Women's Civil Society Organizations: A Sociological Study Kadın Sivil Toplum Örgütleri: Sosyolojik Bir Araştırma

Prof. Dr. M. Ali KİRMAN^a, Ömer Faruk IŞIKLI^b

^a Hatay Mustafa Kemal Üniversitesi, İlahiyat Fakültesi, Hatay/Türkiye, <u>makirman@cu.edu.tr</u>
^b Doğa Kolejleri, Düzce/Türkiye, <u>isikli.omerfaruk@gmail.com</u>
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Öz:

Sivil toplum örgütlerinin tarihi süreçten bugünkü mevcut durumuna bakıldığında onların günümüzün toplumsal bir realitesi olduğu söylenebilir. Bu bağlamda bir diğer toplumsal gerçeklik olarak kadın sivil toplum örgütlerinin de son on beş yirmi yılda ciddi bir artış eğilimi göstermiş olduğu bilinmektedir. Kadınların sivil toplum örgütleri içerisinde faaliyetleri kendilerini sosyal hale getirdiği ve bu örgütlerin kadınlar için çok önemli bir sosyalleşme alanı olduğunu söylenebilir. Kadının sosyal hayata katılımı ve kamusal alanda görünürlüğü ve kadın örgütlenmelerin kadın hakları için yaptığı etki ve katkılar yadsınamaz bir gerçekliktir. İstatistiklere dayalı nicel bir çalışma olan bu araştırmada şu sorulara cevap aranacaktır: Bir sivil toplum örgütü olarak kadın örgütlenmelerinin kadın hakları konusundaki bilinçlenme düzeyine ne kadar etki etmektedir? Türk toplumunda kadın örgütlerine bakış nedir? Türkiye'de kadın toplum örgütlerinin kadın üye sayısı ne kadardır? Kadın örgütlenmelerinin faaliyetlerine yönelik herhangi bir baskı (ataerkil algı, geleneksel din anlayışı) söz konusu mudur? **Anahtar Kelimeler:** *Kadın, Sivil Toplum, Kadın STKlar, Ataerkillik ve Din, Türkiye*

Abstract:

From the perspective of the historical process of non-governmental organization (NGO) presence, it is a social reality for today. In the past two decades, women's non-governmental organizations as another social reality has intensively increased. It might say that, women's activities in these organizations made them social and these organizations are very important area for their socialization. It is possible to say, the number of women's associations have increased for the last two decades. Women's participation in social life, their visibility in the public domain, the impact of women's associations in public to human rights for women is an undeniable reality. In this research as a quantitative study based on statistics, the following questions will be sought: How do women's associations effect raising awareness of women's associations in current process? Is there any differentiation between NGOs from city to city or from region to region in Turkey? Additionally, what is the number of women members than men in the NGOs in Turkey? Is there any pressure (patriarchal perception, traditional religious repression) about that activities of women's associations? In this study we ask like these questions in sociological framework.

Keywords: Women, Civil Society, Women NGOs, Patriarchy and Religion, Turkey

INTRODUCTION

Although civil society has shown a variety of differences, it has been always existed throughout the history. The civil society or social sector organizations have every important place in the world. As we known, there are two kinds of civil society organizations: The non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the government-organized non-governmental organizations (GONGOs) (see. Cumming, 2010: 779). Here, we are interesting in first one. In Turkey, the number of civil society organizations or social sector organizations, especially advocating for women's rights, have been increasing in recent years. These organizations are known as "voluntary organizations, started to gain an important place in modern Turkey in recent years, will be discussed from the sociological perspective. In this regard, it is seen that they have an important effect on awareness and orientation of women in many fields of social life. Women's civil society organizations are becoming very dominant about the demands for human or women rights related to the social or public life, especially in terms of fundamental rights and freedoms. Now, we will try to show how the women's civil society organizations are effective in modern Turkey, comparing to another developed country.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The term of "civil society" literally means "society of citizens" and refers to a system of equality that protects safety of life and properties and an order in which every individual has the same rights. This concept is used as a tool that may raise an opportunity to live as a society. Although the western concept of civil society roots back to 15th century, it was only 18th century that this idea gained a new momentum and became conceptualized (Kirman 2016b:287). A German social scientist Habermas (1991), one of the most significant figures related with civil societies, regards these organizations outside politic and economic aspects and as ways of assembling that were brought into existence spontaneously on a volunteer basis and became a guardian for democratic law states. In this context, civil society is a network of social relations created with people's own will and around common interests or a body of relations that gives the right to choose and requires people to take responsibilities, thus appears in democratic societies. So, "A large and active civil society is held to be essential for a pleasant and effective society." (Bruce and Yearley, 2006:35).

Civil society in modern Turkey has experienced three different phases by Sarıbay. The first phase is an abstraction from its definition as a part of governments. The second corresponds to when independent communities within civil society gained legitimacy for their protection mechanisms against governments. The third phase shows a period of freedom in its definition as a preventive factor against governmental interferences, which are regarded as the source of conflicts (Sarıbay, 1998:89-90). Apparently, civil society in modern Turkey has experienced the various phases.

Another type of civil societies consists of "charitable foundations" (waqf) and "voluntary organizations". These two bodies are always considered together due to their coexistence within the history and complimentary structures for each other. A foundation is an organization that uses individual property and values particularly for societies and charities and protects them from governmental interferences and any other type of seizure (Ülken, 1969:315). Foundations are an example of solidarity and integration of Turkish society and constitute the most spirited forms of significant social organizations that represent social justice and peace (Kirman, 2016a:324).

Among the sociological discussions about civil society organizations, the status of Islamic communities and groups has always become controversial. Although there is no doubt that this controversy sometimes becomes too challenging to solve, it is possible to make some points depending on common characteristics of civil societies. While some academics known for their efforts in researching civil societies, such as Nilüfer Göle, Janine Clark, Koenraad Verhagen and Amani Kandil assert that religious organizations (Islamic communities) have an important role and function in civil society, while many argue that Islamic groups or associations fall outside the realm of civil society (Krause, 2008:5), another large part of the academia, including Ernest Gellner, Serif Mardin, Sönmez Kutlu, Ömer Caha et al., is of the opinion that Islamic organizations cannot be considered as civil societies (Kirman 2016b). In fact, religious communities and groups have a significant place and role within the body of civil societies; however, existence of the groups which are marginalized due to excessive power and do not act in accordance with their status and public role, even engage in violent acts and coup attempts, cannot be ignored. It is seen through the recent developments in Turkey that civil society is a significant component of within societies and has a wide range of action. Civil society can react against the developments unaccepted by the society. The last example of this issue is 15th July coup attempt that shows the effect of civil society. A religious community defining itself as a civil organization has obviously engaged in a conflict with government and society and attempted for a military coup. It should be stated that, although religious groups can be regarded as civil societies, they should not bear purposes such as seizing the governmental power or endangering authorities. Hereby it is obviously seen that these groups gain legitimacy as civil societies but exploit this image for malign purposes. However, the idea we've summarized above is not a topic of our discussion and indeed a different research subject.

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

1. Civil Society in the World

We can say that it is an important area in the world and in Turkey and has an important place within the framework of the social policies of the countries. There are civil society organizations in many Western countries, the Far East countries and the US territories, which are operating in the same way. The countries that we will discuss in terms of non-governmental organizations in the world are USA, UK, Germany, France and India and

also these countries will be examined and evaluated. We can say that it is handled as social sector organizations in the West. For example, Germany is the first country in the world that we will investigate. 16 states in this country had 81.459.000¹ people according to the census of 2015. According to the data of 2014, 588.801² civil society organizations were found in total. We can say that the US is the first among developed countries in the world. The US population was 322.761.807³ according to the data for January 2016 and the number of civil society organizations was 1.532.250⁴ according to the data for November 2015. Another country is England (England, Wales). According to the 2011 Census data, the population was 56.075.912 people⁵. Despite of this population, the number of civil society organizations was 160.453 according to the 2013 data. There were 2.820 civil society organizations per approximately one million people. According to the 2014 data, the number of the women working in charities was 556.000 (68%) and the number of the men working in charities was 264.000 (32%)⁶. Apparently, we can say that civil society organizations provide social life activities for women via charities. France is the top country in terms of civil society organizations. In July 2013 France had a population of 65.107.000⁷ and the number of civil society organization was 1.350.000⁸ according to the data for November 2015. In France, there was 1 association per 48 people. However, 4 out of every 10 French participate in at least one activity. The distribution of civil society organizations in France is as follows. India constitutes about one third of the world's population. The estimated population is 1.284.552.330 according to the data for January 2016. According to the 2010 data, the number of non-governmental organizations is 3.300.000.⁹ Therefore, together with higher population in this country, the number of civil society organizations is rather higher.

Table 1: Number of NGOS According to Countries				
Countries	Population	Number of	Number of people	
		NGS's	per NGOs	
India	1.284.552.330	3.300.000	372	
USA	322.761.8071	1.532.250	210	
Germany	81.459.000	588.801	138	
France	65.107.000	1.350.000	48	
England(UK)	56.075.912	1.600.451	350	

Table 1: Number	of NGOs r	According to	Countries
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Based on the above information, we can say that the civil society organizations in the world differentiate and that their fields of activity vary according to the structure of the state

¹ http://www.statistik-portal.de/Statistik-Portal/en/en_zs01_bund.asp [05.01.2017]

² http://www.npo-info.de/vereinsstatistik/2014/ [05.01.2017]

³ http://www.census.gov/popclock/?intcmp=sldr1 [05.01.2017]

⁴ http://en.yada.org.tr/pdf/c9b3f2a6d1595bde1124f6df6e830903.pdf [05.01.2017]

⁵ http://www.ons.gov.uk/census/2011census [05.01.2017]

⁶ https://data.ncvo.org.uk/a/almanac15/fast-facts-4/ [05.01.2017]

⁷ http://www.insee.fr/en/bases-de-donnees/bsweb/serie.asp?idbank=001641607#gualite p [05.01.2017]

⁸ http://ccss.jhu.edu/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2015/11/Archambault_France-NPs_HSE-

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⁹ http://southasia.oneworld.net/news/india-more-ngos-than-schools-and-health-centres#.V_JNVNWLTDe

and social needs. The total number of NGOs in the countries is shown as in Table 1. According to this, the 2015 data were used in USA and France, the 2013 data were used in England, the 2014 data were used in Germany and the 2010 data were used in India. As can be understood from the table, civil society organizations in the countries constitute an important place for social life. It can be stated that the states encourage and help civil society organizations based on an understanding of social state and thus they follow an encouraging social policy on civilization.

2. Civil Society in Turkey

Civil society in Turkey has a long history. From the Ottoman Empire until today, civil society organizations have developed in different types and sizes. The Ottoman foundation culture has reached today through association in the republican period. Although foundation culture is an important civil society area that continues its existence today, it operates as a voluntary organization. However, the last fifteen-year process in Turkey will be evaluated here. The reason for this is that there has been a significant increase in the number of civil society organizations since the year 2000. The population of Turkey was 78.741.053 according to TUIK data 2015. The number of civil society organizations were 109.623 and there was 1 association per 718 people.

In Table 2, we can see the distribution of civil society organizations in Turkey from 2000 to 2016. According to this, the number of civil society organizations has reached the highest level of republic history in fifteen years period. Although the number of civil society organizations declined in 2004, it has showed a tendency to increase intensively since 2005 and has reached over 109 thousand at the end of 2016. It is possible to say that this increase has been caused by the effectiveness of state policy and encouraging practices.

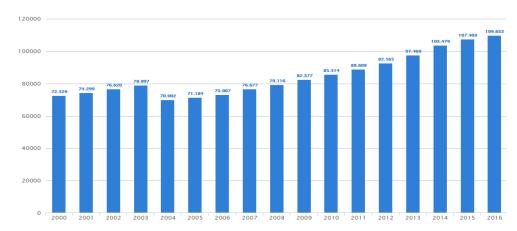


Table 2: Number of Associations in Turkey between 2000-2016

Source: https://www.dernekler.gov.tr/tr/AnasayfaLinkler/yillara-gore-faal-dernek.asp [05.01.2017]

It can be said that NGOs in Turkey are numerically behind when compared to the world. However, the fact that the number of NGOs in Turkey tends to increase day by day can also be considered a sign for further progress will occur on NGOs.

When talking about the increase in the number of non-governmental organizations in Turkey, it is necessary to mention an interesting point about participation. In such organizations, the number of women is lower than that of men. Based the 2015 data, it is determined that the number of female members was 2.161.225 and the number of male members was 8.604.602 and the total number of members is 10.765.827. It can be said that the number of female members was lower compared to the population, and the reason for this is that there may be religious perception or patriarchal oppression in the society. As a matter of fact, in a study in the Middle East countries where it is believed that the public sphere is belong to men and the private sphere belongs to women, it is stated that civil societies are not very impartial in terms of gender, in other words, male sovereignty can also be mentioned in civil society (Krause, 2008:3). It is possible to say that the majority of the society have religious concerns and patriarchal codes are dominant.

Field	Number of NGSs	%
Professional and Solidarity Associations	33.577	30.6
Sport and Sports Associations	20.909	19.1
Associations Operating in Religious Services	18.019	16.4
Humanitarian Relief Associations	6.243	5.7
Educational Research Associations	6.155	5.6
Culture, Arts and Tourism Associations	5.620	5.1
Individual Teacher and Community Development Associations	2.559	2.3
Health Associations	2.477	2.3
Environment, Natural Life, Animal Protection Associations	2.696	2.1
Social Values Sustainability Associations	1.952	1.8
Reconstruction, Urbanization and Development	1.737	1.6
Rights and Advocacy Associations	1.631	1.5
Disability Associations	1.415	1.3
Associations Supporting Public Institutions and Staff	1.255	1.1
Thought Associations	1.180	1.1
Food, Agriculture and Livestock Societies	672	0.6
International Organizations and Cooperation Associations	665	0.6
Turkish Foreign Citizen Associations	619	0.6
Old People and Children's Associations	331	0.3
Relatives of Martyrs and Veterans Associations	322	0.3
Children's Associations	15	0,1
Other	426	0.3
Total	110.049	100

Table 3	3: Ranae	of Active	Associations
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Source: https://www.dernekler.gov.tr/tr/AnasayfaLinkler/derneklerin-faaliyet-alanina-gore.aspx [05.01.2017]

According to Table 3, the vast majority of activity areas have emerged from social needs. We can say that this civil society structure is an important place in Turkey, as well as the abovementioned fields of activity, the state uses these organizations as a means of

establishing its effectiveness in the context of its policies. Civil society is an important factor in the restructuring of the state in the axis of efficiency-transparency-responsibility and in providing good and efficient community management. In this context, it can be said that it will contribute to the emergence of a more stable, better governed Turkey. Furthermore, it is an undeniable reality about public perception of civil society organizations that civil society make a contribution in the democratization of state-society-individual relations in Turkey and thus democratization settles and deepens in social life.

WOMEN'S NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN TURKEY

We can talk about an existence of historical development of women's NGOs in Turkey, which has started in the last period of Ottoman Empire. They aimed to defense women rights through newspapers, articles and magazines. Being started in Tanzimat Reform and Constitutional Era, this period helped women to start a challenge of asking their rights, which has intensified in early years of Republic. Liberal Equalitarian Feminism, penetrated whole world, also had an effect on Turkey and women published magazines, books and newspapers, they, even found a political party. Women, took an active role in this period, started to use their public and legal rights when the republic has been established. That situation continued until the first and the most massive Turkish Women Association's abolition, in 1935. After 1935, even they tried to solve the problems occurred that depressed period went on 1950s (see Kurnaz, 1997; Kaplan, 1998; Karadağ, 2011; Ayman, 2011). By the recovery of Turkish Women Association, various women constitutions has been appeared in 1950-1980. These constitutions aimed to perform charity based activities at first, but after the second half of 1970's, they aimed to make women as public actors and helped them make a change in public life by the approach of Progressive Women Association (Ayman, 2011). However, some problems occurred due to the political situation in public life in this period.

Women's NGOs seemed to be active after 1980 and women moves began to found their own institutions in 1990's. They published magazines, newspapers and journals in order to raise consciousness and awareness of people. Besides, that it can be said many women organizations and challenge models; which met under institutions and donations, carried out massive and active campaigns, began to set up their own non-governmental moves gradually. They also discussed the basic issues such as their rights, equality, difference, common victimization, public and private space. Until the 2000s, women's rights struggle in Turkey was more intensified in this axis, while women's counseling and solidarity centers against violence, platforms, associations and shelter work, campaigns, lobbying and advocacy activities were carried out intensively. The women's organizations, which are always trying to protect the independent and feminist line and are now the most dynamic civil move of Turkey, are now trying to force women to participate in education, politics, career and academic life. It is definitely seen that they have gained significant acquirements and done stronger outcomes. It is possible to say that in recent years in Turkey, women have gone through new activations on women's rights issue, for this reason, many social rights have been granted by the General Directorate of Women under the Ministry of Family Social Policy in relation to women's rights. As a social policy, positive discrimination emerges as an antagonism. We can say that in the last fifteen years in Turkey, the numbers have increased considerably and provided public visibility. The basics have been analyzed under three headings according to regions, in this section. These titles will be considered as "Religion-Oriented or Assistance and Solidarity to Needy", "Entrepreneurship" and "Marginal or Political Prone".

Region	Total NGOs	Women NGOs	%
Region of Mediterranean	11.333	139	1.2
Region of Aegean	14.941	217	1.5
Region of Marmara	37.257	296	0.8
Region of Black Sea	13.024	114	0.9
Region of Central Anatolia	19.867	142	0.7
Region of Eastern Anatolia	6.399	96	1.5
Region of Southeast Anatolia	6.438	107	1,7
Total	109.259	1.111	1.0

Table 4. Region of Women NGOs

Source: https://www.dernekler.gov.tr/tr/Anasayfalinkler/IllereGoreIstatistik.aspx See also. https://www.dernekler.gov.tr/tr/Anasayfalinkler/illere-gore-faal-dernekler.aspx [05.01.2017]

The general distribution of associations referred to as "Women's Rights" in Turkey is shown regionally in Table 4. According to this, the most of women's NGOs are in Istanbul (114), Izmir (113) and Bursa (112). On the other hand, Bartin, Karabük, Kırşehir, Yozgat, Tunceli, and Siirt pointed out that there are no women NGOs.

When the ratio of female NGOs in total NGOs is considered, it is determined that the ratio of NGOs whose activity area is "women's rights" is 1% on the page of the Ministry of Interior Affairs of the Ministry of Interior with the statistical data. According to the region, the proportion of women's NGOs was found to be the highest in Southeastern Anatolia Region (1.7%) and at least in Central Anatolia Region (0.7%). It is notable that in the eastern regions, the proportion of women's NGOs is higher than in western regions. In this context, it can be said that the women's movement in the eastern regions gained a more institutional structure than those in the west. The fact that the ratio of associations that determine the scope of activity as women's rights within the total NGOs in Turkey is limited to only 1%, suggests that organizations for advocating and advocating for women's rights are at the very beginning.

In this context, it can be said that society's view of women's NGOs varies according to regions and provinces. At this point, it is possible to say that it addresses larger areas in big cities. We can also say that the numbers of NGOs in big cities are high, that they gain importance in big cities and they also observed positively in the eyes of the society.

In the detailed research we have done regionally in Turkey, we tried to find out the distribution of the women's NGOs through regions and provinces and we also tried to reveal the number of them in the total number of NGOs. In the Mediterranean region, there is a total of 11.333 NGOs and 139 of these NGOs advocate women's rights and carry out activities on behalf of women. The rate of women's NGOs is 1.2%. Among them, the NGOs which are called "Religion-Oriented or Assistance and Solidarity for Needy Owners" are concentrated in Antalya (8) and Osmaniye (5). "Supporting Women's Entrepreneurship" are mostly located in Adana (7). There are no women's NGOs in Isparta and Burdur. "The Marginal or Policy-Oriented NGOs" are mostly located in Hatay (10) and Mersin (9). The number of the NGOs whose activity areas cannot be determined are 16 in Adana and 11 in Mersin.

In the Aegean region, there is a total of 14.941 NGOs and 217 of them are women's NGOs. The rate of existing women's NGOs is 1.4%. "Religion-Oriented or Assistance and Solidarity for Needy Owners" are concentrated in İzmir (21). The number of "Supporting Women's Entrepreneurship" is 12 in İzmir, but there is no this type of NGOs in Manisa, Kütahya, Denizli, and Afyonkarahisar. "The Marginal or Policy-Oriented NGOs" are mostly located in İzmir (27). The number of the NGOs whose activity areas cannot be determined is 63 in Izmir.

In the Marmara region, there is a total of 37.257 NGOs and 296 of these are women's NGOs. The rate of women's NGOs is 0.8%. Bursa and Istanbul have a high number of these organizations. "Religion-Oriented or Assistance and Solidarity for Needy" are concentrated in istanbul (23) and Bursa (52). "Supporting Women's Entrepreneurship" are mostly located in istanbul and Bursa. "The Marginal or Policy-Oriented NGOs" are mostly located in Istanbul (20) and Bursa (9). The number of the NGOs whose activity areas cannot be determined are 55 in Istanbul and 33 in Bursa.

In the Black Sea Region, there is a total of 13.024 NGOs. 114 of them are women's NGOs. The rate of this is 0.9%. "Religion-Oriented or Assistance and Solidarity for Needy Owners" are concentrated in Trabzon, Samsun, Ordu, Kastamonu, and Zonguldak. "Supporting Women's Entrepreneurship" are mostly located in Trabzon (8). "The Marginal or Policy-Oriented NGOs" are mostly located in Trabzon (7) and Samsun (4).

In the Eastern Anatolia Region, there is a total of 19.867 NGOs and 142 of them are women's NGOs. "Religion-Oriented or Assistance and Solidarity for Needy Owners" are concentrated in Ankara (24) and Konya (13). "Supporting Women's Entrepreneurship are mostly located in Ankara (9) and Konya (5). "The Marginal or Policy-Oriented NGOs" are mostly located in in Ankara (20). The NGOs whose activity areas cannot be determined are mostly located in Ankara (13).

In the Eastern Anatolia Region, there is a total of 6.399 NGOs and 96 of these are women's NGOs. The rate of women's NGOs is 1.5%. "Religion-Oriented or Assistance and

Solidarity for Needy Owners" are concentrated in Van (13) and Bitlis (12). "Supporting Women's Entrepreneurship" are mostly located in Ağrı (5) and Erzurum (4). The number of "The Marginal or Policy-Oriented NGOs" is 7 in total. There are a total of 6 organizations whose activity areas cannot be determined.

In the Southeastern Anatolia region, there is a total of 6,438 NGOs and 107 of these are women's NGOs. The rate of women's NGOs is 1.7%. "Religion-Oriented or Assistance and Solidarity for Needy Owners" are concentrated in Şanlıurfa (13), Mardin (10) and Batman (10). "Supporting Women's Entrepreneurship" are mostly located in Diyarbakır (6) and Gaziantep (4). "The Marginal or Policy-Oriented NGOs" are mostly located in Gaziantep (4).

CONCLUSION

It is observed in the studies that the number of NGOs in modern Turkey has increased compared to previous years but it is numerically behind the data in the world. However, it should not be forgotten that in Turkey, civil society has made great progress, and the most prominent example of this is the events we experienced on the July the 15th. In response to these events, reflexes of civil society have occurred and the coup attempt is prevented. Apparently, there is no chance of success in any social event that civil society does not accept.

It is also possible to say that progress on women's NGOs has been made in Turkey. Numerous data on women's rights and women's organizations in the last two decades prove this. At the same time, it emerges as a state policy. The distribution of women's NGOs according to the regions showed that women's organizations have increased in line with the needs of the society and that association of women's rights is an important area. It is possible to say that it is an increasingly positive view towards women's organizations in Turkish society.

Consequently, while handling women's organizations in modern Turkey, it can be said that there is a historical past and the efforts of women to accept themselves in social life corresponded in this century. It has been seen that women's NGOs are classified as "Religion-Oriented or Assistance and Solidarity for Needy Owners", "in Supporting Women's Entrepreneurship", "Marginal or Policy-Oriented", and they function for their purposes. In addition, among women's NGOs in Turkey, the NGOs which are called "Religion-Oriented or Assistance and Solidarity for Needy Owners" have been found to be very common. It has been understood that women's NGOs are gaining more importance every day.

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