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ATHENIAN COIN-ENGRAVERS
IN ITALY.

BY
REGINALD STUART POOLE, LL.D.

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LONDON :

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ATHENIAN COIN-ENGRAVERS IN ITALY.

BY REGINALD STUART POOLE, LL.D.

AMONG the coins of Magna Græcia, dating from the best age of Greek art, there is a group which shows a marked difference from the general qualities of the schools of Italy and Sicily. Instead of the gem-engraver's influence and the sameness of type, however varied in beautiful details, which mark the Western school, we notice the influence of sculpture and the variety of treatment which characterize the school of Greece. The work of the money of Thurium, recolonised by Athens in the age of Perikles, has naturally suggested the source of this special character, nowhere more marked than in this city. Yet, so far as I am aware, no one has yet attempted to link together the various exceptional issues of Italy which bear out the hypothesis of a direct Athenian influence, though the coinage of Terina supplies exactly the evidence that is needed.

It may be objected *à priori* that the school of the West was strong enough to produce great work in two styles; its own, rich and delicate, and that far more vigorous manner which marks the art of Hellas. But if we compare the Syracusan dekadrachms with the finest copies of them in the money of the Locri Opuntii, Pheneus, and Messene, we shall see at once that even in copying with an inferior technical skill, the engravers of Greece Proper

excelled in strength, simplicity, and purity, the originals which they admired and followed. Consequently, we must allow them that higher expression which a practised eye will recognise in all they executed as an unflinching test of authorship, a test strengthened in the present instance by direct and probable links which make up a logical chain not to be disregarded.

The coins of Terina afford us evidence only second in directness to that derived from the neighbouring town of Thurium, though more forcible. First, they have the peculiar art which comes in like an Athenian colony in Magna Græcia; secondly, the theme in which their engravers delight, the figure of Nike, is not a "memory-sketch," like the recumbent Herakles of Croton and Heraclea, suggested by a work of art, but is developed in a free series of variations, and thus indicates a strong school. In the third place, the subject has a remarkable resemblance in some of its forms to the exquisite contemporary balustrade-relief of the Temple of Nike Apteros, at Athens, while the earliest coin of Terina, dating about B.C. 480, presents the goddess in the wingless shape with her name written beside her figure. Of course, there is much to explain in this agreement. We do not know of an older temple of Nike Apteros at Athens than the famous one dating from before circ. B.C. 400. It is a startling hypothesis that an engraver carried away the general form of the reliefs of the balustrade, and reproduced them in another country. Yet a later temple generally preserved an older worship, and we must look on the relief of the temple at Athens as typical of the school rather than as a solitary example, merely because to us it was long so. A new instance is rather a proof of the individual force of a style than of mere copying,

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and no one who had the facility of the great engravers of Terina would have condescended to copy a relief. The conscious or unconscious copying of coins, especially of the same series, is obviously another matter, due to the inevitable influence of the older type or to popular feeling, and is the key to the slow change of style in coin-art.

The coins here engraved (Pls. XI., XII.) do not need a detailed description, the object of this essay being artistic and not numismatic in the special sense, and suggestive, with no dream of finality.

The earliest coin, like all the rest, except where specified, is a didrachm (Pl. XI. No. 1). The date is about B.C. 480, the art the later archaic, much resembling the Æginetan style. The obverse bears a head in profile bound with a simple diadem, resembling the Syracusan coins of the time of Gelon. Around it is the name of the goddess Terina. Her place in mythology is mere matter of speculation. Unhappily, Pindar, in his remaining Odes, commemorates no citizen of Terina, and speculation is useless. On the reverse is a dignified form of Nike, accompanied by her name ΑΝΖΗ; she is clad in a long chiton, and carries an olive-branch, while the whole subject is encircled by a wreath of olive.

The works of the period next following do not present anything bearing on the present subject. It is when we reach the age of finest art that we find two groups of didrachms, the earlier marked by the engraver's initial Φ, the later by a pupil who signs Γ. The works of the earlier master, Φ, are in style somewhat before B.C. 400. The severity of the transitional age is not wholly lost by him, though when he is severe, he is so by choice, not of necessity: and one type of the Terina head, that of Pl. XI. Nos. 4, 5, 6, is strikingly similar in composition to some of the

Syracusan transitional tetradrachms. The heads require no detailed analysis. They are remarkable for beauty, skill, and balance, and the presence of two types; that already noticed and another (Pl. XI. 2, 3), surrounded by an exquisitely drawn wreath of wild olive, affording another proof of the power in variety that marks the engravers of Terina. The reverse presents Nike in changing attitudes of a singular playful grace, alone paralleled by the similar types of the Fountain Nymph of the Thessalian Larissa. We see her resting on an overturned hydria; seated on a base and drawing water with the same vessel from the fountain in the wall; in a chair, throwing and catching two balls on the back of her hand, repeated in a different form at Larissa, and also in two instances seated on a base. In all subjects but that of the game of ball she holds the caduceus. In the first case a little bird rests on her hand (No. 2), in the last but one (No. 5), she has a wreath besides the herald's staff. The composition in all cases is masterly. In the first instance (Pl. XI. 2, XII. 1), Nike has just alighted, and sits with perfect balance, her half-open wings aiding her in a position otherwise difficult to maintain. Her drapery is still drawn back by the wind. The figure is seen beneath the drapery, in the manner of the balustrade in the Temple of Nike Apteros. A stream flows from the overturned hydria, and a flower springs up from the watered earth. The skill of the work as a whole is marvellous. The large curves suggested and returning inwards, the equal proportion of the subject to the space thus naturally filled in, and little subtleties such as the manner in which the shoulder of the right wing forms a kind of nimbus for the head, are truly admirable. With all this care for detail the work is large. Note especially the grand forms of the wings depicted with the usual sagacity

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of the Greeks in the inner side, where the orders of the feathers are longer in appearance than on the outer side. The Nike at the fountain is as masterly in poise. She balances the weight of the hydria held on her right arm by striking the foot of the herald's staff into the ground behind, and resting her right foot against the base on which she sits. The subject is unusual in the background of delicately drawn stone wall, and the swan swimming in the basin beneath the fountain. The third type is the game of ball, another picture of every-day life, yet more playful than the last, leading us from the motives of sterner art to those of the terra-cottas, though treated more severely than the familiar post-Alexandrine works in that material. The remaining forms are similar, but the subjects more dignified.

A smaller coin (Pl. XI. No. 7), signed $\Phi\Lambda\Lambda\Lambda\Sigma$, bearing the types of the head of Terina and Nike seated on a base wreathed with olive, a bird on her hand, seems a little later in date. The type of head is not dissimilar from that surrounded by the wreath (Pl. XI. No. 2, 3), yet has more affinity with the Mænad's head on the coin of Elea or Velia, signed Φ (Pl. XI. No. 13), to be presently noticed as possibly a work of the Terinæan Φ . Is $\Phi\Lambda\Lambda\Lambda\Sigma$ for $\Phi\Lambda\Lambda\Lambda\Sigma\tau\iota\omega\eta\eta$? That name occurs on coins of Elea about two generations later, and it may be suggested very tentatively that if the Φ of Elea is the Terinæan $\Phi\Lambda\Lambda\Lambda\Sigma$, then the later Elean engraver may possibly have been grandson of the Terinæan, according to the Greek fashion of giving a name in alternate generations. The possible identity of Φ at Terina and Elea with $\Phi\Lambda\Lambda\Lambda\Sigma$ at Terina has nothing to do artistically with the descent of $\Phi\Lambda\Lambda\Lambda\Sigma\tau\iota\omega\eta\eta$, who has a purely Italian style, like all his contemporaries of Magna Græcia.

The mention of the coin of Elea, possibly by the engraver of Terina, suggests the comparison of a group of coins signed Φ , of other towns of Lower Italy, and clearly of the same school, if not by the same hand. These are of Heraclea, Thurium, Elea, and Pandosia. A careful study shows points of contact with the money of Terina signed Φ throughout this group, which stands apart from the surrounding work. We must note that the obverse of the coin of Heraclea (Pl. XI. No. 9) is signed Σ , apparently the initial of another artist of the same school. Certainly, the hand is not that of the Terinæan, but the composition of the reverse, signed Φ , while true to the Attic instinct of the age of Pheidias in representing a supreme struggle, is for skill of composition quite comparable to the Terinæan series of the engraver Φ . The subject is too dissimilar for more than a conjecture of similar origin, and the size of the head of Herakles is unlike the better proportion of the coins compared. While the matter is thus in suspense, an additional evidence for identical authorship is seen in the small coin of Heraclea signed Φ (No. 8), which, in the obverse, particularly in the form of the eye, resembles that of the Terina series of Φ , while the exceptional springing lion of Elea (No. 13) is like the same subject of the reverse. The head of Athene of Thurium (No. 10), copied at Neapolis (No. 12), is acknowledged to be of Attic style. It is signed Φ . The similarity to the coin of Terina (No. 2) is very striking. The reverse, a butting bull, is too different a type from the Nike for us to institute a comparison, except in the skill of composition, which is singularly shown in the position of the fish in the exergue, which fits the round of the coin, and is exceptional when a single fish is represented. The little bird beneath the bull again recalls Terina. The signature at Thurium occurs in a long series, in which the helmet of

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Athene is bound with the olive-wreath or adorned with the figure of Scylla, and which includes the well-known splendid tetradrachm, the signature on which is doubtful (Head, "Brit. Mus. Guide," Pl. 25, 17). These coins may be classed together by the style of the head of Athene and the drawing of the bull, particularly in the position of the head and the treatment of the dewlap. One specimen of the olive-wreath group has the letters $\Phi \text{P} \Upsilon$ on the reverse (Pl. XI. 11), recalling the $\Phi \text{P} \Upsilon \Gamma \text{I} \Lambda$ (Phrygillos) of Syracuse, whose work is a little later; but the style of the animal is so different from that of Φ that it may reasonably be conjectured that $\Phi \text{P} \Upsilon$ worked with Φ , and wrote his name more fully for distinction. Some may prefer to identify the two, but the balance is rather in favour of $\Phi \text{I} \Lambda \text{I} \Sigma$ as the longer form of Φ , at least at Terina.

Probably, the splendid three-quarter face of Hera Lakinia, at Pandosia (No. 14), is by the artist of Terina; the reverse is signed Φ , and presents a not less beautiful subject, Pan seated on a rock before a term, his hound crouched at his feet. It is very hard to compare these works with the Terina subjects. Perhaps it would be best to say that both are by engravers of the highest power in design, and specially noteworthy for skill in composition. Yet there is something in the head of Hera, and more in the calm repose of the resting hunter, which recalls the delightful subjects of Terina; the figure, for pose and fulness of detail, may be especially compared with the fountain subject (No. 3).

The coins of Terina signed Γ (Pl. XII.), are in part contemporary with, in part later than, those with Φ . We may venture to think them works of a pupil and in general not equal in force and beauty to those of his master. In the heads of Terina he follows the type which is not sur-

rounded by a wreath (comp. Pl. XII. 1—8, with Pl. XI. 4—6), and the execution is that of a copyist, unmistakably inferior. One of these heads has for reverse the splendid figure of Nike resting on her hydria by the older artist (Pl. XII. 1), showing that at one time the two engravers worked together. Another example is combined with the reverse of Nike on a base in the manner of Φ (comp. Pl. XII. 2 with Pl. XI. 6). But the younger artist shows himself truly great in the signed reverse of the stooping Nike, which startlingly reminds us of the figures of the balustrade at the Temple of the wingless Victory. This is in all respects a most charming composition, though not so skilfully placed in the field as the works of the other artist. Nike is clad in a long chiton and a peplos, passing round her left arm, with which she supports her drapery as she stands in arrested movement, the herald's staff in her hand. In her figure partly seen through the drapery, the fall of her wings, and her whole attitude (Pl. XII. Nos. 3, 9), there is that perfect harmony that suggests a rhythmical series of movements, treated in the style of the balustrade-relief, indicating a strong influence, though not necessarily that of a particular work. In the other subjects, Nike is usually half-draped (Nos. 4—7); her figure is short, and her attitude in some cases too much bent (Nos. 7, 8). Three unsigned coins have been added (Nos. 10—12) partly for comparison (with Pl. XI. No. 7), which are probably the work of a second pupil of the engraver who signs Φ . The head is of a style wholly new to Terina and of a distinctly Sicilian character, as shown by the exaggerated lines of the throat; and the reverse, in one case dignified (Pl. XII. 10), is otherwise weak (Nos. 11, 12).

To sum up, we find in Lower Italy a distinctly

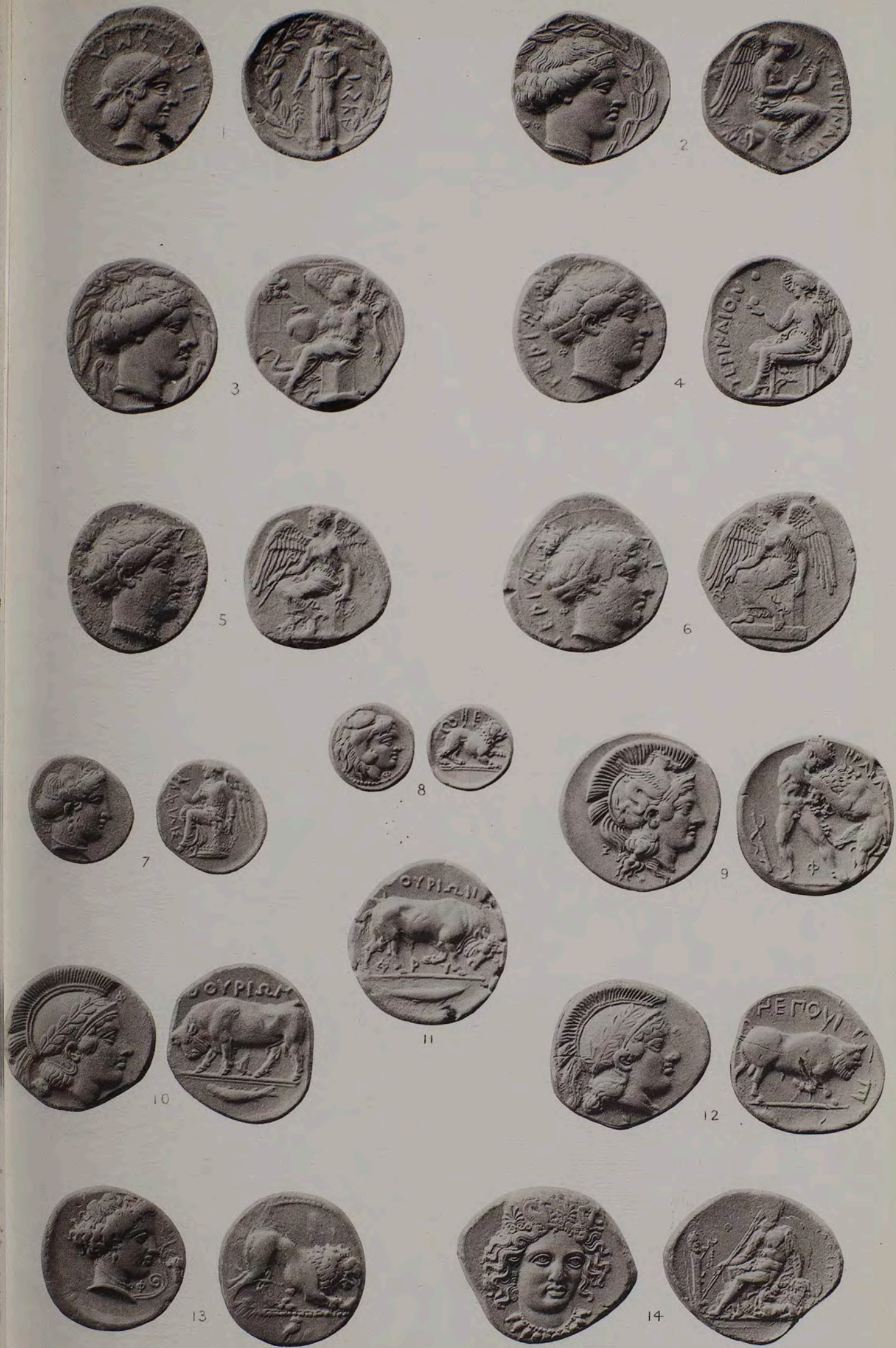
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Athenian school, probably owing its first acclimatisation to Thurium. The greatest engraver or engravers of this school sign Φ , the abbreviation of the fuller form either $\Phi\Lambda\text{I}\Sigma$ or less probably $\Phi\text{P}\text{Y}$. The works with the initial Φ form a series of Thurium, Terina, Elea, Heraclea, and Pandosia. The distinct link with Athens is in the famous balustrade-relief of the Temple of Nike Apteros, worshipped in common at Athens and at Terina.

This is but a small contribution to our knowledge of the local schools of Greek art, but it is of use if it warn us not to disregard special characteristics when they occur in the midst of a local school. In another paper I hope to examine fully the evidence of the money of Thurium, which was apparently the earliest art-colony of Athens in the West.

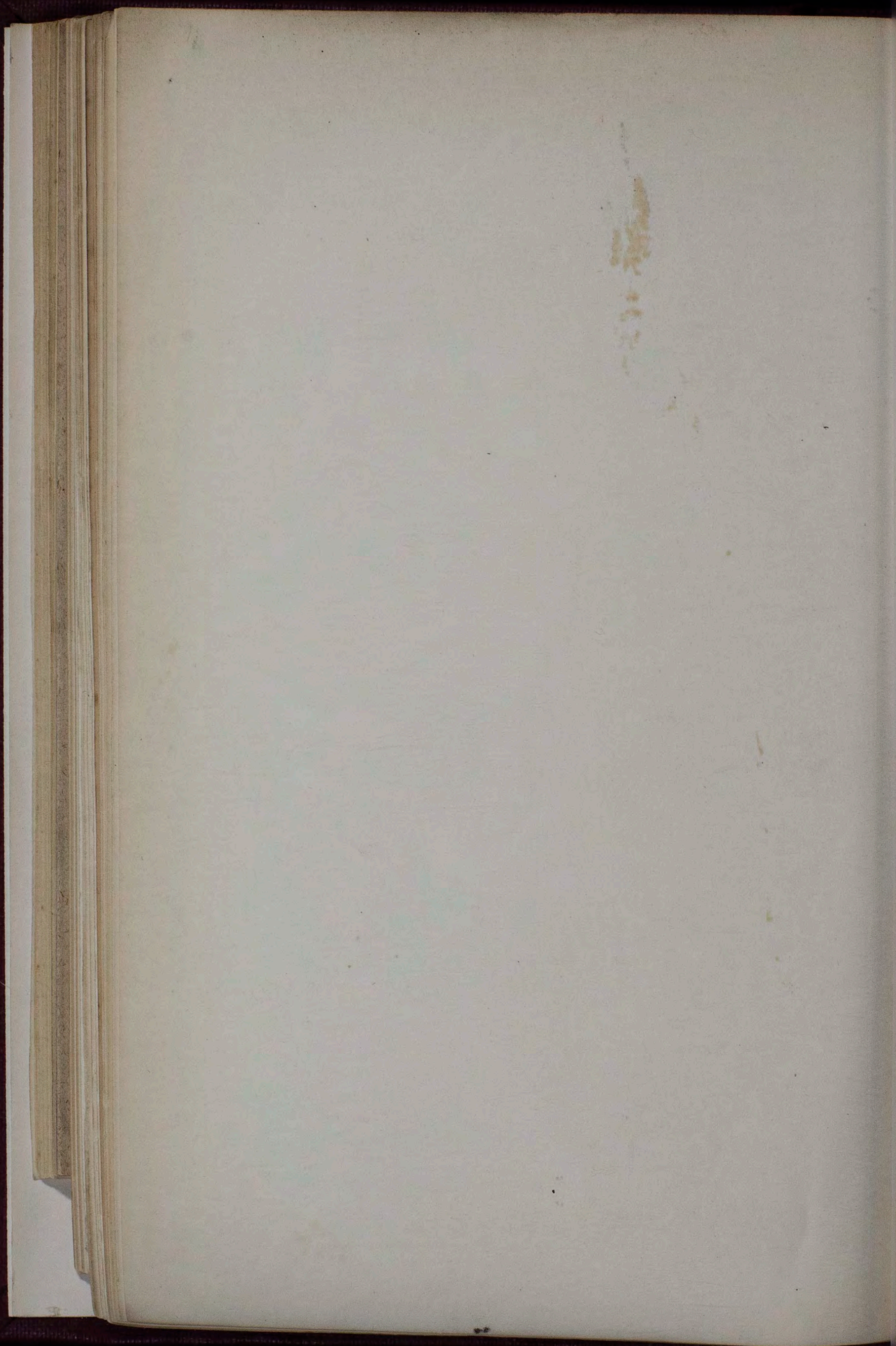


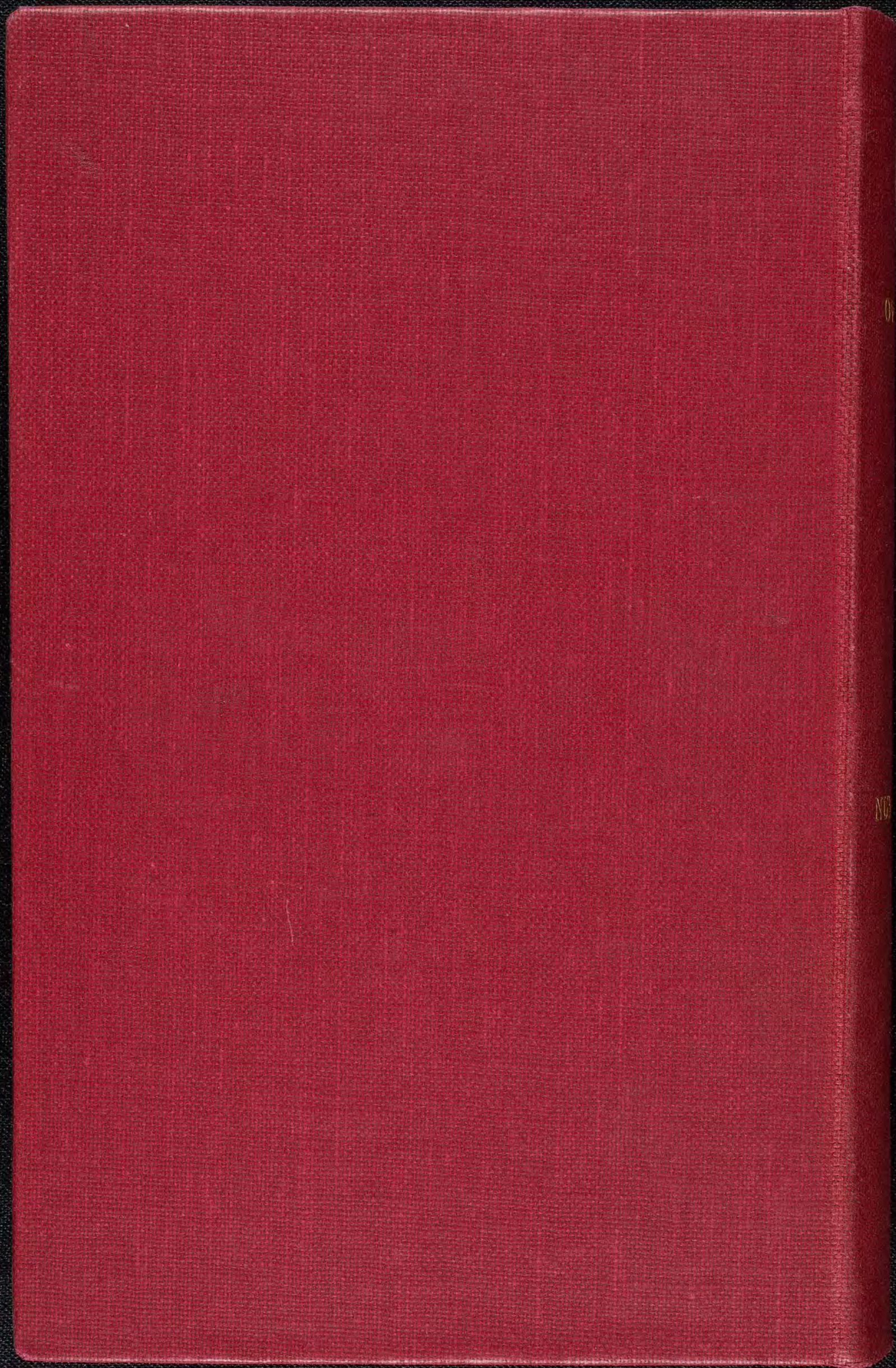
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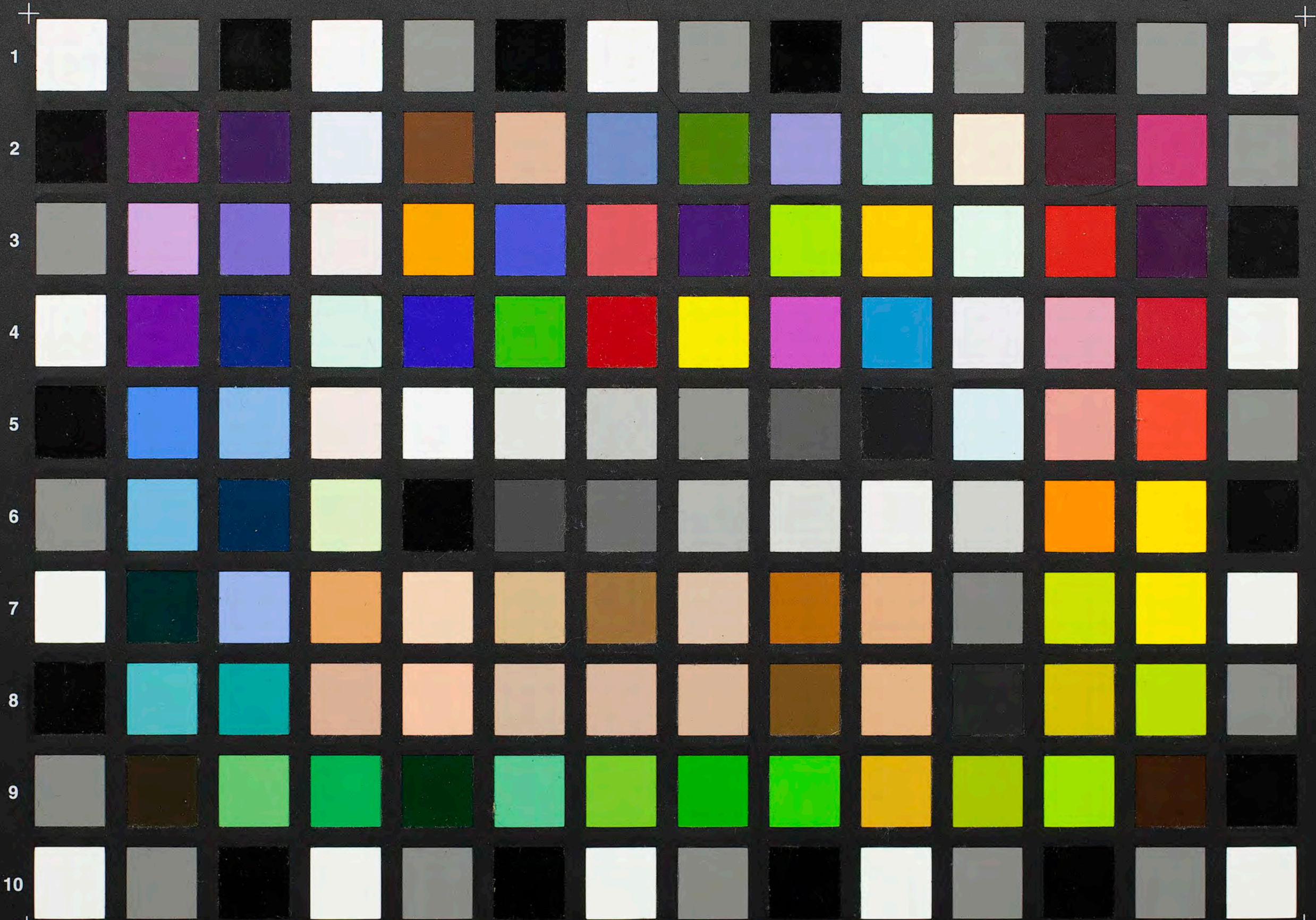
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