



MINATO-TOKYO

みなとユネスコ 会報

Bulletin

MINATO UNESCO ASSOCIATION NEWS & CALENDAR

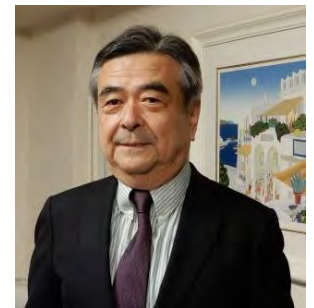
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A Thought on World Heritage

Takayuki Kobayashi, MUA Standing Director

What is World Heritage? Is it simply an attractive site where people want to visit? “In 1954 the decision to build the Aswan High Dam was made. This dam would lead to the creation of a huge artificial lake covering the Upper Nile Valley from Aswan in Egypt to the Dal Cataract in Sudan - a culturally extremely rich area, which has been known as Nubia since antiquity. In 1960, UNESCO launched an International Campaign to Save the Monuments of Nubia. This appeal resulted in the excavation and recording of hundreds of sites, the recovery of thousands of objects, and the salvage and relocation of a number of important temples to higher ground. It was when the principles of World Heritage Convention emerged and resulted in the adoption of the Convention in 1972.” Mr. Yukio Nishimura, Professor of Graduate School of The University of Tokyo, former vice-chairman of ICOMOS, started his speech this way at the Kanto Bloc Meeting back in October 2017.



I was very impressed by his speech and started to investigate a little more into a previous stage than the UNESCO campaign stated above. A concept of International Committee of The Red Cross created in the middle of the 19th century that the destructive actions of cultural heritages by the negative power of war were prohibited, and that any wounded soldiers needed to be saved no matter which countries they belong to, was eventually expanded to the preservation of cultural heritages. However, many cultural heritages were seriously damaged in some countries during the World War II, while a rule to save them was observed in some historical areas. Thereafter, UNESCO was established in November of 1945.

Minato UNESCO Association (hereafter “MUA”) last year hosted a lecture meeting titled “The present and the past of Bamiyan, the world heritage in Afghanistan” by Mr. Kosaku Maeda, Director General of Japan Institute for the Studies of Cultures of Afghanistan. Eastern Buddha and Western Buddha built in the 7th century were both destroyed in the spring of 2001 at the end of civil strife. UNESCO and Afghanistan Government started a talk on the reconstruction of the cultural heritage in 2002. Afghanistan cultural assets flew overseas due to plunders from museums or theft from remains. The master artist Ikuo Hirayama gave UNESCO a suggestion that such cultural assets be treated as “cultural asset refugees”. His suggestion was accepted. Salvation and preservation activities started in Japan as well and paved the way to have them returned to Afghanistan as soon as the situation there was stabilized. Some of them were restored by Tokyo University of the Arts and returned to Afghanistan in the end of 2016. I was deeply moved by his enthusiasm to preserve cultural heritages.

(To be continued on P. 4)

The 1st Cross-cultural Awareness Lecture for 2017 “Growing Tension in East Asia”

Date: Monday, October 16, 2017

Place: Minato City Life-long Learning Center

As the speaker for this workshop, we had the pleasure of having Professor Kazuhiko Togo of Kyoto Sangyo University, who was formerly Japan’s ambassador to the Netherlands, and who concurrently assumes the positions of Director of KSU’s Institute of World Affairs, and Assistant Secretary (External Affairs) for the governor of Shizuoka Prefecture. Our readers must be aware that his lectures in the past were always very popular because of stimulating viewpoints and episodes based on his years of experiences in diplomatic duties. His lecture this time focused on Prime Minister Abe’s diplomatic policies, the threatening posture of the North Korean regime, and the latest trends in Russia and China. The following is a summary of his presentation:



1. Brief chronological review of major historical trends in the world:

1945 – 1989: The China – Soviet conflict gave way to the U. S. – Soviet confrontation during the Cold War. The power balance between the two countries was kept at equilibrium because of their mutual nuclear threat. The end of the Cold War ushered in an age of the unrivaled U. S. dominance. However, from 2008 onward, the world has turned into an “Our country first” sentiment. The international political framework has been distorted due to the rise of populism and nationalism, resulting in an unsecure environment where it’s hard to predict the forthcoming world order.

2008: The U. S. economy was blasted by the Lehman shock. It symbolized the emergence of a new era where the U. S. economy cannot always stay as an all-mighty giant. China has evolved from the status focused on the accumulation of its national resource & power to the one focused on the assertion of its national interest.

2012: In Russia, Putin regained his presidential leadership while Abe regained his prime minister’s seat in Japan. This marked the comeback of the two leaders in each country.

2014: After the Arab Spring fever died down, the terrorist organization ISIS emerged while the unstable internal situations in Syria and Iraq aggravated.

2016: The Brexit decision by the British voters astounded the world.

2017: President Trump started his administration in the U. S.

2. Since he regained leadership in 2012, Prime Minister Abe has responded to the challenge of diplomatic issues by combining the following three basic policies: maintain a political commitment to execute what has to be done, be all ears to what others say, and have flexibility in passing decisions as prime minister. In view of extremely sensitive nature of the issues to be solved, he demonstrated his strategic mindset to tackle them, one by one, rather than try to solve them all at once.

As a result, Prime Minister Abe accomplished a steady progress in the past five years in each of the diplomatic, defense and security issues, under the banner of “Proactive Pacifism.” For example, he established a “Deterrent and Dialog” stance toward China, centering on the Senkaku Islands issue which continues to be a potential flash point. As for the Japan-U. S. security alliance which has involved a critical imbalance in bilateral obligations, he worked out an interpretational revision of what the Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution addresses.

In August 2015, he gave a 70th anniversary commemorative speech on Japan's historical course since the end of WWII, expressing among others his endorsement of the Japan-South Korea bilateral relations which former Prime Minister Murayama had established. In December 2015, he worked out a mutually irreversible agreement with South Korea concerning the so-called comfort women issue. In December 2016, he invited President Putin of Russia to his hometown in Yamaguchi Prefecture, in an effort to seek a new possibility to promote the bilateral diplomatic negotiations for peace between the two countries.

In the spring of 2017, Prime Minister Abe's administration slipped into a critical situation due to different challenges of domestic issues. However, he regained strong leadership after the ruling party won a landslide victory in the election of October 2017. Today Prime Minister Abe is facing major diplomatic challenges from North Korea, Russia and China, in each of which Japan's alliance with the U. S. continues to be of vital importance.

3. North Korea continues to express a visibly threatening stance especially toward the U. S., as highlighted by the hostile exchange of verbal blows between Kim Jong-un and President Trump. In diplomatic negotiations, all possible measures should be sought after to attain a solution. Let us hope that the tireless diplomatic efforts between the two countries will bring about a positive development.

In retrospect, North Korea's economy was better off than South Korea's during the years following the end of WWII. This is because Kim Il-son could inherit the industrial infrastructure built and left by Japan while South Korea had only farmlands. In 1951 Kim decided to wage a war to expand his territory into the south. Ultimately the war came to a cease-fire at the 38th parallel north. In 1953 Stalin passed away and Kim Il-son concluded peace agreements with China and Russia, respectively.

In 1994, Kim Jon-il started his leadership in North Korea after the three-year mourning over the passing of his father Kim Il-son. The most tragic incidents which took place during Kim Il-son's dictatorship include the terrorist attack in 1983 of the South Korean president and his delegation while in Langoon (today's Yangon), Myanmar as well as the time bomb-triggered mid-air explosion in 1987 of the Korean Airline 858 which originally departed from Baghdad, bound for Seoul. After the passing of Kim Jon-il, his son Kim Jon-un took over the dictatorship regime and solidified the 3-generation of military-centric national framework. Nuclear armament was the option Kim Jon-un took for securing the continuation of the Kim's dynasty in North Korea.

When we compare North Korea and Taiwan, we notice a conspicuous difference in how the second-generation leaders have behaved. In 1949 Chiang Kai-shek and one million Chinese retreated from mainland China to Taiwan and proclaimed martial law. His son Chiang Wei-kuo hammered out the following two directives toward the end of his leadership; the lifting of the martial law and the approval for organizing new political parties other than the Chinese National Party. It marked the start of the Democratic Progressive Party which declared as its mission the independence of Taiwan. After the retirement of Chiang Wei-kuo, Lee Teng-hui took over the leadership and drove movements toward full-fledged democracy which resulted in more Taiwanization.

An invariable principle in diplomacy is to know your counterpart. For this purpose, it's indispensable to understand the historical track records and maintain a network of key personnel.

4. I'm concerned about the visible slowdown on the part of Russian in the bilateral diplomatic negotiations with Japan, once into 2017. Both the international diplomatic environment and the U. S.-Japan dialog for economic cooperation are in a challenging status. Therefore, it will be imperative for the two leaders to demonstrate committed leadership and let the related bureaucrats follow up on the outcome of their dialog. Otherwise, the bilateral efforts may lose momentum.

5. In China, Xi Jinping succeeded in grasping more power in 2017 and kicked off the One Belt, One Road international initiative which seeks the formation of a China-centered new trading network, involving Eurasian countries. The initiative involves political, military and economic activities comprehensively. All the world will be watching closely what Xi Jinping will announce as new policies at the forthcoming National Congress of the Communist Party of China.



From Ambassador Togo's insightful lecture, I could learn many things helpful for understanding the challenging nature of the current international relations. Frankly, it is rare that we have a perception of impending crises in our ordinary life. I was enlightened about the necessity for us to look at international relations from extensive viewpoints. I trust that those who attended this lecture would love to participate in Ambassador Togo's next lecture. I hope that those who could not get admission this time will submit their applications sooner next time and get their seats.

(Written by N. Kaneta, Vice President, the Cross-cultural Awareness Committee, and translated by S. Tanahashi, the PR, Bulletin & Internet Committee)

(Continued from P. 1) A Thought on World Heritage

In May of 2017, MUA presented a visit to The National Museum of Western Art which was designed by Le Corbusier and enjoyed an opportunity to listen to the presentation on the Matsukata Collection. I also personally enjoyed The Grand Exhibition on the Silk Road - SOSin - DENSin Clone Cultural Property: Revitalization of Lost Time ends held at The University Art Museum of Tokyo University of the Arts. It was an epoch-making event that advocated to think about world heritages on a global scale.

World Heritages are divided into such three categories as Cultural, Natural and Mixed Cultural and Natural Heritage. World Cultural Heritage among them holds a universal value which does not belong to a specific ethnic group nor a nation. I could understand that it was a global thought based not only on international community but on all the people of the world.

It is not long since I was involved in the UNESCO activities. However, I believe it important that I touch on "tangible and intangible world heritages" and understand their cultural background and history as a step for thinking about the peace among many fields of UNESCO activities.

(Translated by Y. Suda, the PR, Bulletin and Internet Committee)

The 21st MUA Salon
Global Thinking, Local Action
New Possibility for Global Citizens' Activities;
Challenges by Groups of Housewives

Date: October 17, 2017

Place: Minato City Life-long Learning Center

The speaker of this salon was Mrs. Yoshiko Nagato, MUA Director. She talked about "Inter-Cultural Community Life Association". She repeated during her talk that her experience as a Standing Director of Minato UNESCO Association (MUA) in planning and implementing of a number of events during the early days of MUA enriched her soul. Meeting socially prominent persons who represent various fields became her precious property. Thanking deeply for those who kindly taught and let her, she has been trying to return a favor since then. She reiterates that she owes what she is today to them as well. It was a two-hour session in which we strongly felt that she valued the relationship with people, and has been involved in various activities very energetically.



The ICCLA, which Mrs. Nagato led, stands for Inter-Cultural Community Life Association, and was named by Mr. K. Miwa, Honorary President of MUA. She dedicated herself in ICCLA and had tried to expand the UNESCO spirit to the society.

Brief profile of Mrs. Nagato is as stated below:

She moved to Minato City in 1975 when her husband was transferred to a new position there. She undertook a position as a PTA officer of her son's high school, participated in the Minato City sponsored seminars for housewives, open lectures held by universities, and many more. Taking advantage of experiences she had in the said careers, she established the International NGO ICCLA in Utsunomiya city back in 1983. Trainees invited from Mongolia by Ministry of Foreign Affairs, whom she took care of during their stay in Japan, established the Ulaanbaatar ICCLA. She received from Mongolia a state award of the highest recognition, the Altan Cadas medal (Order of the Polar Star) on September 14, 2015. She largely contributed to MUA by sending a number of foreign students studied in Utsunomiya University to participate in the Youth Forum held by MUA during the year 2011 and 2016. Those foreign students thanked a lot that they were given opportunities to have quite valuable experiences.

We at MUA also would like to express our great appreciation for extending great cooperation to us in carrying out the Youth Forum where we could deepen the exchanges with foreign students and young people.



(Written by T. Kobayashi, Standing Director, and translated by Y. Suda, the PR, Bulletin & Internet Committee)

The 2nd Hands-on Cultural Workshop The Japanese Folk Song & Tale in Kumamoto

Date: Saturday, October 7, 2017

Place: Minato City Life-long Learning Center

A total of 42 people participated in this workshop which offered an opportunity to learn Kumamoto tales (spoken with a local dialect) and the traditional Otemoyan dancing. This event was held with an objective to provide monetary support for the restoration of the earthquake-stricken Kumamoto Castle.

In Part I, Ms. Naoko Matsumoto (right photo), a freelance announcer & narrator, recited a cat-related folktale which originated from Mt. Nekodake inside the once-volcanic Mt. Aso, Kyushu. Everyone enjoyed the local dialect with which she presented the story.



In Part II, Ms. Fujima Toyotaro (center of photos below) and her pupils first gave an impressive demonstration of the Otemoyan dance and then opened the floor for kimono-clad attendees to join them and learn how to dance, step by step. Everyone looked very happy. A brief career of Ms. Fujima is as follows:

1963 Became a pupil of the first Fujima Kandayu, her grandmother.

1983 Became the 2nd Fujima Toyotaro.

1986 Received a merit award from the Minister of Education

Ms. Fujima assumes an important positions at the Japanese Classical Dance Association and also teaches Japanese dance at the NHK Culture Center. She has performed many times in foreign countries, including Austria, China, Denmark, France, South Korea, Spain, and the U. S.

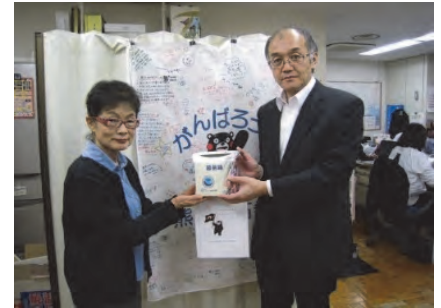


Some comments from the attendees:

- I had a great fun. The dance was unexpectedly demanding physically and was a good exercise.
- I felt like learning more about the Otemoyan dance.
- The friendly learning experience was memorable.
- The workshop was just too short. Still I enjoyed it as there has not been any opportunity to know about Kumamoto.
- It was good that I did not become nervous because of the comfortably noisy environment.

As our readers know, a big earthquake hit the Kumamoto prefecture in April 2016. The Kumamoto Castle sustained devastating damages. It is estimated that a huge amount of money would be necessary for the repair & restoration of the castle. As of April 2017, a partial restoration of the castle tower portion is expected to be complete in the spring of 2019.

From the castle tower, you can command a distant view of Mt. Aso which was registered as a UNESCO geo-park on September 23, 2014. At this workshop, we asked the attendees for their generous donation to the Kumamoto Castle Restoration Fund. We are pleased to report that the donation amounted to ¥10,500. On October 17, we delivered the proceeds to the Tokyo office of the Kumamoto prefecture (photo). Taking this opportunity, we'd like to extend deep appreciation to Mr. Morita, secretary general, and Mr. Yamaguchi, supervisory officer, of the Kumamoto Kenjinkai.



(Written by K. Hirakata, Vice President, and translated by S. Tanahashi, the PR, Bulletin & Internet Committee)

The oil painting by S. Yamamoto, an MUA member, wins a big award at the 53rd Soujyukai Art Exhibition

The 53rd Soujyukai Art Exhibition was held at the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum from October 24 – 30, 2017. At this exhibition, the oil painting titled “A Breeze from the Adriatic Sea” (photo) by Mr. Shunsuke Yamamoto, an MUA member, won the award from the Minister of the Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology Ministry. I saw this 100-size art work during the exhibition period and it's a great pleasure for me to report on this recognition of Mr. Yamamoto's accomplishment. I wish for a continuation of his tireless creative efforts. Mr. Yamamoto gave the following comment:



“I have participated in the Soujyukai exhibition for over 20 years. In the past I was fortunate enough to receive recognition a few times, including the award from the president of the Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly in 2009 and another from the Mainichi Shimbun in 2014. The year 2017 will remain as an unforgettable year for me as the award I received this time is the most prestigious.

I have long worked as an architectural designer which calls for extensive involvements with society. Thus my major objective in painting has been to present figurative images which are easy to understand, and which portray different people. I captured the view from atop the high castle wall, looking down on the beautiful Dubrovnik community and feeling a soothing breeze from the Adriatic Sea. I'm pleased that this representational painting was highly evaluated and won the award.”

(Written by K. Hirakata, Vice President, and translated by S. Tanahashi, the PR, Bulletin & Internet Committee)

**The 2017 Kanto-Block UNESCO Convention in Ichikawa,
Commemorating the 70th Anniversary of the Grass-roots UNESCO Activities.
Theme: Let's disseminate the "Peace for Tomorrow" spirit, far and near.
- Dialogs on "Peace-oriented Activities" pursuing more enthusiasm and
expanded membership at all MUA Associations -**

Date: October 14 (Sat.) & 15 (Sun.)

Place: Yamazaki Baking Creation Center in Ichikawa

This commemorative event took place in Ichikawa, Chiba. It was kicked off by the violin performance of Mr. Eijin Nimura, a UNESCO-designated peace artist. It was followed by the opening address by Ms. Haruko Yoshizaki, chairperson of the host UNESCO association, as well as invited dignitaries. Professor Yukio Nishimura of the University of Tokyo gave a keynote speech titled "UNESCO World Heritages and Future Heritages, addressing world peace." (right photo)



A total of five concurrent sessions were organized, including ① UNESCO schools, ② Information dissemination, publicity and member recruitment, ③ Career design and UNESCO, ④ World heritages and future heritages, and ⑤ Peace activities and Terakoya initiatives. At the end of these sessions, each representative gave a summary presentation. The convention successfully marked the 70th anniversary of the grass-roots UNESCO activities in Japan. The Day 1 was wrapped up with a powerful yell of "Let's meet again in Ibaraki!" by those belonging to the next host association.

I for one joined a branch committee, included in the 4th session mentioned above, where Mr. N. Kidokoro of the Toshima UNESCO Association gave a presentation on their "Zohshigaya-gayagaya" future heritage project. During fiscal 2014, their community was certified as the third Future Heritage, following Kagurazaka and Yanaka, within the central Tokyo area. I could understand how their project developed from the start to the certification, along with their future prospect. I was impressed with their close interactions with the local community and thought I should visit the place in the future.

In Day 2, the National Federation of UNESCO Associations in Japan held a program titled "Power-up Workshop." It was a meeting for everyone to participate, addressing the acquisition of information and knowhow which should be shared for promoting UNESCO activities further.

(Written by T. Kobayashi, Standing Director, and translated by S. Tanahashi, the PR, Bulletin & Internet Committee)

In memoriam: Mr. Yoshiya Mikami, an MUA advisor, passed away at age 82 on August 24, 2017. He was the founder and CEO of the Minato City-based Institute of Sound Arts. In 1981 when MUA was founded, he joined as a Director and later assumed the position of Vice President from 1987 to 1991. Without any exaggeration, his extensive viewpoints & networks along with enthusiasm and execution power contributed a lot to MUA's growth, especially during its burgeoning period when Minato City and its citizens were yet to be clear about the concept "internationalization." In 1992, the Minato International Association was established under the guidance of the Ministry of Home Affairs. Mr. Mikami became the first MIA president at the request of the Minato City mayor. In his double cap-position, he continued to provide helpful advices to MUA. He'll be sorely missed.

(Written by M. Takai, Counselor & Director, and translated by S. Tanahashi, the PR, Bulletin & Internet Committee)

Participation in the 36th Minato Citizens Festival

Date: October 7 (Sat) & 8 (Sun), 2017

Place: Minato City Shiba Park

As in the past, MUA participated in the Minato City's flagship annual event to introduce its extensive grass-roots activities while also doing a mini-bazaar for fund-raising. The early morning rain had let up by the time Day 1 opened. We could scent the smell of ginkgo nuts even inside our tent. We hanged the publicity panels of different MUA committees on the cloth walls while placing complementary event flyers and member-recruitment leaflets on the convenient table surface. Whenever people walked by, we spoke to them to catch their attention to MUA. Although not many people came inside our tent, there were some who took an interest in the forthcoming Cross-cultural Awareness Lecture (Speaker: Ambassador K. Togo) and made attendee registration on the spot. On Day 1 Mayor Takei made round visits to all the tents and boosted the participation atmosphere.

As for the mini-bazaar, we had a smaller number of donated items than last year. However, we could record a larger amount of sales, thanks to the cooperation from our members. The proceeds were donated to the East Japan Great Earthquake Student Relief Scholarship. We'd like to extend hearty thanks, not only to MUA President Nagano for providing car transportation for the donated items but also other members who offered various assistance.



(Written by T. Isobe, Vice Chairperson, the Minato Citizens Festival Committee, and translated by S. Tanahashi, the PR, Bulletin & Internet Committee)

(Continued from P. 10) UNESCO Press Release on the withdrawal of Israel from the Organization

Israel has ratified 18 UNESCO International Conventions and has nine cultural sites on the World Heritage List.

Masada (2001) / Old City of Acre (2001) / White City of Tel-Aviv -- the Modern Movement (2003) / Biblical Tels - Megiddo, Hazor, Beer Sheba (2005) / Incense Route - Desert Cities in the Negev (2005) / Bahá'í Holy Places in Haifa and the Western Galilee (2008) / Sites of Human Evolution at Mount Carmel: The Nahal Me'arot / Wadi el-Mughara Caves (2012) / Caves of Maresha and Bet-Guvrin in the Judean Lowlands as a Microcosm of the Land of the Caves(2014) / Necropolis of Bet She'arim: A Landmark of Jewish Renewal (2015)

Mount Carmel (1996) and Megiddo (2011) are members of UNESCO's World Network of Biosphere Reserves. In 2014, Tel Aviv - Yafo joined UNESCO's Network of Creative Cities for Media Arts. Israeli universities host 12 UNESCO Chairs and one UNESCO Centre. Twenty-five Israeli schools are members of the Associated Schools Network.

UNESCO Press Release

Declaration by UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay on the withdrawal of Israel from the Organization

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UNESCO Director-General, Audrey Azoulay
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29 December 2017

In my capacity as Director-General of UNESCO, I was officially notified today by the Israeli Government of Israel's withdrawal from the Organization effective on 31 December 2018, a decision which was announced on 12 October 2017.

I regret this deeply, as it is my conviction that it is inside UNESCO and not outside it that States can best seek to overcome differences in the Organization's fields of competence.

A Member of UNESCO since 1949, Israel has a rightful place inside the United Nations agency that is dedicated to education, culture and science. Inside an institution committed to the defence of freedom of expression, the prevention of all forms of antisemitism and racism, which has developed a unique programme of education about the Holocaust and the prevention of genocide. Inside an institution that is among the most active in promoting dialogue among cultures, fighting violent extremism and conserving heritage affected, notably, by the destructive acts of terrorist organizations.

In the face of disagreements among Member States, which lead to votes for which they are responsible, engaging fully in the work of UNESCO makes possible sustained dialogue, cooperation and partnerships that are more necessary than ever and that I committed to support when I took office.

Facts and figures concerning the cooperation between Israel and UNESCO:

Israel has been a member of UNESCO since 16 September 1949 when it also established a National Commission for UNESCO.

Renowned Israeli personalities are associated to UNESCO: Ivry Gitlis as Goodwill Ambassador, sculptor Dani Karavan as Artist for Peace, and Professor Ada Yonath received the UNESCO-L'Oréal For Women in Science Prize in 2008, one year before she won a Nobel Prize. **(To be continued on P. 9)**

Minato UNESCO Association is a citizens' voluntary membership organization that promotes Japanese traditional culture, holds cross-cultural workshops and presents multicultural events and international symposia for world peace. For any questions or comments about our articles, please contact our secretariat office at:

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