PROSPECTS FOR THE SECURITY ARCHITECTURE OF EAST ASIA IN THE 21ST CENTURY

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I. Introduction

Students of International Relations in the Northeast Pacific are hamstrung by their reluctance or inability to take culture into account. The relationship between culture and any aspect of society "is one of the central problems of all human experience and philosophical speculation," one of the oldest problems in social science. Yet "Critics of international security studies have often suggested that [such] questions are neglected by the field." What little theory there already is about the political, economic and military dynamics in the region does not successfully address the impact of domestic cultural components on state-to-state interactions, let alone multilateral interactions. At least in part, this weakness of theory arises because it is inspired by a European or a North American context. What limited attempts at theory exist do not successfully integrate the political economic and security dynamics, nor do they take into account domestic developments and interactions between states in the region. And "Now that walls of our [Cold War] prison have suddenly collapsed [...and] we emerge, bewildered, into a new and unfamiliar world,"4 any such theory must cope with high levels of uncertainty.

The theory of strategy can provide guidance for all of us who are lost in the post-Cold War world and solve each of the problems set out above. Even if none of the above claims proved creditable, theoretical studies would remain important in their own right. If we study ways to improve drinking water in rural Cambodia, for example, that study can only address the specific circumstances of Cambodia. But if someone commissions a more basic study of what makes for bad drinking water in general, then that study can lead to a way of assessing drinking water and a catalogue of all the causes. When the time comes to improve drinking water around the world, it will be cheaper to do it: all the possibilities are already catalogued, and it can be done locally.

Civilian analysts of military affairs are often accused of not using logic, of using impressionistic or anecdotal information, and of being unsystematic in their methods. By and

¹ Robert E. Osgood, Ideals and Self-Interest in America's Foreign Relations? The Great Transformation of the Twentieth Century (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953), i.

² Kenichi Ohmae, The Mind of the Strategist (New York: Penguin, 1982); Kenneth J. Arrow, "Values and Collective Decision-Making," chapter in Philosophy and Economic Theory, Frank Hahn and Martin Hollis, eds. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), 110-1.

³ Joseph Nye and Sean Lynn-Jones, "International Security Studies: A Report of a Conference on the State of

the Field," International Security 12:4 (Spring 1988), 5-27, 17.

Sir Michael Howard, "The Remaking of Europe", Survival XXXII: 2, 95-106, 99.

large, that is a justifiable criticism. Although the discipline of political science is becoming more and more theoretical, in general our conceptual frameworks are weak, our definitions are fuzzy, and very few of us employ a properly scientific approach, i.e. deriving a hypothesis, establishing a defensible methodology, seeking out evidence to confirm or contradict it with care, and reporting on the entire investigation. Could it be that such research is sought after neither by editors nor peers? Could it be that political scientists are sceptical of too much rationality and too much rigour?

This article presents the results of analysis conducted on the basis of the theory of strategy and argues that it has every reason to prove valuable not just to the understanding of East Asia, but also to a number of other levels. This is a method of analysis for the serious student of International Relations: the theory of strategy is worth the effort, however, because its potential surpasses more limited attempts to understand it. Moreover, strategy provides a great deal of insight into both national priorities and multilateral interactions.

II. The Method

A. Identifying National Strategies and Their Components

The method can be broken into six steps. The first of these steps involves the identification of a major shift in national policies, usually a reliable indication of the last time a new strategy was introduced. Such major shifts in direction are often accompanied by major social upheavals. In the case of Russia, for instance, it was easy to infer that a strategy shift had occurred when the Russian government introduced glasnost and perestroika.

Step 2 involves the identification of the new tactics introduced with the new grand strategy. These tactics are the most obvious manifestations of a new strategy. By tactics I refer to the means by which the state (or any actor in the political sphere) attempts to implement its new strategy. This stage of the analysis looks for changes in the economic, military, diplomatic, and political spheres, and they also usually provide the material for identifying the values that seem to have driven these changes. Values are a key factor in determining how strategies will interact in the long term. In fact, my own previous research shows that they underpin the entire national strategy. The identification of values also helps narrow the range of strategic possibilities that must be considered.

Step 3 in the analysis examines the declaratory policy or political rhetoric, i.e. official documents, speeches, debates in the legislatures, etc. in order to identify the goals of the national strategy. In addition, it is sometimes but not always possible to identify the core idea of this strategy. Strategy is not purely military, but encompasses military, economic and political means. National strategy is identified by gathering evidence to answer three questions: (1) Is a particular state using strategy? Plans, policies and programs organize means to an end as much as a strategy does. But a state using strategy is much more likely to use slogans or strong images: plans, policies and programs do not. (2) Is the state using a national strategy? A strategy is national when it uses a broad spectrum of the means available to the state, and tries to achieve objectives important to the whole state rather than to its parts. In other words, the strategy must cut across several areas of state behaviour: economic, political, cultural,

possibility	description	example	comments
neutrality	strategie do affect each other	two countries completely isolated from each other	
identity	2 strategies are identical	bloc or alliance strategy	incompatibility impossible; likelihood outside alliance almost non-existent
synergy	when one national strategy reinforces the other	Franco-German proposal for joint brigade as nucleus for new EC armed forces	
cooperation	deliberate, conscious common strategy addressing mutual concern	Canada-US joint surveillance of Far North	
complementarity	2 strategies address different concerns but in harmony with each other	Japan and US position on NK nuclear issue	
competition	two national strategies in a contest when combined success is impossible		must be a zero-sum game
antithesis	two straegies in conflict	PRC and Taiwan	

TABLE 1. Possibilities for Strategic Interaction

military, etc. (3) What strategy is the state using? Here, one identifies first the type, then the components of strategy being used. The method used for this work would include both the analysis of documentary sources and interviews with opinion leaders and policy-makers.

Step 4 identifies the strategy itself. The identification of values will have provided us with the type of strategy possible. It may be that the strategy is made explicit in the declaratory policy of a state, but if not the strategy can be identified by its characteristics. A national strategy will be felt in politics, economics, diplomacy, domestic policy and military affairs. The best strategy is not going to be explicit or immediately obvious to an outsider, although there is a difference between a camouflaged strategy and no strategy at all.

In Step 5, the analyst studies the interaction of both strategy and components. Two national strategies can interact in a number of ways: they can be neutral, identical, synergistic, cooperative, complementary, competitive or antithetical (See Table 1: Possibilities of Strategic Interactions).

Step 6 identifies whether that type of interaction will continue in the short-, mid- or long term. Compatibility exists when the two strategies are either identical, neutral or cooperative, complementary or synergistic at the global and the component level. Some components' interaction are more important than others, just as compatibility of certain components is essential to the compatible interactions of strategies. Some components' interaction are more important than others: if the values are incompatible, for instance, then relations are quite likely to be conflictual. (See Table 3: Compatibility in the Short-and Long-term)

All of the components of strategy (goals, tactics, styles, core ideas) can interact, and any of these interactions can range among the possibilities outlined above. It is easy to envisage complementary interactions if one country's goals are direct, and the other indirect, if tactics are material on one side and non-material on the other, and so on. For other components, like the core idea, the components are so central or so basic to the nature of the strategy that any

Component	Duration of Incompatibility		
strategy	long		
values	long		
core idea	medium		
goals	short		
tactics	short		

TABLE 2. COMPATIBILITY IN THE SHORT-AND LONG-TERM

significant positive interaction necessitates the strategies being mutually known and mutually understood.

The type of interaction may change if the strategy of one state changes. The type of interaction may also change if any of the components of the strategy change. Certain components change less frequently than others: values do not change frequently, but tactics can and do. The duration of various types of interactions, therefore, depends on the durability of the strategic components, given in Table 2 (Compatibility in the short and long-term).

III. Observations Arising from the Analysis

The analysis of national strategies are summarized in Table 3, and strategic interactions in Tables 4 through 8. The observations arising from this analysis are provided country by country, beginning with the People's Republic of China.

The People's Republic of China

Interactions with Japan. This is a relationship which is going to be difficult for the foreseeable future: nearly every aspect of the national posture of these two states are in opposition, in part if not in whole. The identity of values between China and Japan would usually be considered a good sign for the long-term relationship. However, there are clear signs that Japan is in transition: if its values evolve in the direction of individualism, which would be consistent with the patterns of both the market system, affluence, and liberal democracy, there is long-term conflict in the relations between China and Japan. The two national strategies are neutral, although they complement each other on the economic aspects. The tactics are antithetical in part, particularly with respect to the strong political leadership in the PRC and the weak one in Japan. Even more important are the contrasting role of the two significant military forces. Both countries have strong bureaucracies, the PRC given its sheer size and weight, and Japan because of its postwar reliance on bureaucratic decision-making. These oppositions are important, and the antithetical styles of the two countries pales in its comparison.

Interactions with the ROK. Here the likeliest relationship will be one of the PRC winning every issue, wielding considerable influence. It is therefore imperative that the ROK not enter into direct conflict with China. This imperative is compounded by the fact that the ROK is at present in a position of strategic drift, a serious disadvantage when dealing with a strategically

Style

new liberal

democratic

US PRC Russia Japan **DPRK** Component ROK Values materialism. non-materialism. materialism. materialism. materialism, materialism, individualism collectivism individualism collectivism individualism collectivism regain selfenlargement pragmatism step into the --(drift) high-stakes Strategy of democracy USSR's shoes respect via gambling and market and exploit economic performance the position system from "it doesn't beating the Core idea US containment matter if it is a black cat or at its own a white cat, game enlargement so long as the cat gets the mouse" become an regime improved Goals continued regime survival reducing costs economic of being survival economy economic world leader power growth, more domestic reform, eventual integration with DPRK juche; extremely shifting domestic prioty to Tactics gradual economic responsibility economic reforms; economy; opening to gradual weak political foreign international economic for reform: relations leadership; maintain competition; reform; no international emasculated deterrence, political reform; security: domestic based on nordpolitik nuclearization as using political political actual or military and bargaining chip clout to status quo potential improve economic engagement of DPRK; economic contributions alliance with position US

Table 3. National Strategies of the 2+4

sophisticated and much more powerful neighbour. Their values are partly antithetical, although the issue of individualism is of much lesser importance that the issue of materialism, i.e. economics, so dominates China's concerns that to all practical purposes this divergence is not significant. As the Chinese and Korean economies develop, however, this divergence will increase and the individualism in Korea develops and the pressures against collectivism and for political reform in China accelerate. Long term prospects, therefore, are not good. In the mid-term, because of the neutrality on tactics and goals, it would be possible for the two countries to work out some complementary arrangements. The US should take note of this and use its sound relations with the ROK to manage its relations with China, if possible.

weak.

indecisive

unpredictability;

decision-making

piecemeal

personalized

politics

rhetoric

restrained

conservative

rhetoric.

Interactions with DPRK. The PRC is much vaunted as the model for gradual reform in DPRK, but it is clear so far that the DPRK is putting far greater emphasis on ideology than PRC has since advent of Deng. The reason for so many analysis thinking the DPRK should model itself on the PRC is of course the identity of goals, regime survival. The circumstances

Level of Interaction	Japan	ROK	DPRK	US	Russia
Values	identical long- term	partly antithetical	partly antithetical	partly antithetical	partly antithetical
Strategy	compatible long- term		complementary	antithetical where they intersect	complementary
Core Idea	complementary			partly antithetical	
Goals	neutrality	neutrality	identity	antithetical	complementary
Tactics	partly antithetical	neutrality; potential for complemer.tarity	almost identical	antithetical	complementary
Style	neutral	neutrality	neutrality	antithetical; advantage to the PRC	neutral

TABLE 4. STRATEGIC INTERACTIONS OF THE PRC

affecting the two states are completely different, however, not the least of which is the fact that the DPRK has not made any transition away from totalitarianism, which China did for 15 years before introducing greater economic reforms.

The pragmatism of China might help stabilize the fragile DPRK. There is a similarity of constraints between the two, due to their respective circumstances. Both of them have recently attempted to create bargaining chips in their relations with the US, the PRC by holding military exercises in the straight of Taiwan, and the DPRK by announcing it will no longer use distinctive markings on its soldiers operating in exercises in the DMZ.

Interactions with US. Values here are partly antithetical so there is room for long-term conflict. In addition, the present national strategies are actively at loggerheads wherever they intersect. Given the conflict in relations, it is easy to see it: the US wants to expand its sphere of influence today as it has been expanding since its inception; China is interested in regime survival and the expansion of the US threatens it. The goals are also are directly antithetical; PRC cannot help the US reduce the costs of being world leader without incurring greater costs itself. To survive it will also act to increase those costs if it has to, as it did with the military exercises in the straight of Taiwan in March 1996. The tactics are also antithetical. So the relations are going to be fraught in the near-, mid- and long-term. The weakness of the decision-making style is at present the most damaging dimension to the US' position.

Interactions with Russia. Russia's lurch towards the market system and the development of its economy is so important and yet so difficult that the materialism is the vastly overriding concern, just as it is for the PRC. There is therefore no reason for their respective strategies not to conjugate each other wherever they intersect.

Japan

Interactions with the ROK. I have already argued that Japan is moving towards individualism, so that when there is a renewal of the national strategy, I suspect there will be an identity of values with the ROK. In the meantime, there will be little tension in the relationship. With respect to goals, the important issue of domestic political reform in Japan exists as a goal but it is blocked by the inertia in the electoral and bureaucratic systems.

Interactions with the US. Because Japan is moving towards individualism so long term

Level of Interaction	Russia	
Values	identity	
Strategy	complementarity	·
Core Idea		
Goals	complementarity	
Tactics	neutral	
Style	complementarity	

TABLE 5. STRATEGIC INTERACTIONS OF THE US

prospects are good for the relations. For the time being, the strategies are disjunct, as are the core ideas and the goals. Over time it has become obvious that the US has been threatened by the rapid growth of economic power of Japan, so one is left to ponder what will happen if Japan's political power begins to catch up. There is an interesting correlation between the tactics of Japan, which includes a weak political leadership, and the style of the US strategy which includes a weakness in decision-making. Otherwise, there is oppositions especially regarding the use of military force.

Interactions with Russia. The materialism, i.e. the concern of Russia for its economic development overwhelms every other aspect of its strategy. As a result there is some complementarity of strategy between the new Russia and the old, fading strategy of Japan. The similarity ends with tactics and the style is actively antithetical, so there is likely to be a large number of surface irritants which will not derail the relationship in any serious way. Some temporary kinds of disputes and conflicts might come about.

South Korea and North Korea

The policy-relevant suggestions derived from this analysis fall into the following categories: those relevant specifically to the ROK; those relevant to the increase in compatibility between North and South Korea, the clearly stated (although not in those terms) primary foreign policy objective of the ROK Government; and suggestions relating to the foreign policies of either the ROK or the DPRK, excluding inter-Korean relations. There is support for this method in the fact that not all of these policy-relevant suggestions are surprising or original: on the contrary, it is reassuring that similar conclusions have been reached by other researchers using a wide variety of reasoning and approaches.

Level of Interaction	ROK	US	Russia
Values	partly antithetical	partly antithetical	partly antithetical
Strategy		neutral	complementary
Core Idea		neutral	1
Goals	complementarity	neutral	complementarity
Tactics		neutral	complementary
Style		complementary to US tactics	antithetical

TABLE 6. STRATEGIC INTERACTIONS OF JAPAN

Level of Interaction	DPRK	US	PRC	Russia	Japan
Values	antithetical	identical	identical	identical	partly antithetical
Strategy					
Core Idea					
Goals	partly antithetical	competitive	complementary	complementary	complementary
Tactics	antithetical	complementary	complementary	neutral	complementary
Style	neutral	complementary	complementary	neutral	weekly antithetical

TABLE 7. STRATEGIC INTERACTIONS OF THE ROK

TABLE 8. STRATEGIC INTERACTIONS OF THE DPRK

Level of Interaction	ROK	US	PRC	Russia	Japan
Values	antithetical	antithetical	partly identical	antithetical	antithetical
Strategy		antithetical	complementary	complementary	neutral
Core Idea			1		
Goals	partly antithetical	competitive	identical	complementary	neutral
Tactics	antithetical	antithetical	complementary	complementary	neutral
Style	neutral	neutral	complementary		neutral

About the ROK

It is apparent from the analysis of the ROK's posture in the international system that South Korea is in a position of strategic drift, i.e. that it has no grand design or no grand strategy. What South Korea does have are very clear proposals to increase the international competitiveness of its economy (although there is some debate about the effectiveness of these measures), and a clear plan for the future inter-Korean relations. This is still no grand strategy. And given that North Korea has a very clear and very coherent strategy (whatever we may think of its legitimacy, desirability or long-term prospects), South Korea is at a clear disadvantage. It also puts South Korea at a certain disadvantage in dealing with the four major powers in the region. The first recommendation, therefore, is for South Korea to formulate a grand strategy in the near future.

Another point the analysis of strategic interaction reveals is that prospects for reunification will be bad until values between the two countries are compatible. At present, as the analysis below shows, the values between North and South Korea are antithetical. Given that values change very slowly unless there is an authoritarian government strong enough to impose them from the top, or there are great social upheavals, the prospects of reunification are dim in the near future.

In addition, the end of the Cold War has produced changes to the national strategies of the US, China, and Russia and North Korea which are less favourable to the ROK than during the Cold War. In part, South Korea's geostrategic importance has decreased, but also most countries have become more inward-looking: the US because of its domestic crisis, Japan because of its deep recession, Russia because of the disintegration of the USSR. Overall, this leaves South Korea with more, rather than less, responsibilities for its own security.

Another hypothesis, amply borne out by post-Cold War relations, is that South Korea and the US should have good relations for the foreseeable future. These relations should remain good irrespective of what relations between the US and China or the US and Japan may become. The analysis predicted that relations between the US and China would deteriorate for the foreseeable future. US-Japan relations will also deteriorate until such time as Japan changes its grand strategy to adapt to the post-Cold War world. By Japan's own assessment, that could take 'two or three general elections.' South Korean diplomacy, therefore, must take these facts into account.

Finally, good relations between the US and North Korea relations are only temporary: the relationship will deteriorate in the mid-term. Until that time, the DPRK will have an additional advantage in negotiating with South Korea. Eventually, and unless the DPRK changes suddenly and dramatically, relations are bound to sour. Therefore, whatever advantage exists for the ROK in these good US-DPRK relations should be exploited now, without taking any measures that will hurt the US-ROK relations in the long term.

Increasing Compatibility between ROK and DPRK

First, the ROK should look carefully to which major powers can most further its agenda with the DPRK. Working with the power whose strategy is most compatible with the DPRK will be the most productive. In those terms, the ROK is presented with a choice: it can look to the US, which has recently embraced the DPRK, so to speak, but whose long-term strategy is not compatible, and allow it to effect whatever change it can in opening North Korea to the world; or it can look to China, whose strategy is quite compatible with the North Koreans. China's relations with the US are chilly at present, though its relations with the Seoul government have improved in recent years. The analysis presented below supports the China option.

Next, the ROK should allow the market system to change the values of North Korean society, however slowly that may occur. According to this China model of reform, as economic reforms do occur, however gradually, they encourage good PRC-DPRK relations, since the PRC is a good example for the DPRK. The DPRK has already moved towards the same kind of reforms we might expect the DPRK to adopt. A number of Korean scholars have advocated the Chinese model for the DPRK's reform and development, as noted below.

Finally, perhaps the ROK should give the DPRK a rest from its policy of engagement. South Korea has its own crowded political agenda, having recently democratized, and having to deal with domestic concerns over public safety after an unprecedented series of public disasters in the last 2-3 years. South Korea, despite its obviously benevolent intentions, is actually perceived as something of a threat to the present North Korean regime. For the time being at least, there is nothing to be lost and something to be gained from letting the US do most of the talking.

On the Foreign Relations of the ROK and the DPRK

Although the alliance between the US and the ROK is very solidly based, it is nevertheless prudent to expect the pressure for burden-sharing to increase, as well as some future trade frictions once the US has dealt with Japan. Nevertheless, the compatibility of foreign policy

⁵ Susumu Takai, Interview With Author, Tokyo, May 1994.

agendas, if not the identity of interests, should be emphasized in dealing with the US. Given that the DPRK, China and possibly Japan⁶ are not likely to be as compatible with the US as the ROK itself, the ROK will be a more privileged ally for the DPRK. By emphasizing its opening markets and democratization, as did Taiwan (and look at its recent gains) there is much to be gained. The biggest problem the ROK will face in its relations in the near future will, of course, be the US's weak or lax decisiveness. It is a serious problem for the security of the ROK which relied on the US deterrent for its national safety.

Second, Japan is not likely to enjoy a good relationship with the US for the foreseeable future. It is possible for Japan to adopt a more compatible grand strategy that would raise its significance to the US. But it cannot contribute more than it already does to the US' strategy in Asia, while the strategic significance of other countries is on the increase. And it is possible that Japan's significance will decrease, as its economy matures and its population ages. Japan is one of the major powers in the region, so its choice of grand strategy, when it comes, will affect the overall environment of foreign policy for both the ROK and the DPRK. At present, the respective goals, strategies, tactics and style of Japan and the DPRK are so completely different they might be called disjunct, and their respective values are actually opposites. Unless either Japan or the DPRK changes dramatically, they will not affect each other directly. This prediction is admittedly difficult to reconcile with the importance of Japan in the area: it could well be an added force in the impetus for change in both Japan and the DPRK, another sign that their strategies are out of date and out of touch. DPRK-Russian relations will not be close, and might even be competitive in the foreseeable future. The DPRK-PRC relations will continue to be close for the foreseeable future.

VI. Conclusion

Strategic theory succeeds because it takes actions, not actors, as the object of study. It is possible that these conclusions could be reached by means other than this elaborate-seeming analysis, but it is unlikely that all of these conclusions could be reached in as systematically. Historically, the principal advantage of systematic analysis is that it is economical in terms of time and effort. It is also clear that the study of strategic interaction is as significant as the direct strategic analysis of various grand strategies. Even more useful, however, is the fact that this method of analysis can accommodate debate and dispute of particular facts or events. This method is actually improved by such interventions by specialists in various topics. If they care too, they may simply turn to the disputed element of analysis, and work through the conclusions to be reached on their own, following the method proposed above.

If the reader accepts this approach, it and its future refinements can be applied to a succession of important national and international situations from the moment they develop, as well as including the impact of non-state actors, like NGO's or MNC's, are involved. Although analysis of global phenomena will likely require computer support because of the great complexity of circumstances, studies of more modest scope can easily be carried out at the subnational and the individual level. This method of analysis can also lead to integration

⁶ Depending on its choices in the next few years, since it has not renewed its national strategy since the end of the Cold War.

between previously distinct, not to say disjunct, levels of analysis: between the national and the international; between the regional and the global; between the national and the global (focusing on certain states only); between the national and the subnational; between the national and the individual (political elections strategies); between the individual and the subnational (political strategies of groups); etc.

Although the method of analysis is already demonstrably useful, it is still not complete. This framework is based on one half of a new general theory of strategy, based on the role of values. The other half, currently in development, must examine the role of circumstances in defining the grand stategy of a state. It is only when both halves of the whole are available that we can rely on the framework with greater certainty.

There is one caveat in order. Generally, the more tightly knit the theory, the more precise the predictions (or empirical hypotheses) it will generate. In the case of strategy, though, the theory produces only probabilistic hypotheses (i.e. hypotheses that read: "The state is likelier to...") about the type of strategy. Strategy by nature is more suited to macroscopic analysis than it is to microscopic analysis, because it looks at long-term patterns of action in states. The predictions and explanations its study produces are also going to be general. This is strategy's great and unavoidable limitation. As a result the theory presented here would inevitably appear somewhat crude, even if it were something more than a proposal. Although certain methodological choices are responsible for this crudeness (the classifications are binary, for instance, and conditions set for the theory's validity are deliberately and considerably simplifying), it is important to remember that this is the first attempt to theorize about values this influence. To produce a general theory of strategy, it will be necessary not only to understand the roles of interest and circumstances, but also to make many, many adjustments as empirical study produces feedback. This paper only claims to make a first cut, theoretically speaking, in order to bridge a very obvious gap in strategic thinking. Other gaps needs to be filled before any integration into a general theory of strategy can happen, and much of the theory cannot be refined before then: it is a case of having to begin somewhere. In any event, any theoretical contribution is always temporary: it only survives as long as it takes for someone else to come up with a better idea. Aware as this author is of the precarious life of any theory, the present paper builds into its own theory a process by which other scholars can contribute to it, adapt it as needed or, indeed, transform it completely. Theoretical research, after all, thrives on controversy but dies of neglect.⁷

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⁷ Keith G. Banting, Interview with Author (Kingston: February 1990, personal notes).

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