$ consists of all collineations $\mathcal{P} \rightarrow \mathcal{P}$ commuting with π [7,p.388ff], [8,p.19]. Obviously, each $\kappa \in \text{P}\Gamma\text{Sp}(\mathcal{P}, \pi)$ is inducing a Plücker transformation.

If $\dim(\mathcal{P}, \mathcal{L}) = 3$, then for each duality τ with $\mathcal{I}^\tau = \mathcal{I}$ the restriction $\tau|_{\mathcal{L}}: \mathcal{L} \rightarrow \mathcal{L}$ is a Plücker transformation. Moreover, in the three-dimensional case there are always Plücker transformations not arising from collineations or dualities: Let \mathcal{L}_1 be any subset of $\mathcal{L} \setminus \mathcal{I}$ such that $\mathcal{L}_1^\pi = \mathcal{L}_1$. Then define

$$\delta: \mathcal{L} \rightarrow \mathcal{L}, \begin{cases} x \mapsto x & \text{if } x \in \mathcal{L} \setminus \mathcal{L}_1, \\ x \mapsto x^\pi & \text{if } x \in \mathcal{L}_1. \end{cases} \quad (2)$$

Such a bijection δ will be called **partial π -transformation** (with respect to \mathcal{L}_1); it is a Plücker transformation of (\mathcal{L}, \sim) , since

$$a \sim b \iff a \sim b^\pi \iff a^\pi \sim b \iff a^\pi \sim b^\pi \text{ for all } a, b \in \mathcal{L}, a \neq b.$$

The identity on \mathcal{L} and the restriction of π to \mathcal{L} are partial π -transformations, as follows from setting $\mathcal{L}_1 := \emptyset$ and $\mathcal{L}_1 := \mathcal{L} \setminus \mathcal{I}$, respectively. For every other choice of \mathcal{L}_1 (e.g., $\mathcal{L}_1 := \{a, a^\pi\}$) it is easily seen that there exist two non-isotropic concurrent lines $x \in \mathcal{L} \setminus \mathcal{L}_1$, $y \in \mathcal{L}_1$. Then $x^\delta = x$ and $y^\delta = y^\pi$ are skew lines. Such a Plücker transformation cannot arise from a collineation or duality.

3. The three-dimensional case

Theorem 1. *Let $(\mathcal{P}, \mathcal{L}, \pi)$ be a 3-dimensional symplectic space and let $\beta: \mathcal{L} \rightarrow \mathcal{L}$ be a bijection such that*

$$a \sim b \text{ implies } a^\beta \sim b^\beta \text{ for all } a, b \in \mathcal{L}.$$

Then there exists a partial π -transformation $\delta: \mathcal{L} \rightarrow \mathcal{L}$ such that $\delta\beta$ is induced by a collineation $\kappa \in \text{P}\Gamma\text{Sp}(\mathcal{P}, \pi)$.

Theorem 1 is a consequence of the subsequent Propositions 1.1 - 1.4 in which β and $(\mathcal{P}, \mathcal{L}, \pi)$ are given as above.

Proposition 1.1. *There exists an injective mapping $\kappa: \mathcal{P} \rightarrow \mathcal{P}$ such that*

⁴Alternatively, \mathcal{L} may be seen as the set of vertices of a graph with two vertices joined by an edge if, and only if, the corresponding lines are distinct and related. We refrain, however, from using terminology of graph theory.

$$\mathcal{I}[Q]^\beta = \mathcal{I}[Q^\kappa] \text{ for all } Q \in \mathcal{P}. \quad (3)$$

Moreover, β is a Plücker transformation, since

$$\mathcal{I}^\beta = \mathcal{I}. \quad (4)$$

Proof. By the invariance of \sim under β , the elements of $\mathcal{I}[Q]^\beta$ are mutually related. We infer from Lemma 3 that $\mathcal{I}[Q]^\beta$ contains at most one non-isotropic line. Thus $\mathcal{I}[Q]^\beta \cap \mathcal{I}$ has at least two distinct elements, whence it is a subset of a pencil of isotropic lines, say $\mathcal{I}[Q']$ with $Q' \in \mathcal{P}$.

We show $\mathcal{I}[Q'] \subset \mathcal{I}[Q]^\beta$: Assume, to the contrary, that there exists a line $x \notin \mathcal{I}[Q]$ with $x^\beta \in \mathcal{I}[Q']$. Recall that at most one line of $\mathcal{I}[Q]^\beta$ is non-isotropic. Therefore there is a point $X' \in x^\beta$ that is not incident with any line of $\mathcal{I}[Q]^\beta$. Thus we can draw a line $b' = b^\beta$ through X' that is not related to any line of $\mathcal{I}[Q]^\beta$. Hence b is not related to any line of $\mathcal{I}[Q]$. By $\dim(\mathcal{P}, \mathcal{L}) = 3$, b and the plane Q^π have a common point lying on some line $c \in \mathcal{I}[Q]$, so that $c \sim b$, a contradiction.

Next $\mathcal{I}[Q]^\beta \subset \mathcal{I}[Q']$ will be established: Suppose there is a line $a \in \mathcal{I}[Q]$ such that $a^\beta \notin \mathcal{I}[Q']$. Then $a^\beta \sim \mathcal{I}[Q']$ forces that a^β is a non-isotropic line either through the point Q' or in the plane Q'^π . Let $d \in \mathcal{L}[Q]$ be non-isotropic, whence $\mathcal{I}[Q]^\beta \cup \{d^\beta\}$ is a set of mutually related lines containing the non-isotropic line a^β . Since $d^\beta \notin \mathcal{I}[Q]^\beta$ and $\mathcal{I}[Q'] \subset \mathcal{I}[Q]^\beta$, the line $d^\beta \neq a^\beta$ also has to be non-isotropic in contradiction to Lemma 3.

To sum up, there is a mapping κ satisfying formula (3). The injectivity of κ follows from the bijectivity of β together with (3).

Finally, we prove (4): $\mathcal{I}^\beta \subset \mathcal{I}$ is a consequence of (3). Conversely, assume that $e \in \mathcal{L} \setminus \mathcal{I}$. Choose a point $R \in e$. Then $\mathcal{I}[R]^\beta \cup \{e^\beta\} = \mathcal{I}[R^\kappa] \cup \{e^\beta\}$ is a set of mutually related lines. Therefore e^β is a non-isotropic line either through R^κ or in $R^{\kappa\pi}$. Lemma 2 and $\mathcal{I}^\beta = \mathcal{I}$ imply that β is a Plücker transformation. ■

Proposition 1.2. *Let $a \in \mathcal{L}$. Then*

$$a^{\beta\pi} = a^{\pi\beta}, \quad (5)$$

$$Q^\kappa \in a^\beta \cup a^{\pi\beta} \text{ for all } Q \in a. \quad (6)$$

If $a \in \mathcal{L} \setminus \mathcal{I}$, then either

$$Q^\kappa \in a^\beta \text{ for all } Q \in a \quad (7)$$

or

$$Q^\kappa \in a^{\pi\beta} \text{ for all } Q \in a. \quad (8)$$

Proof. If $a \in \mathcal{I}$, then $a^\beta \in \mathcal{I}$, whence (5) follows from $a = a^\pi$ and $a^\beta = a^{\beta\pi}$. If $a \in \mathcal{L} \setminus \mathcal{I}$, then, by Lemma 1,

$$\mathcal{C} := \{x \in \mathcal{L} \mid x \neq a, x \sim a\}$$

is a hyperbolic linear congruence of lines with axes a and a^π ; moreover $\mathcal{C} \subset \mathcal{J}$. We infer from β being a Plücker transformation and (4), that $\mathcal{C}^\beta \subset \mathcal{J}$ is also a hyperbolic linear congruence with $a^\beta, a^{\pi\beta}$ being its axes. Obviously, only a^β and $a^{\pi\beta}$ are meeting all lines of \mathcal{C}^β . On the other hand, by Lemma 1, the axes of \mathcal{C}^β are a^β and $a^{\beta\pi}$. This completes the proof of (5).

If $a \in \mathcal{J}$, then (6) holds true, since $Q^\kappa \in a^\beta = a^{\pi\beta}$. If $a \in \mathcal{L} \setminus \mathcal{J}$ and $Q^\kappa \notin a$, then $a^\beta \sim \mathcal{J}[Q]^\beta = \mathcal{J}[Q^\kappa]$, whence $Q^{\kappa\pi} \supset a^\beta$ and therefore $Q^\kappa \in a^{\beta\pi} = a^{\pi\beta}$, as required to establish (6).

Now let $a \in \mathcal{L} \setminus \mathcal{J}$. Assume to the contrary that there exist points $Q_0, Q_1 \in a$ such that $Q_0^\kappa \in a^\beta$ and $Q_1^\kappa \in a^{\pi\beta}$. Then $a \notin \mathcal{J}$ implies $\mathcal{J}[Q_0] \cap \mathcal{J}[Q_1] = \emptyset$ whereas, by Lemma 1 and (3), $Q_0^\kappa \vee Q_1^\kappa \in \mathcal{J}[Q_0]^\beta \cap \mathcal{J}[Q_1]^\beta$. This is a contradiction to β being injective. ■

Proposition 1.3. *Write \mathcal{L}_1 for the set of all lines $a \in \mathcal{L} \setminus \mathcal{J}$ satisfying (8). Then*

$$\delta: \mathcal{L} \rightarrow \mathcal{L}, \begin{cases} x \mapsto x & \text{if } x \in \mathcal{L} \setminus \mathcal{L}_1, \\ x \mapsto x^\pi & \text{if } x \in \mathcal{L}_1, \end{cases} \quad (9)$$

is a partial π -transformation. The Plücker transformation $\delta\beta: \mathcal{L} \rightarrow \mathcal{L}$ takes intersecting lines to intersecting lines.

Proof. In order to show that δ is a well-defined partial π -transformation, we just have to establish that $a \in \mathcal{L}_1$ implies $a^\pi \in \mathcal{L}_1$: Given $Q_0 \in a$ and $Q_1 \in a^\pi$ then $Q_0 \vee Q_1$ and $(Q_0 \vee Q_1)^\beta = Q_0^\kappa \vee Q_1^\kappa$ are isotropic lines. Therefore

$$Q_0^\kappa \vee Q_1^\kappa \neq a^{\beta\pi} = a^{\pi\beta} \notin \mathcal{J}$$

so that $Q_1^\kappa \notin a^{\pi\beta}$. Now, by (8), $a^\pi \in \mathcal{L}_1$.

If distinct lines b and c intersect at a point R , then $b^{\delta\beta} \cap c^{\delta\beta} = R^\kappa$ follows from (7), (8) and (9). ■

Proposition 1.4. *The mapping $\kappa: \mathcal{P} \rightarrow \mathcal{P}$ defined in (3) belongs to $\text{P}\Gamma\text{Sp}(\mathcal{P}, \pi)$. The Plücker transformation $\delta\beta$ is induced by this collineation κ .*

Proof. The bijection $\delta\beta$ is taking intersecting lines to intersecting lines. Every star of lines is mapped under $\delta\beta$ either onto a star of lines or onto a ruled plane [4], [10, Theorem 1]. The latter possibility does not occur, since $\delta\beta$ is induced by κ . Because of $\dim(\mathcal{P}, \mathcal{L})$ being finite, the mapping κ is a collineation [10, Theorem 3]. Finally, $\mathcal{J}^\beta = \mathcal{J}$ implies $\kappa \in \text{P}\Gamma\text{Sp}(\mathcal{P}, \pi)$. ■

4. The higher-dimensional case

Theorem 2. *Let $(\mathcal{P}, \mathcal{L}, \pi)$ be an n -dimensional symplectic space ($5 \leq n \leq \infty$) and let $\beta: \mathcal{L} \rightarrow \mathcal{L}$ be a bijection such that*

$$a \sim b \text{ implies } a^\beta \sim b^\beta \text{ for all } a, b \in \mathcal{L}.$$

Then β is induced by a collineation $\kappa \in \text{PGSp}(\mathcal{P}, \pi)$.

As before, the Theorem will be split into several Propositions subject to the assumptions stated above.

Proposition 2.1. *The bijection β takes intersecting lines to intersecting lines. There exists an injective mapping $\kappa: \mathcal{P} \rightarrow \mathcal{P}$ inducing β . This κ is pre-serving collinearity and non-collinearity of points. Moreover*

$$\mathcal{L}[Q]^\beta = \mathcal{L}[Q^\kappa] \text{ for all } Q \in \mathcal{P}. \quad (10)$$

Proof. Suppose that $a, b \in \mathcal{L}$ meet at a point Q . If $a \sim b$, then a^β and b^β are intersecting. Otherwise, by Lemma 2, $a \notin \mathcal{I}$ and $b \notin \mathcal{I}$. Then $\mathcal{I}[Q] \cup \{a\}$ and $\mathcal{I}[Q] \cup \{b\}$ are, respectively, sets of mutually related lines. Each line of \mathcal{L} is related to at least one line in $\mathcal{I}[Q]$, since Q^π is a hyperplane covered by $\mathcal{I}[Q]$. If $\mathcal{I}[Q]^\beta$ would be a set of coplanar lines, then all lines in \mathcal{L} would meet a fixed plane in contradiction to $n \geq 5$. Thus $\mathcal{I}[Q]^\beta$ is not contained in a plane, whence there exists a point Q' with $\mathcal{I}[Q]^\beta \subset \mathcal{L}[Q']$. Since the elements of $\mathcal{I}[Q]^\beta \cup \{a^\beta\}$ are mutually related, $Q' \in a^\beta$. Repeating this for b yields $Q' \in b^\beta$.

Now the assertions on κ follow from [10, Theorem 1]. ■

Proposition 2.2. *The bijection β is a Plücker transformation, since*

$$\mathcal{I}^\beta = \mathcal{I}. \quad (11)$$

Proof. Given $a \in \mathcal{I}$ then choose a point $Q \in a$. We observe that $a \sim \mathcal{L}[Q]$, whence $a^\beta \sim \mathcal{L}[Q^\kappa]$ by (10). Since $\mathcal{L}[Q^\kappa]$ contains more than one non-isotropic line, $a^\beta \in \mathcal{I}$ follows from Lemma 2.

Given $b \in \mathcal{L} \setminus \mathcal{I}$ then choose a point $R \in b$. Assume to the contrary that $b^\beta \in \mathcal{I}$. Then for each line

$$x \in \mathcal{L}[R] \setminus (\mathcal{I}[R] \cup \{b\})$$

there exists a line $\bar{x} \in \mathcal{I}[R]$ such that b, x, \bar{x} are three distinct lines in one pencil. By the invariance of collinearity and non-collinearity of points under κ , as is stated in Proposition 2.1, $b^\beta, x^\beta, \bar{x}^\beta$ are again three distinct lines in one pencil. However, b^β and \bar{x}^β are isotropic, so that

$$x^\beta \in \mathcal{I}[R^\kappa].$$

Hence $\mathcal{L}[R]^\beta \subset \mathcal{J}[R^k]$ which is impossible by (10).

Now (11) and Lemma 2 show that β is a Plücker transformation. ■

Proposition 2.3. *The mapping $\kappa: \mathcal{P} \rightarrow \mathcal{P}$, described in Proposition 2.1, is a collineation belonging to $\text{P}\Gamma\text{Sp}(\mathcal{P}, \pi)$.*

Proof. Since β is a Plücker transformation of (\mathcal{L}, \sim) , Proposition 2.1 can be applied to β^{-1} . Therefore β and β^{-1} are preserving intersection of lines. By [10, Theorem 2], the mapping κ is a collineation and, by formula (11), $\kappa \in \text{P}\Gamma\text{Sp}(\mathcal{P}, \pi)$. ■

This completes the proof of Theorem 2.

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