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## Abstract

What is the state media's role in reinforcing traditionalism? What implications does traditionalization have for society and particularly violence against women? In the case of Kazakhstan, Kazakhstan's state media plays a role in reinforcing societal traditionalism. These policies manifest in the form of violence against women: non-consensual bride abductions have been steadily increasing in prevalence since the Soviet collapse. I argue that Kazakhstan's re-traditionalization policies could have reinforced the salience of clan survival rather than class mobility. I build on both Kathleen Collin's work on Central Asian clan politics and Cynthia Werner's exploration of economic incentives for men to kidnap wives (Werner (2009)). Collins identifies how clans cut through class cleavages (Collins (2007), 27) and provide a means for social mobility via marriage (Collins (2007), 26). As the first iteration of this project, I will generate descriptive statistics from an analysis of Central Asian Barometer data as well as International Crime Victims Survey (ICVS) data for Kazakhstan. This descriptive analysis will better prepare me to conduct a content analysis (searching for words associated with clan or class) of state-media and independent media representation of bride kidnapping in Kazakhstan. If clan salience is a better explanation than economic motives, then mitigating the practice of non-consensual bride abduction would not be a matter of solely targeting economic inequality. To what extent is women's political participation or political behavior affected by one's position in society and one's trauma? Since bride kidnapping is a patterned behavior that renders the abducted woman's choice to marry obsolete, woman's choices in other spheres of society may also be impacted.

*Keywords:* clan, media, rhetoric, consent, post-Soviet, nationalism, re-traditionalization, class

Word count: 1241

## Clan, Class or State (Media)?: Evaluating the Roots of Kazakh Bride Abduction

**Introduction**

Since the Soviet Collapse, Kazakh bride kidnapping has been increasing in prevalence (Werner (2009)). Scholars have argued that economic motives may be at the heart of these kidnappings, with men kidnapping wives to secure social mobility (Werner (2009)). However, it is possible that clans cut through class cleavages (Collins (2007), 27) and provide a means for social mobility via marriage (Collins (2007), 26). As the first iteration of this project, I will generate descriptive statistics and an analysis from Central Asian Barometer data as well as International Crime Victims Survey (ICVS) data for Kazakhstan in 2018 to problematize the idea that economic motives are at the heart of bride abduction. I will, first, analyze how pervasive the practice is in Kazakhstan using the ICVS data. As Werner (2009) looks at young unmarried men in particular, my first steps will evaluate the economic grievances among this group, compared to women, and then the whole population from the Central Asia Barometer. Following that analysis, I will determine which media agencies I should look at in further versions of this study. This descriptive analysis will better prepare me to conduct a content analysis (searching for words associated with clan or class) of state-media and independent media representation of bride kidnapping in Kazakhstan. If clan salience is a better explanation than economic motives, then mitigating the practice of non-consensual bride abduction would not be a matter of solely targeting economic inequality. More broadly, my findings will also speak to literature on state measures in relation to informal institutions.

## 53 Summary Statistics for the ICVS Data

Summary Statistics of ICVS Data	
Characteristic	N = 4,000 <sup>1</sup>
A7	
1 Not worried at all	1,313 (33%)
2 A bit worried	854 (21%)
3 Quite worried	442 (11%)
4 Very worried	802 (20%)
5 Don't know	284 (7.1%)
6 Not applicable/Refuse to answer (have no daughter/granddaughter/sister)	305 (7.6%)
D0	
1 Yes	47 (4.6%)
2 No	963 (94%)
3 Do not know or cannot remember	14 (1.4%)
4 Refusal	5 (0.5%)
Unknown	2,971
F1	
1 Male	1,820 (46%)
2 Female	2,180 (55%)
F2_1	
2 16-19 years	341 (8.5%)
3 20-24 years	418 (10%)
4 25-34 years	1,147 (29%)
5 35-44 years	887 (22%)
6 45-54 years	569 (14%)
7 55-64 years	405 (10%)
8 65 years and more	233 (5.8%)
F2	35 (27, 48)
K0	
1 Kazakh	710 (18%)
2 Russian	3,290 (82%)
D1	
1 Yes	31 (66%)
2 No	14 (30%)
3 Do not know or cannot remember	2 (4.3%)
Unknown	3,953
D2	
2 No	12 (86%)
3 Do not know or cannot remember	1 (7.1%)
4 Refusal	1 (7.1%)
Unknown	3,986
F11	
1 Astana	1,000 (25%)
10 Kostanai oblast	120 (3.0%)
11 Kyzylorda oblast	100 (2.5%)
12 Mangystau oblast	80 (2.0%)
13 South-Kazakhstan oblast	380 (9.5%)
14 Pavlodar oblast	100 (2.5%)
15 North-Kazakhstan oblast	80 (2.0%)
16 East-Kazakhstan oblast	180 (4.5%)
2 Almaty	1,000 (25%)
3 Akmola oblast	100 (2.5%)
4 Aktobe oblast	120 (3.0%)
5 Almaty oblast	260 (6.5%)
6 Atyrau oblast	80 (2.0%)
7 West-Kazakhstan oblast	80 (2.0%)
8 Zhambyl oblast	140 (3.5%)
9 Karaganda oblast	180 (4.5%)
<sup>1</sup> n (%); Median (IQR)	

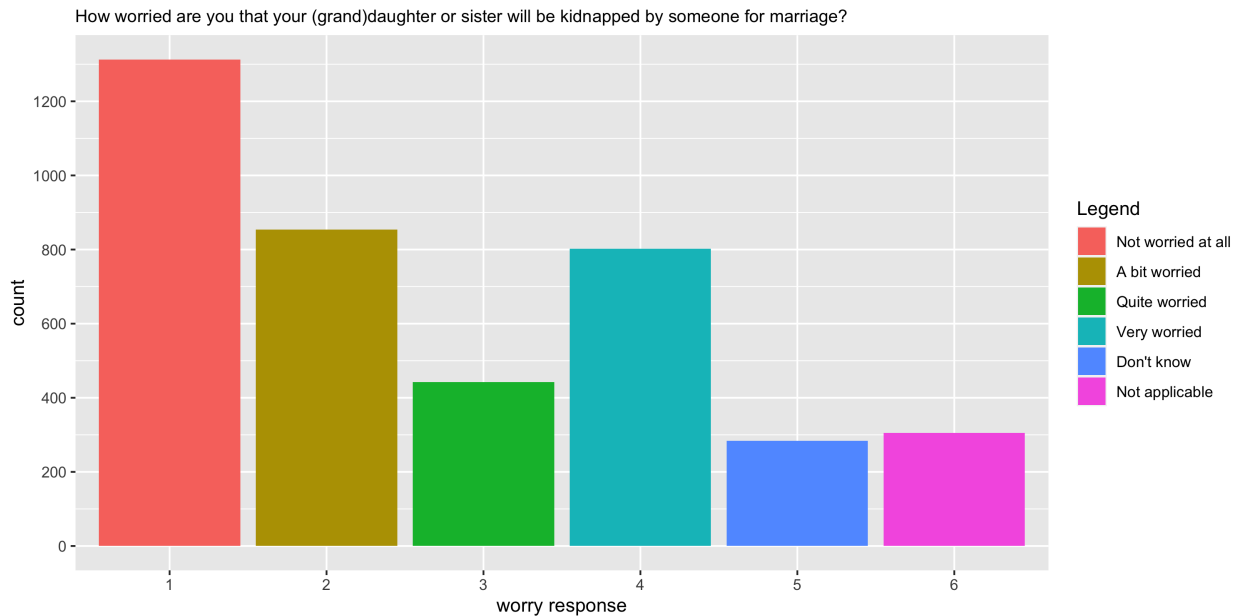
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Legend: A7: Worry level for

55 bride kidnapping D0: If married, have you been subject to bride kidnapping? F1: Male or

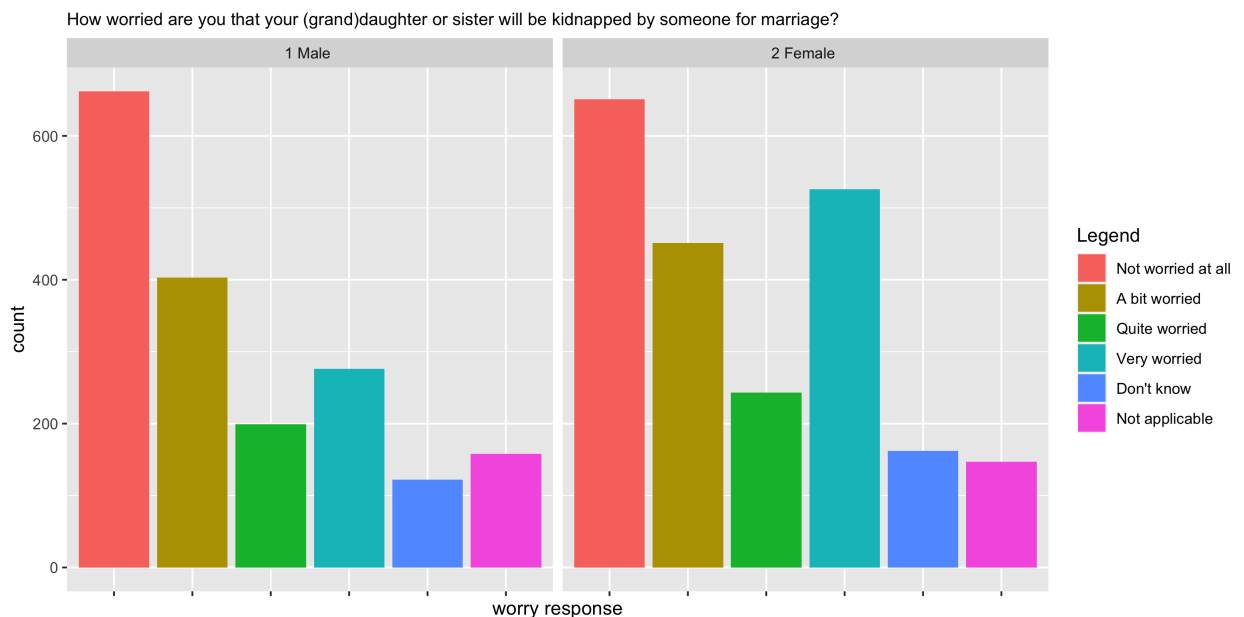
56 Female F2\_1: Age Range F2: Age D1: Did you agree to kidnapping in advance? (If D0, yes)  
 57 D2: Did you report to the police? F11: Regions of Kazakhstan

## 58 Concern for Victims of Kidnapping



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60 Ultimately, those surveyed mostly did not worry about relatives being subject to bride  
 61 kidnapping. However, this is not disaggregated by gender.



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63 When we disaggregate the data by gender, we see that women are “very worried” more often

than men. Of course, the majority of those interviewed are still not that worried about the practice. One thing to note is that the traditional practice has two forms: one with consent and one without consent. It is possible that the people surveyed are not envisioning the non-consensual practice. It is also possible that both types of the practice are being considered by respondents, which could also lead to underreporting of worrying. Next, I look at region, to see if perhaps the prevalence of bride kidnapping is more severe in certain regions of Kazakhstan.

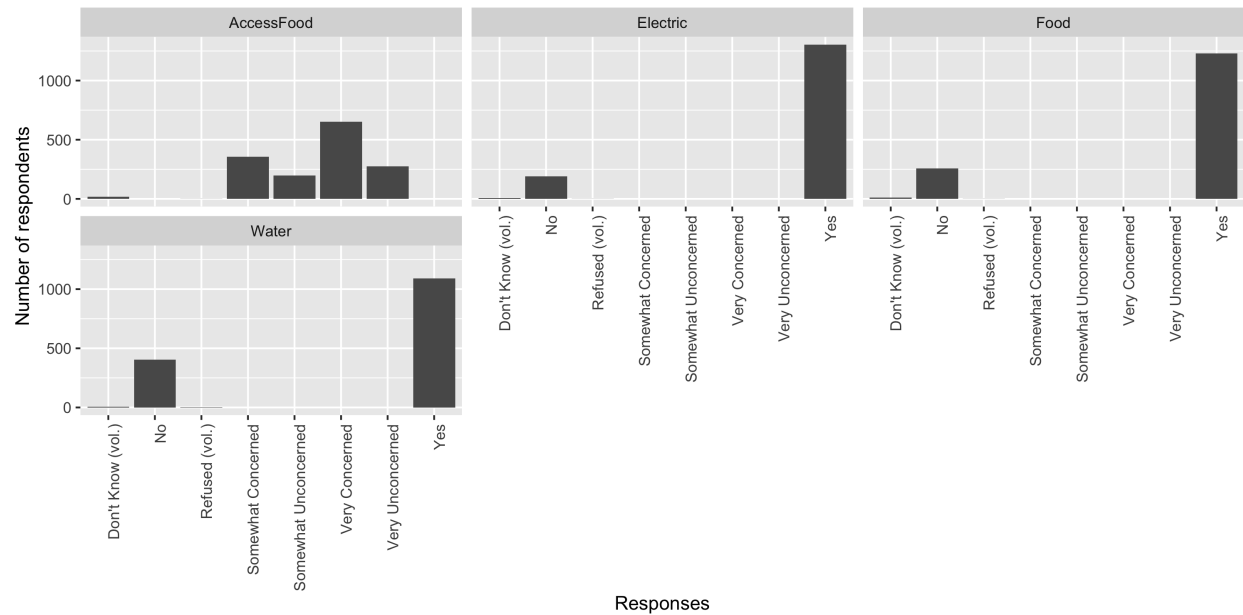
### Kidnapping Risk



In Astana (now Nur-Sultan) and Almaty cities, more married women have been subject to bride kidnapping. Almaty oblast and South-Kazakhstan oblast have the next highest incidences of the practice.

## 76 Summary Statistics for the Central Asia Barometer Data

	Variable	NotNA	Mean	Median	PropNA
1	GeoCode	1500			
2	... Rural	700	46.7%		
3	... Urban	800	53.3%		
4	Gender	1500			
5	... Female	969	64.6%		
6	... Male	531	35.4%		
7	Age	1500	42.611	40	0
8	Water	1500			
9	... Don't Know (vol.)	6	0.4%		
10	... No	403	26.9%		
11	... Refused (vol.)	1	0.1%		
12	... Yes	1090	72.7%		
13	Food	1500			
14	... Don't Know (vol.)	12	0.8%		
15	... No	256	17.1%		
16	... Refused (vol.)	1	0.1%		
17	... Yes	1231	82.1%		
18	Electric	1500			
19	... Don't Know (vol.)	6	0.4%		
20	... No	189	12.6%		
21	... Refused (vol.)	1	0.1%		
22	... Yes	1304	86.9%		
23	Educate	1500			
24	... Don't Know (vol.)	35	2.3%		
25	... No	437	29.1%		
26	... Refused (vol.)	6	0.4%		
27	... Yes	1022	68.1%		
28	AgeGrp	1500			
29	... 18-24	178	11.9%		
30	... 25-34	359	23.9%		
31	... 35-44	333	22.2%		
32	... 45-54	260	17.3%		
33	... 55+	370	24.7%		
34	TrustNwsPpr	1500			
35	... Distrust somewhat	269	17.9%		
36	... Don't Know (vol.)	223	14.9%		
37	... Refused (vol.)	20	1.3%		
38	... Strongly distrust	197	13.1%		
39	... Strongly Trust	255	17%		
40	... Trust somewhat	536	35.7%		
41	MarriageStat2	1500			
42	... Married	744	49.6%		
43	... Refused (vol.)	9	0.6%		
44	... Single	436	29.1%		
45	... Widowed or divorced	311	20.7%		
46	AccessFood	1500			
47	... Don't Know (vol.)	19	1.3%		
48	... Refused (vol.)	1	0.1%		
49	... Somewhat Concerned	357	23.8%		
50	... Somewhat Unconcerned	197	13.1%		
51	... Very Concerned	652	43.5%		
52	... Very Unconcerned	274	18.3%		

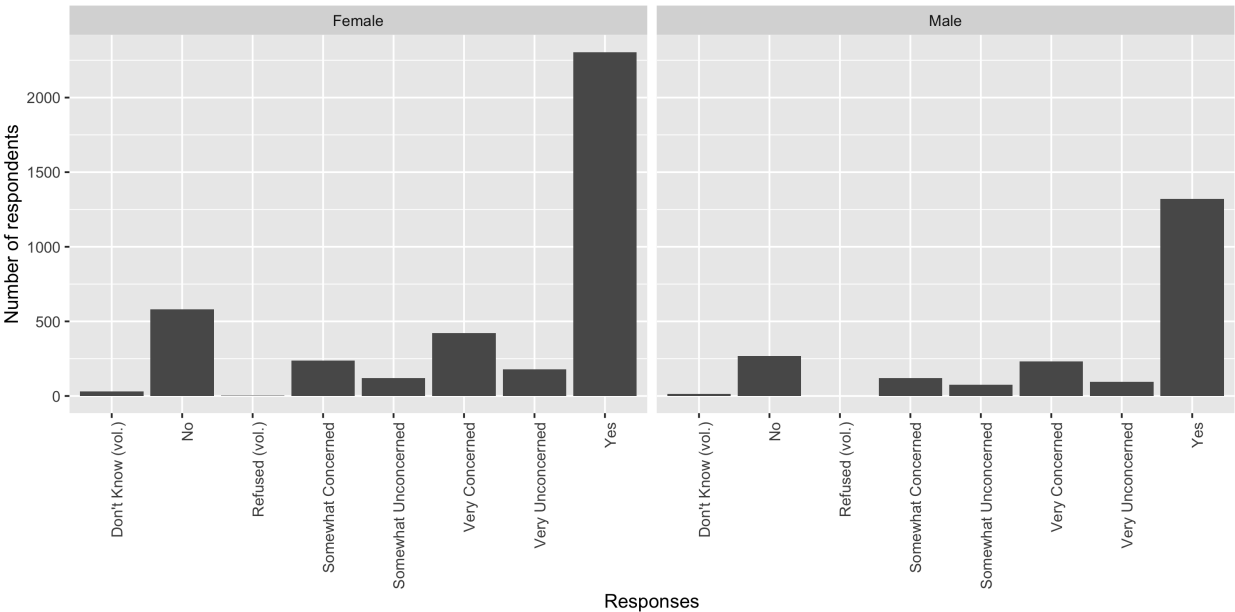


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80 This is an aggregate pool of responses to questions pertaining to material and resource  
 81 security. The highest ammount of responses is “somewhat concerned” to “very concerned”  
 82 about access to food. Food security can be an indicator of economic security. Most  
 83 respondents have adequate access to electricity, food, and water. Access versus worries over  
 84 access are viewed differently in the analysis (i.e. The store may be accross the street, but can  
 85 you afford the products inside?). Next, I will disaggregate by gender, and pool the above  
 86 responses as a “resource marker,” keeping in mind that access to food is on its own scale for  
 87 this analysis.

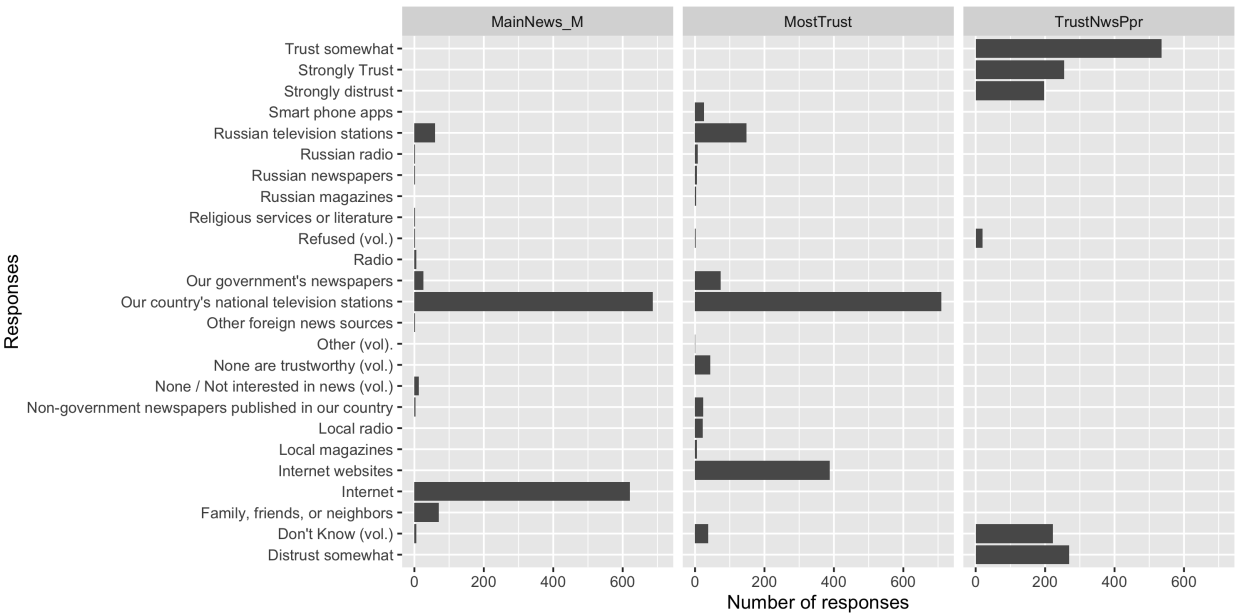


Our “Resource Marker”



Ultimately, women feel less materially secure than men when it comes to access to electricity, food, and water. Anxiety over food access is also felt significantly more by women. Our “resource marker” shows that women in Kazakhstan feel less economically secure than men.

What does media consumption look like in Kazakhstan?



The main news consumed comes in Kazakhstan from the internet and Kazakhstan’s national

television stations. It is also the most trusted content. kazakhs also watch Russian television stations. Newspapers are mostly to somewhat trusted. This media consumption is consistent with my claim that the state media may be a good vessel for Kazakh re-traditionalization mechanisms. Since some news comes from the internet, it may mean that more independent media may be available, and it would be worth it to deduce whether variation exists between state-run and independent media in terms of representation of clan and class in media articles. It is also important to note that the Kazakh government has been increasing internet restrictions since 2017, even initiating internet shutdowns “Internet Censorship in Kazakhstan” (n.d.).

## Methods

I report how I determined my sample size, all data exclusions (if any), all manipulations, and all measures in the study in the summary statistics.

I used ICVS data from a 2018 survey conducted in Kazakhstan by Dijk, Van Kesteren, Trochev, and Slade (2018). The Central Asia Barometer Data comes from 2019.

## Procedure

I generated summary statistics to analyze both the Central Asian Barometer data as well as International Crime Victims Survey (ICVS) data for Kazakhstan. I created various data visualizations of descriptive statistics to probe the existing theory about economic motives and bride abduction. I analyzed young men’s motives and bride kidnapping’s prevalence. I also determined what kind of media agencies I should look at, so that I may scrape words associated with class and clan in later iterations of this study.

## Data analysis

I used R (Version 4.1.2; R Core Team, 2021) and the R-packages *dplyr* (Version 1.0.7; Wickham, François, Henry, & Müller, 2021), *forcats* (Version 0.5.1; Wickham, 2021a), *foreign*

(Version 0.8.81; R Core Team, 2020), *ggplot2* (Version 3.3.5; Wickham, 2016), *gtsummary* (Version 1.5.0; Sjoberg, Whiting, Curry, Lavery, & Larmarange, 2021), *papaja* (Version 0.1.0.9997; Aust & Barth, 2020), *purrr* (Version 0.3.4; Henry & Wickham, 2020), *readr* (Version 2.0.2; Wickham & Hester, 2021), *stringr* (Version 1.4.0; Wickham, 2019), *tibble* (Version 3.1.5; Müller & Wickham, 2021), *tidyr* (Version 1.1.4; Wickham, 2021b), *tidyverse* (Version 1.3.1; Wickham et al., 2019), and *tinylabls* (Version 0.2.1; Barth, 2021) for all my analyses.

## Results

I did not find that respondents worried much about bride kidnapping, unless they were women. Certain regions have higher incidences of bride kidnapping. Access to resources like electricity, water, and food is adequate, but worries and anxiety over food access is present. Again, the worrying effect grows once the resource data is pooled then disaggregated by gender. Next, media consumption in Kazakhstan aligns well with my proposed course of action for media analysis and web-scraping.

## Discussion

The descriptive statistics do not show correlations between men and economic concerns. Perhaps class is not a sure and solid variable through which to mediate the bride kidnapping practice. Further work should be done to conduct the content analysis suggested in the abstract and eventually infer causality.

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