

How important was the Cold War in bringing about regime change?

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Abstract. Form after World War Two, through to the beginning of the 21st century, there were many international influences such as the Cold War that brought about regimes changes that were not desired by any individuals at the beginning of the process. This paper analyses the importance of international conflicts on Eastern Europe, Eastern Asia, and America as a case study to analyse and identify the importance of the Cold War that caused regime changes.

Keywords: Cold War, Regime change, Eastern Europe, America, East Asia

1. Introduction

In analysing the importance of international influences on regimes changes, Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way have concluded that there are two main sources that cause regime changes: leverage (the governments' vulnerability to political, economic and social pressure from the West) and linkage (the density of politics, economic, and social factors as well as the communication between countries and West) [1]. Over the past years, political regime transformations in Eastern Europe and East Asia have revived political scientist' concerns with a possible breakdown or replacement of political governance structures [2]. After World War Two, the Soviet Union (USSR) has been attacked twice by Germany in history, so they had the intention of wanting Germany to become very weak. On the other hand, Britain and America wanted Europe, especially Germany, to be economically strong and independent again so that they could trade with them. They also hold the fear that the USSR might want to invade Germany when it is in a weak state and take over to make them hold the same ideologies. The tension between the USSR and America rose as they hold contrasting opinions on the development of Germany. There are two events that contributed to the rising tension: the Marshall Plan, and the Berlin Crisis.

The Marshall Plan was put in place by America because they feared the spread of communism across Europe towards America. So, they decided to act. The American government sent a lot of money to Europe to make the countries rich again as most rich people would not like the thought of communist, left, ideologies. The USSR was not happy with this action as they see America going against them. However, the Berlin Crisis was caused by the worry of the USSR. West Germany was getting very strong and developing in an astonishing speed due to British, French, and American areas of Germany joining together to speed up the German development. The city of Berlin is surrounded by communism as it is located in the area of Germany that is allocated under the control of the USSR. The Berlin Crisis is when the USSR decided to stop railways of resources entering Berlin in order to cease the development of Germany. In response, America started to fly resources into Berlin and drop off food for the citizens. A combination of these actions made people across the world sympathize the citizens of Berlin. The Americans also presented the USSR as very evil figures as they decided to starve the citizens of Berlin and themselves as the saviours of the German population.

During the Cold War, there was also a spread of communism in East Asia, for example, China came under communist rule. On the 1st of October 1949, the Chinese Communist leader, Mao Zedong, announced the declaration of the creation of the People's Republic of China. The USA is more worried after this as around one third of the world's population were under the communist leadership. The American government was scared that the entire Asia is going to turn towards communist ideologies.

Another contributor to the Cold War in East Asia is the Korean War, fought between North Korea and South Korea between 1950 and 1953. The war began on 25th of June 1950 when North Korea

declared an invasion on South Korea following multiple clashes along the borders and rebellions within South Korea. The US government sent troops into Korea to help South Korea as they both hold the same ideologies of the right. The USA were very scared that communist ideologies would spread across Asia. The war lasted for around three years. This war also presented to the American public and people across the world that communism is terrible as they started the invasions. These conflicts and actions around the world rose people's fear in communist ideologies as the Cold War progresses. The combination of these actions and a contrast in ideologies increased and tension between the ideologies further.

1989 was a significant date in history because it marked the collapse of the Berlin Wall in Europe and for the rest of the world, many events before and after 1989 varied the political structures of the states severely. The Berlin Wall was the division between East and West Berlin, which is also described by Winston Churchill, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom from 1940 to 1945, as 'The Iron Curtain' which was withdrawn on the 9th of November 1989. The collapse of the Berlin Wall marked the collapse of the rule of the USSR in Central and Eastern Europe which reflected wider changes taking place across the globe [3]. The collapse of the Berlin Wall led to borders opening and free elections taking place, which upset the Communist regimes in all areas of Eastern Europe. In late 1991, the USSR soon dissolved into component republics [4]. Fidel Castro said that 'It's a hell of a story, when a big country begins to experiment with reforms that connect to so many other countries.' In the past, the USSR aided the Third World countries, countries that are classified together as relatively poor or developing. They are characterized by high percentages of poverty, political or economic instabilities, and very high mortality rates. However, in 1989, the USSR winds down support for the Third World and encourages peaceful resolution of long-standing civil wars and conflicts. Life became very difficult in many countries as they completely relied on the USSR for aid and resources.

The significance of the study lies within establishing international relationships as interdependent on the behavior and conduct of other countries, perhaps linked to fundamental human instincts of self-protection or evolution which society operates on the basis of. This is an area that is not yet explored. This paper will use international influences like the Cold War on Eastern Europe Eastern Asia, and America as a case study to analyze and identify the importance of the Cold War that caused regime changes.

2. Regime definitions

Political regimes are the structures of government, set of rules, cultural or social norms and there are three main types of regimes: democratic regimes, hybrid regimes and authoritarian regimes.

Democratic regimes often associated the power to the people. This means that the state would hold competitive elections and there would be a universal franchise (all adults are able to vote). Free press would also be considered as an important aspect of democratic regimes. The most well-known examples of this regime would be the United Kingdom and the United States. People are the ruler and being ruled or restricted at the same time, so people and power are considered to be on the same level. The two main aims of democratic regimes are equality and pluralism. Equality is when all individuals are considered to be equal despite their race, wealth or sexuality. Pluralism is when all the different views that are expressed by individuals have the same value. Democracies are mainly achieved through the rule of law (which is the legal rules that are regulated, and no one is above the law), free elections (which is when all adults possess the right to vote), freedom of information and press (which is when different views and perspectives are considered to be equally important).

Hybrid regimes often associate to uncompetitive elections, constrained press (mainly government dominated) and no level playing field for opposition parties. One example of this would be Russia, before they declared war on Ukraine. Hybrid regimes are then separated into two sections: competitive authoritarianism and electoral authoritarianism.

Competitive Authoritarianism is often when formal democratic institutions remain in place, but they are constantly violated and to an extent that the regime itself fails to meet the absolute minimum standards for a democratic regime. It is also not considered to be fully authoritarian because executives are chosen through elections by the people. It is not fully following the democratic ideologies because most of the time it contains the denial of the opposition of media coverage, harass opposition candidates and their supporters. Elections are also not free and fair which does not fit in with the fundamental principle of equality in democracies. Journalists, opposition politicians and other government critics may be spied on so there isn't pluralism. The group elected has control of the media, abuse of state resources and an unfair advantage over the opposition. One example of this would be Zimbabwe.

Electoral Authoritarianism is often when the state adopts democratic institutions but subvert them to be ruled as dictatorship. It is not considered to be an authoritarian regime because there are elections through votes and executives are chosen through elections that are open, free, and fair. It is also not democratic because it is then controlled by a 'strongman' that deals with all the problems in the state themselves without any group discussions. Which is leading the country into dictatorship. One example of this would be Turkey.

Authoritarian regimes are often associated when the power and people are not on the same level, or the power is not shared. This is often associated with countries that have no elections, ruling monarch or elite with full power, extensive press control, strong state clamps down on any dissent so no debates are held. One example of this would be the PRC. People and power are not equal as power is in the hands of an individual person or group of people that hold the same ideologies. The totalitarian State controls all aspects of individuals' life without leaving them spaces of autonomy and suppressing their fundamental rights and freedoms. This is often when an individual (monarch or dictator) or a party not willing to share their power to others. There is also no equality within the people and other points of views that oppose the ruling elites are not welcome. An example of this would be Adolf Hitler, the dictator of Germany from 1933 to 1945. He was also the leader of the National Socialists German Workers' Party.

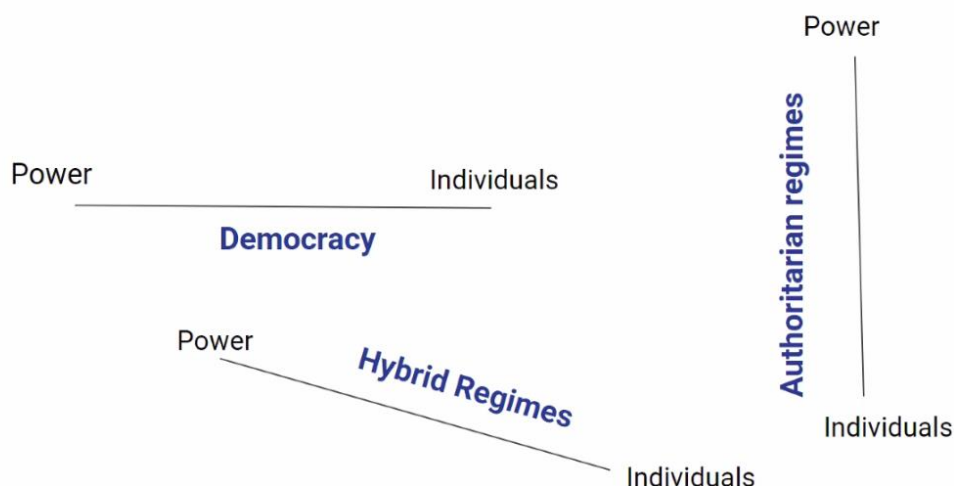


Figure 1. Source from: Emanuela Costanzo

Cold war (America, USSR, Korea): One significant international influence that brought out regime changes in history is the Cold War. After World War Two ended, in 1945, the Cold War began to develop between the United States and the USSR and their allies. Many historians identify several causes that potentially could have led to the outbreak of the Cold War. This includes the tension between the two nations at the end of World War Two, the ideological conflict between the US and the USSR, the development of nuclear weapons, and the fear of the spread of communist regimes in the US. The ideological conflicts between the USSR and America and the fear of communism were closely tied together and considered to be the most important factors as there were many fears within America, called the 'Red Scare', that communist ideologies will spread across nations. The Cold War

lasted for 44 years, 12th of March 1947 to 26th of December 1991, and during this period, many conflicts were held around the world between countries that hold different ideologies.

1989 was a hugely significant date in history because it marked the collapse of the Berlin Wall in Europe and for the rest of the world, many events before and after 1989 varied the political structures of the states severely. The Berlin Wall was the division between East and West Berlin, and it is also considered to be the division of the two contrasting ideologies, authoritarian regimes, and democratic regimes. The fall of the Berlin Wall was due to many different international factors. Some examples are the Economic factors, Domestic political factors, and external and internal dimensions.

The economic crisis in the 1970s were partly responsible for the economic factors that caused the fall of the Berlin Wall as they held shortages of food and consumer goods in Centre and Eastern European (CEE) regions. In response, the government borrowed from foreign currency in Western banks and use it to subsidize domestic consumption. This was not a long-lasting solution as it caused a spiralling debt in foreign currency and a continuous lack of productivity and technological transfer in CEE economies. So, the strategy of borrowing money reaches a limit by the 1980s.

The domestic political factors that were responsible for the collapse of the Berlin Wall also consists of protests and oppositions. In some cases, domestic opposition and protests were significant. For example, the German Democratic Republic (GDR) or East Germany. One of the factors was the loss in legitimacy of the communist regime which fell at the very top amongst the ruling elite itself. There was a collapse in the belief of the superiority of socialism as these regimes were built on ideologies.

The external and internal dimension also played a very important role in the fall of the Berlin Wall. The role of Mikhail Gorbachev, a Soviet politician who was the last leader of the USSR from 1985 to 1991, and his foreign policy played a hugely significant part. Gorbachev made changes in the foreign policies of the USSR and one of the most important one was that he decided to end the independence of the countries that were in the Soviet bloc. This means that countries must have a socialist ideology and he also limited the sovereignty of the countries in the bloc [5].

Finally, in 1989, the Sinatra Doctrine announcement was made. This announcement promised that the USSR would not intervene with countries in the Soviet bloc so countries could make their own decisions. This action led to borders opening and free elections taking place which outset Communist regimes [6]. Fidel Castro said that 'It's a hell of a story, when a big country begins to experiment with reforms that connect to so many other countries.' In late 1991, the USSR itself dissolved into its component republics which marked the end of the Cold War which had a huge impact on multiple political regimes in Eastern Europe, East Asia and America. In the past, the USSR aided the Third World, countries. However, in 1989, the USSR winds down support for the Third World and encourages peaceful resolution of long-standing civil wars and conflicts. Life became very difficult in many countries as the government and their citizens relied on the USSR for aide and resources.

3. Eastern Europe

The two main processes that took place at the end of the Cold War was democratization and transition to market capitalism. Democratization is a process of transition from authoritarian regimes into democratic regimes and the transition to market capitalism is the move from centrally planned economy to a free market economy. The GDR was one of the most solid countries in the Soviet Bloc before 1989. However, after 1989 there was a major transformation in political regimes ideologies.

Before 1989, the GDR was considered to be one of the most economically successful in the Soviet Bloc. Even if it was considered to have a successful economy it was still experiencing an overwhelming financial crisis. In 1989, the socio-economic factors resulted many people in East Germany to flee to Western countries and the East German governments were powerless to prevent these movements. By the middle of 1989, multiple forces that included areas like economic, social, and political in the GDR and abroad, began peaceful protests, starting in Leipzig. This was due to millions of East German citizens secretly watching colourful, capitalist West German TV, even though that was illegal. They saw the luxuries lifestyle of the West meanwhile the GDR was grey and

plagued by shortages [5]. More than 300,000 protesters were in the city of Leipzig, it was the biggest protest since 1953 and there was still a growing power of support. A large number of opponents gathered to protest against the police state, and they called for the freedom of assembly, freedom of press, freedom to travel to foreign countries and the freedom to elect a democratic government. It was also known as a peaceful protest as the crowd also constantly chanted 'No violence!' to avoid giving the police any chance to open fire. The main goal of this protest was that people in the GDR wanted to share the prosperity enjoyed by citizens in the West and most people demonstrated a favour in uniting Germany [7]. On the other hand, Erich Honecker, who was East Germany's leader from 1971 until 1989, refused to make any concessions because he wanted to crack down the protesters across the country though violence so there were also many movements made to overthrow him.

In 1989, the German border with Hungary unofficially opened and over 60,000 GDR citizens crossed the borders in 4 months. The effect of population movements stoke tension inside the GDR. As a result, within a year after the unification of the East and the West, the GDR government came to an end which means that many people were left unemployed as the authoritarian regimes secured housing and jobs for its people, and the economy was also thrown into uncertainty. So, the number of unemployment rose above 3 million due to hundreds of state-owned companies being sold to the private sectors or collapsed as these companies absolutely could not compete in a market with much stronger currency and oppositions combined with the West. This resulted the industrial production in Eastern Germany fall to less than half the previous rate [3].

However, in 1990, a free and fair election was held, completely moving the GDR from an authoritarian regime into a democratic regime. Therefore, the Cold War inevitably played as the most important role which directly dictated the future of Eastern European political structures, thus also determining the development of these states. Due to the Cold War, the GDR shifted from an authoritarian regime rule under the USSR to a democratic regime that consists of a free market economy. Western Germany saw the European unity as a potential framework to repel from the past reputation of the Nazi rule but also as a helping source to secure the country's fragile and recently developed parliamentary democratic system for the upcoming [8].

4. East Asia

Another significant influence that the Cold War had on the world was East Asia. The Korean War had a huge impact on the political structures in East Asia as it was between North Korea and South Korea and was fought from 1950 to 1953. It began when North Korea advanced into South Korea due to clashes along the border and multiple rebellions within South Korea. This war was not considered to be a conflict between two countries as it was mainly considered to be a conflict between the two contrasting regimes and ideologies. North Korea was under the rule of authoritarian regime and South Korea was under the rule of democratic regime, so they held completely different ideologies which is one of the most important factors which caused the global conflict. North Korea had allies such as China and the USSR while South Korea had allies such as the US.

The conflict between the North and South Korea chased back to the end of World War Two when the US and the USSR divided Korea along a line, that is known as the 38th parallel, into two occupation zones. The USSR administered the northern zone, and the Americans administered the south. In 1948, the tension of the Cold War rose to a peak, so the occupation zones became two states that held completely different ideologies. Military forces from North Korea advanced through the borders into South Korea on the 25th of June 1950 as Joseph Stalin, a Soviet political leader who ruled from 1924 until his death in 1953, and Mao Zedong, the founder of PRC, both demonstrated their final approval in the spring and had finally decided to demand North Korea the invasion. North Korea was proclaimed as The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) on the 9th of September, with Kim Il-sung as the Premier. The Premier is the head of the government. By December 1948, the United Nations General Assembly soon declared the Republic of Korea to be the 'only lawful government in Korea'. So, by 1949, North Korea became a Communist state. The

government advanced quickly to create a new political system that was styled based around the original Soviet system, with political power in the hands of the Workers' Party of Korea. Resulting to these actions, the Security Council of the United Nations (UN) denounced North Korea's move as an invasion, so they dispatched forces to Korea attempting to repel it. Twenty-one countries of the UN, not including China and the USSR because at the time, China was not recognized as a country by the UN so the USSR was boycotting as the UN recognised Taiwan as China. Eventually, the UN forces, with the US providing around 90% of the military, aided South Korea [9].

Officially, the physical fighting ended on the 27th of July 1953 when the Korean Armistice Agreement was signed. This agreement led to the creation of the Korean Demilitarized Zone that separate the North Korea and South Korea. However, no peace treaties were ever signed in history, so the two countries are technically still at war in frozen conflict [10]. The Korean War is considered to be one of the most destructive conflicts of the modern era with more civilian death than both World War Two and the Vietnam War. It also destructed all of Korea's major cities on both sides severely including the mass killing of suspected communist members by the South Korean government. North Korea is also known as one of the most heavily effected countries by bombs in history and historians estimated that around several million North Korean citizens are estimated to have left the country over the time period of the war.

The end of the Korean War also brought about dramatic alternations in the political system of North Korea [11]. It ended direct Soviet control and provided a stable base for the consolidation of Kim Il Sung's power within the Korean Workers' Party. Due to the impractical ideological applications of Stalin's policies in North Korea over the past years, North Korea replaced communist ideologies with a new ideology called the Juche ideology in 1992 onwards. The Juche ideology incorporates historical materialist ideas but also strongly emphasizes on individuals, national sovereignty, and the state. Juche ideologies emphasises that a state will prosper when it becomes self-reliant and achieving independence in the economy, politics, and the military. The devastation of the Korean War and Cold War provided the context for Kim Il Sung's to impose extreme leaderships which resulted him putting in place a new system of internal solidarity in North Korea. In other words, this was considered to be a period of political consolidation by which he blames other countries and factors while strengthening his direct political position and control over the country. Due to the Cold War, North Korea moved away from an authoritarian regime ruled by the USSR and towards dictatorship led by Kim Il Sung.

In Asia, the Philippine dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos was also toppled in 1986 due to a campaign of civil resistance against the violence of regimes and electoral fraud [4]. The non-violent revolution marked the end of a 20-years dictatorship and the restoration of democracy in the Philippines. The topple of the Philippine dictatorship also marked a change in regime within East Asia and sparked people's thoughts of revolutions. This action also marked the beginning of competitive multiparty elections in South Korea that followed straight afterwards which led to South Korea liberating from American control. By this time, the Communist regimes have already suffered in a disastrous defeat or dissolves in elections as most people were voting in favour of democratic regimes [6].

5. America

The Cold War was also an international influence that had a significant impact on the political system of America. After World War Two, Britain and the US wanted Europe, especially Germany to get stronger politically and economically but they hold complete opposite ideas to the USSR. American politicians hold the fear that the USSR might want to invade Germany and take over to make them hold the same ideologies when they are in a weak state [12]. This fear that is embedded into the American citizens and political system is called 'The Red Scare'. The actions of the Marshall Plan, the Berlin Crisis and the Korean War dramatically rose the tension between the USSR and America. In response, the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC), created in 1938,

aimed to investigate possible disloyalty or rebel activities held by public employees, American citizens, and organizations that are suspected of having Communist links.

At the end of World War Two, the US and the USSR divided Korea and Germany into two zones of occupation. In 1948, the tension between the USSR and America rose to a peak and the occupation zones became two sovereign states that holds completely different ideologies. The Korean War and conflicts in Eastern Europe were not considered to be a conflict between two countries, it was mainly considered to be a conflict between the two regimes [13].

The United Nations Security Council then denounced the actions held by North Korean as an invasion so they dispatched forces to Asia in order to repel it. Twenty-one countries in the UN contributed to the forces with America providing approximately 90% of the military. At the same time, US also spread negative information on authoritarian regimes across the world and produced propaganda against communism within its country as they are always presented to be the one who starts the invasion. The main two example of invasion would be World War Two and the Korean War. This then led to the main aspects of the Cold War which was the dispute between the two complete opposite ideologies held by America and the USSR. The fear and complexed solution to cease the spread of communism towards America effected the American political system severely.

McCarthyism was a big contributor to the rise of the Red Scare in America during the Cold War. Joseph McCarthy, an American politician who served from 1947 until his death in 1957, claimed that he had a list of 205 individuals that had links with the communist party who were also working for the American government. However, the number soon decreased to 57. His accusations helped to explain why the Korean War and the Cold War were not going well for the Americans as he accused that the US government was full of communist members that are potentially spies for their ideology. Nobody who were ever accused by McCarthy were ever convicted of spying, but he continued to appear in public. Thousands of American citizens attended his speeches and millions of people watched his television show. One of his tactics of increasing popularity was to attack high-profile figures. Even President Eisenhower supported McCarthyism as he was afraid of losing votes in the upcoming elections. Just being called by McCarthy for questioning ended people's careers as others assumed that they were found guilty even if they were proven to be innocent and released. The main methods that McCarthy used for question were bullying and aggressive questioning to intimidate people.

The HUAC also began to build up files on communist suspects and normal citizens who were suspected of having connections to the communist party would be arrested and tried in a court. In 1948, a significant court case of Alger Hiss rose the tension of the Red Scare within the US. Alger Hiss was on a very high status in America because he worked as an important adviser for President Roosevelt in the government. In August 1948, Whittaker Chambers, an editor who worked at the Time magazine, was suspected by the HUAC. One official she named as someone who is possibly connected to the USSR was Alger Hiss. Immediately, the FBI began investigating her claims to ensure those individuals who were named did not continue to have access to the state's information or power. Hiss denied the accusations, so he was found guilty of lying-in court and was sentenced 5 years in prison. The HUAC never found any proof that he could have been a member of the communist party or a communist spy. However, many people thought that he was found guilty as he was sent to prison. This case justifies people worries in the fact that communist spies could be anywhere, even in high profile government leaders.

The McCarran Act, also known as the Internal Security Act, was also validated in 1950 which was when the Red Scare peaked in America so the act was passed by the United States Congress. The McCarran Act required all organizations that were considered to be communists to register with the state, while agencies were given the authority to investigate their 'rebellious activities' which shows the level of concern that the American government has on the spread of communist ideologies.

McCarthyism then led to a downfall because Joseph McCarthy's accusations became more and more extreme over time. He was leading a new committee on communist influences in the US army. The army fought back by finding evidence of McCarthy abusing his privilege and they sent

information to journalists who were critical of McCarthy. This led to the actions of McCarthy being televised and the American public were shocked by his bullying. There was also an increasing number of articles published against him, but it didn't affect the general public being worried of the spread of the communist regime.

The Red Scare and the Cold War had a huge impact of the political system in the US as many citizens held the fear of anyone around them being communist spies. The action of investigations by the HUAC and Joseph McCarthy led to many people losing their jobs and numerous amounts of elites fleeing the country as they don't see a future in this political system that holds fear against an ideology. Many elites don't see the land of America as the 'land of free' anymore as they are not following the US declaration of Independence in 1776. The declaration clearly stated that 'We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.' But this is completely contradictory to the investigations and actions done by the government on political ideologies which made many people lose trust in the American government.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, international influences such as the Cold War definitely has a huge impact on the political systems of a state but to what extent will depend on the security of the highest office system that follows the collapse of the original. The Cold War is an example of an international influence that caused many people to shift towards a democratic ideology from the original authoritarian ideology. This result was mainly due to the propaganda during the Cold War and the actions taken by the countries that were led by an authoritarian leader. However, many people also lost trust in democratic regimes and fled as they were not presented to be very democratic as the citizens were targeted by propaganda and investigated due to their political beliefs. This paper demonstrates that despite the change in political regime are not as significant in some countries, most political systems that hold authoritarian ideologies in Europe and East Asia faced serious threats and collapsed at a shocking speed when elections began. Democratic ideologies remained relatively stable during the Cold war, but citizens of the countries were in serious fear of the potential spread of the authoritarian regimes.

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