



THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
CENTENARY
香港大學百周年



The University of Hong Kong
Libraries
Centenary 1912-2012

Welcome to the Libraries Centenary Exhibition

Through this exhibition we are drawn towards celebrating the 100 years of achievements realized through the Libraries in support of the University's ambitions. Additionally, this exhibition provides us with an opportunity for reflection; to reflect upon not only what has transpired, but what our future might hold in the coming 100 years.

These are uncertain times for libraries who face challenges on many fronts. Rapidly evolving technologies, changes in scholarly publishing, financial shortfalls, the rise of the e-book, changing demands on library spaces and greater expectations of library users. Despite these challenges we remain positive about our future and our ability to continue to support the University in its teaching and learning, research and knowledge exchange pursuits. To realise this we will:

- ensure our priorities are aligned with those of the University, both in terms of our collection building and our service delivery;
- continue to build on our quality collections;
- emphasise our Libraries as places for people as well as collections, and ensure that a friendly, service oriented experience is available to all who enter our premises;
- collaborate at all levels that serve the University's interests, including seizing opportunities both locally on campus as well as further afield;
- remain agile as an organisation so that, as circumstances evolve, we can respond to them appropriately.

Perhaps most significantly, we will be recognized, locally, regionally and globally as leaders in information service and delivery through our innovative approaches that others will follow.

Please enjoy the exhibition and I look forward to working with you to set our course for the next 100 years.

List of Librarians

1922-1950	Mrs Marie E.M. Ring
1951-1960	Mrs Dorothea Scott
1961-1983	Mr H.A. Rydings
1984-1999	Dr L.B. Kan
2001-2010	Dr Anthony W. Ferguson
2011-	Mr Peter E. Sidorko

*Part time librarians from 1912-1922

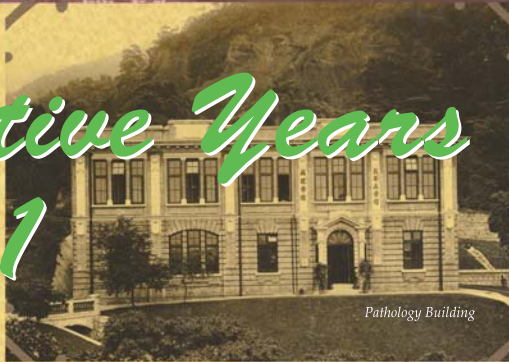




HKU 1912



Fung Ping Shan Library 1940



Pathology Building



The Formative Years 1912-1961

The University of Hong Kong Libraries was conceived in 1908 as part of the plan to set up the first university in Hong Kong. Little information is available on the date when the library was open but most likely it has been providing services since the University of Hong Kong opened its first session in October 1912. Located on Main Building ground floor was the Main Library. It had a floor area of about 288 square metres and comprised two rooms, one on each side of the Great Hall (known as Loke Yew Hall now). Also available was a Medical Section, which was housed apart from the Main Library in the Pathology Building of the Faculty of Medicine.

The library collection was small in the early days. Some 25,000 volumes were available in 1926, which in many ways were not sufficient even for a student population of 283. Book lending was restricted to term time and during the year 1926, 1,384 volumes were borrowed by members of the University. The Library was staffed by three full-time employees, including a librarian, a clerk and a coolie.

The Fung Ping Shan (馮平山) Chinese Library was open on 14 December 1932 after Mr Fung Ping-shan donated a library building along Bonham Road and an endowment fund of \$50,000 for the building's maintenance. Accordingly the Main Library moved its Chinese collection, including a copy of the 1,628-volume *Gu jin tu shu ji cheng* (古今圖書集成) donated by Sir Cecil Clementi (金文泰), then Colonial Secretary of Hong Kong, in April 1912, to the newly-found library.

Still, the collection was painfully inadequate even with the increase of the annual book grant from \$3,500 (1926) to \$10,000 (1933) and the purchase of the 'China' section of the Hankow Club Library, a unique collection of some 3,000 volumes of books on China and things Chinese for \$25,000. The accommodation was equally inadequate: its reading rooms were overcrowded for a student population of 516 in 1939/40. Some 500 students of Lingnan University driven from Guangzhou by the war could also use the Library for evening work since 1938.

The Japanese invaded Hong Kong on 8 December 1941. The only university buildings which escaped serious damages during the course of hostilities were the main floor of the Main Building housing the Main Library, the Fung Ping Shan Library Building and the Tang Chi Ngong Building. The Japanese took over the Library and the Librarian was interned.

In 1942 the Japanese started confiscating private and institutional libraries and centralizing the resultant collections at the Fung Ping Shan Library. Some 240,000 volumes were received from libraries all over Hong Kong. Library staff took up the responsibility for preserving these books during the war. The Fung Ping Shan Library also became the Library of the Government of the Occupied Territory (香港占領地總督部立圖書館) in September 1944.

The war ended in August 1945. The Library suffered little damage during the periods of hostilities and occupation. In October 1946 it opened again for the use by staff and students to correspond with the inauguration of the first postwar university session. In the meantime, staff members were busy checking library holdings to determine the loss of books during the occupation and returning books collected during the occupation to their rightful owners.



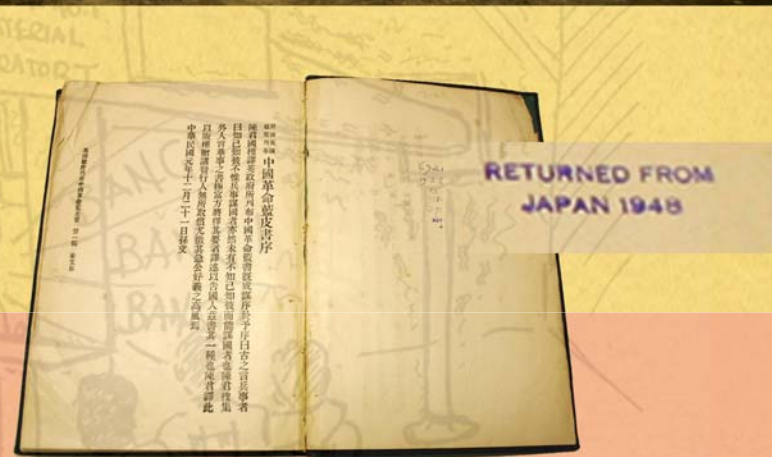
A book with the book pocket of the wartime library



HKU students 1928



Library staff group photo 1960



A book returned from Japan

By 1950, the Main Library included ten large rooms and four smaller rooms, all connecting with each other, and situated on the ground floor of the Main Building. It occupied some 1,000 square metres and could accommodate 118 readers. Size of the collection grew from 98,000 in 1941 to 180,000 in 1955. Despite additional space allocated to the Main Library, the problem of housing new acquisitions was getting serious in the mid-1950s and resulted in a diminishing of seats available for an increasing number of staff and students. Planning of a new library building started in 1956 and approval for construction was given in October 1959.

The 1950s was a decade of unprecedented development for the Library. Its bookstock grew from 110,000 volumes to 233,000 volumes, whilst the number of professional posts increased from one in 1950 to eleven by 1960.



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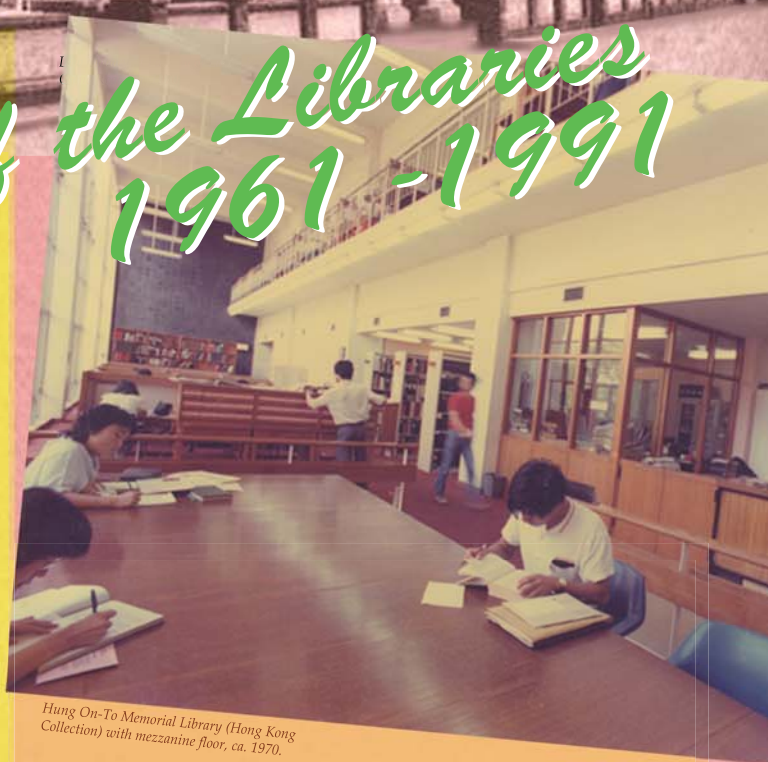
A look back - growth of the Libraries 1961-1991

In September 1961, the Library celebrated the move to its first library building (now Main Library Old Wing) dedicated to curriculum, research and discovery. Sir Robert Black, then Hong Kong Governor, toured the building and officiated the grand opening of the new Library.

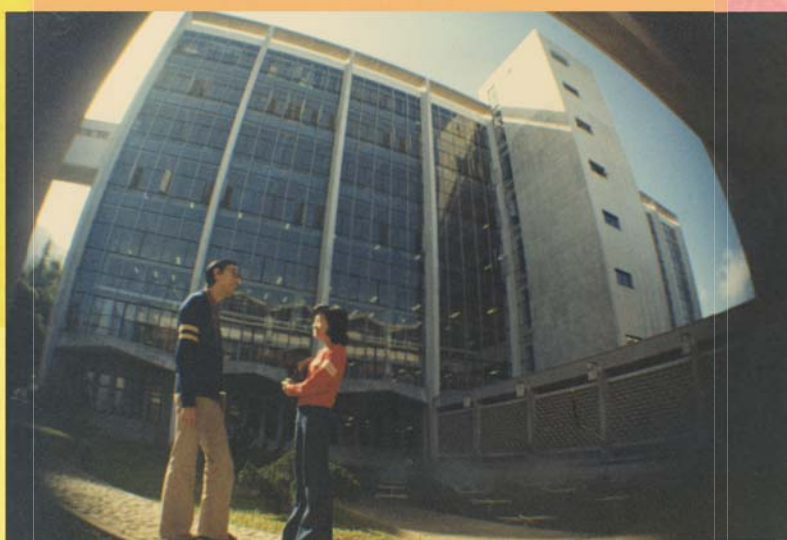
In January 1962, the Fung Ping Shan Library (East Asian Collection) was consolidated and moved into the new Library. At the same time, the Main Library collection experienced rapid growth and soon outgrew the building. In a short period of 5 years, two floors (5/F & 6/F) were added to the original library building, fortunately designed with future expansion in mind. A half-floor at mezzanine level was also built in 1969 where the Hung On-To Memorial Library (Hong Kong Collection) was housed with some of the remarkable treasures from the Library's special collections.

The ensuing years witnessed the Library's further expansion and establishment of branch libraries:

- *Medical Library* was founded in December 1965 and located in the Patrick Manson Building, a pre-clinical site of the Faculty of Medicine. In January 2002, it was relocated to a new Library in the Faculty of Medicine Building, a state-of-the-art facility well equipped with sophisticated information technology to provide a virtual learning environment conducive to study and research.



Hung On-To Memorial Library (Hong Kong Collection) with mezzanine floor, ca. 1970.



Main Library Old Wing



Lee Hysan Medical Library at Patrick Manson Building, ca. 1998



Medical Library moved to new location at Faculty of Medicine Building in 2002



Interior of Yu Chun Keung Medical Library, a state-of-the-art facility, in 2010

- *Law Library* was set up in September 1969 in a temporary accommodation of the Faculty of Law at Caine Road and later moved to the fifth floor of the Knowles Building in July 1973 and again relocated to K.K. Leung Building in 1989.



Lui Che Woo Law Library at K.K. Leung Building in 2011



Law Library serials collection area on 5/F Knowles Building, ca. 1973



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The Music Library is located on 1/F Hung Hing Ying Building.

- *Education Library* was started in January 1978 on the sixth floor of the Main Library Old Wing and moved to Runme Shaw Building in 1984.
- *Dental Library* was opened in 1981 in the Prince Philip Dental Hospital and extended with an additional floor in 1988.
- *Music Library* was founded in 1982 on the second floor of the Main Building and relocated to the first floor of the Hung Hing Ying Building, another historical site, in 1996.

Education Library at Runme Shaw Building, ca. 1980s



Dental Library located at the Prince Philip Dental Hospital



Dental Library soon after opening in 1981



Dental Library after renovation in 2001

Education Library with the new Learning Commons in 2010



Listening facilities in Music Library in 2011



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Panoramic view of Main Library New Wing



Mediated online search by a librarian in early 1980s



Online catalogue & CD-ROM workstations in late 1980s



Main Library card catalogue - the gateway to the library until the late 1980s

Print and electronic resources

From 1960s to 1990s, both print and electronic resources were expanded. In August 1974, the total number of current journal titles exceeded 4,000. In August 1976, the collection increased to 500,000 volumes and the number of new titles catalogued a year exceeded 10,000. The collection reached 1 million volumes in June 1991.

On electronic resources, the Library was quick to learn the new technology and position itself as early adopters of computing resources. In 1980, for the first time, Online Information Service was offered using the ORBIT system of SDC Search Service, Santa Monica, California, with a satellite link arranged by Cable & Wireless (now PCCW). Later in 1988, CD-ROM based information services were introduced. The new compact, cheap and robust mass data storage medium made available convenient and economical access to the fast growing electronic information sources.



Student manually searching for serial records in Kardex in 1970s



Student searching index to serials literature on CD-ROMs in early 1990s

Library automation - from in-house systems to integrated library management systems

The decade from 1970s to 1980s saw gradual transition from systems built by libraries in-house to integrated library management systems created by third party vendors. The University of Hong Kong Libraries' first automation efforts began in 1978 with the development of a Machine-Readable Cataloguing (MARC) database. Local in-house systems were also created for acquisitions, serials control, cataloguing and circulation. Automation for cataloguing and circulation started in 1981 and serials control in 1985. The serials control system was capable of compiling a complete list of holdings of western language serials as well as handling the financial aspects of serials management. Automated book acquisitions system also went live in April 1986. For the East Asian materials, an in-house microcomputer system was developed in December 1968 for book ordering and accessioning in the Fung Ping Shan Library. The first online public catalogue was available in January 1986, allowing online access to a short form catalogue containing much of the Main Library's active stock.

In 1989, the great leap forward took place when the Library implemented the DRA integrated library system with all major library applications - acquisitions, cataloguing, circulation, and serials; replacing the in-house system designed in the 1980s. Subsequently, the online public access catalogue was named DRAGON - acronym for DRA GO ONLINE.



Main Library online public access catalogue, ca. 1982.



Construction work of Main Library New Wing



Sir David Wilson, then Hong Kong Governor, toured the New Wing during the Opening Ceremony on 19 December 1991

As the Library's collections, services, and programmes continued to grow, it was obvious that more space was needed to increase stack area and to provide an inviting environment for reading and study. To accommodate these, another major expansion was initiated - to build a new library extension (now Main Library New Wing) on the site of the old Student Union Building. With the approval of the UPGC (now UGC), the Library New Wing was constructed and became fully operational on 1 July 1991. The official opening ceremony was held on 19 December 1991, when Sir David Wilson, then Hong Kong Governor, unveiled a plaque commemorating the event and toured the new library building - this again earmarked another significant era for the University of Hong Kong Libraries.



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Knowledge Navigation Centre

The Age of Information and Collaboration, 1991-2011

HKUL homepage in 2000

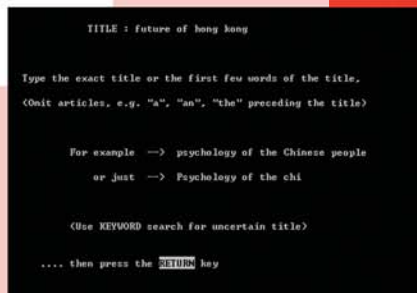


Main Library webpage in 1996

Gateway to the libraries' electronic resources in 1998



Renovation work to make way for the KNC



Telnet version of INNOPAC

And parallel to the revolution in database access was the replacement in 1996 of the library's integrated library system with one called INNOPAC, which comprises both the public catalogue (the new Dragon) with a Web interface and the other backend modules which are still in use today. No longer a novelty, the integration of records in Western and Asian languages that came with the new system was a hallmark at the time. Also innovative was that the new Dragon allowed users to view their own circulation records, and manage book requests and renewals. For the first time, users could cross-search multiple local library catalogues simultaneously.

In the years that followed, the potential of the Web was fully realized with the many online services that the Libraries introduced: Book Recommendations Online, Subject guides to Internet Resources, Electronic Reserve Collection, to name a few. Perhaps one of the most notable achievements was the creation of ExamBase, a database of HKU's past examination papers, which previously had to be borrowed at the circulation counter. This was the Libraries' first of many Digital Initiatives of special materials, digitized for ease of searching and access. Other special projects that made available online valuable local collections included the Last Governor Online, Hong Kong Journals Online, Historical Law of Hong Kong Online, etc.

The period from 1991 to 2011 was underscored by major changes in many different aspects of the Libraries. Many of these changes were a result of the advancements in computing, networking and information technology that occurred during the period.

Moving on to the Web era: 1991-2001

The developments and improvements in the last twenty years in database design, data storage and access might be incomprehensible for those of us who did not witness them. In April 1993, the library took what was then a major step forward from restrictive access at designated workstations of CD-ROM databases, with the installation of its first CD-ROM towers. This gave users networked access from multiple locations in the library to a growing collection of indexing and even full-text databases on CD-ROM.

The transformation was sped up with the introduction of the Internet and World Wide Web in the mid-1990s, as the Libraries launched the HKU Libraries Web site in 1995. This served both as a portal to information about library services, and a gateway to databases that had become accessible not just on the local area network, but remotely through the Web.



Networked CD-ROM towers



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Makeovers in infrastructure and information literacy



Electronic Information Centre



With the Web and ensuing changes in learning and teaching came demands for a corresponding upgrade in the Libraries' physical premise and information technology infrastructure. In 1996, the entire Libraries system was re-cabled to Fast Ethernet, which was replaced by a Gigabit Ethernet backbone several years later. 1996 also saw the Main Library open an Electronic Information Centre, later named Knowledge Navigation Centre, which was continuously expanded to provide users with the latest hardware and software to integrate learning, research and digital publishing.

In 1999, the Libraries participated in the university's Digital Campus Initiative, installing over 400 network access nodes so that users could connect their notebooks to the campus network from anywhere in the library. This was followed by another project in April 2001 that made available Wi-Fi connection, a relatively new technology at the time, in the Main Library. There were only 4 access points then – now there are 62 access points and the communication speed, at 100Mbps, is ten times faster.

As network speed improved and the different barriers to data access were broken down, the need for space changed from one for physical books and shelves to that for users. What followed was the establishment of the Hing Wai Storage, comprising the Libraries' bindery and a compact storage facility for less frequently used materials, many beginning to have electronic equivalents online as the Libraries' e-collection began to grow. The relocation freed up much needed space for more user seating and workstations.

For many, be they freshmen or alumni, the move from the familiar library of printed materials to one of computers, electronic information and the Web had meant not so much convenience but challenge. Information literacy was not just a buzzword but a survival skill in these times of relentless change. As a result in September 1998 the Libraries cooperated with the Department of Computer Science and Information Systems, and the Computer Centre to introduce a new three-credit General Education Course, Foundations to Information Technology (FIT), for first year students. This was developed in conjunction with many new short courses on the use of databases and information searching.



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The next level: the decade from 2001

Innovation and user-centered services were the key as the Libraries stepped into the new millennium. Many new projects ensued to take service excellence to the next level in support of the university’s teaching and research activities.

Better access to electronic resources: To improve remote access, EZProxy authentication was introduced in 2002, which subsequently developed to allow single sign-on with the university’s Portal service. This was followed by the MetaFind (now called ResearchPro), a federated search engine which allows one-stop cross-searching of multiple databases, and also WebBridge, a link resolver which connects article records to their corresponding full-text.

Better access to print resources: An inter-branch delivery service was launched in 2005 to allow all borrowers to request books to be collected at other pickup locations. The program was expanded in 2007 to allow inter-branch electronic article delivery for teaching staff.

Better access to local materials: To promote the visibility of HKU research and provide a one-stop search point, the HKU Scholars Hub, an institutional repository of HKU’s research and publication, was launched in 2006. The popular e-Video Web site, which provides access to digitized video content of local TV programs and HKU materials, was revamped in 2010 with a YouTube-like interface.

Better access to other libraries’ materials: In 2003, the Libraries implemented a comprehensive online interlibrary loan system, ILLIAD, replacing the paper system. The system enabled online requesting of materials held in other local and overseas libraries as well as electronic delivery of articles and other documents.

More i-services: Library users began receiving library messages, including overdue, recall and pickup notices, in SMS via mobile phones in 2004. Another service, MyLibrary/MyAlerts, which allowed users to create personalized Web pages of favorite resources and receive email alerts of new library books and tables of contents of preferred journals, was launched around the same time. In 2007, Wiki@HKUL was created. This knowledgebase of the Libraries’ services and resources made use of the Wiki technology, allowing users to share their knowledge and experience in the familiar Wiki environment. The following year, the Dragon catalogue was further enhanced with a next generation interface and many Web2.0 community features such as tagging and sharing. The Libraries also upgraded over one million printed volumes with radio frequency identification tags, allowing users to check-in and out these items using self-check stations.

Better facilities: In 2004 the Libraries opened the Student Learning Centre, a 7/24 study facility, which was the only such service on campus. Since 2008, the Main Library has been open around the clock during Revision Week and Assessment Period.

Better support for learning and teaching: The Libraries introduced the plagiarism detection software Turnitin and the bibliographic management software Endnote in 2004 and 2006 respectively. In addition to regular courses at all levels, extensive help and support is also provided on the use of the software.



Library van in operation



SMS service

Wireless library launch at HKU



HKUL launched the first wireless library in Asia in 2003



Second million volumes celebration

Collections and service collaboration

The twenty years from 1991 onward witnessed the Libraries’ collection expand at an unprecedented rate. By 2002, the number of printed volumes was at two million, twice the size 10 years ago. The number of e-books also rose from the initial two thousand ebooks in 2000 to over one million in 2006 and two million in 2010. But more importantly, during the same period the Libraries initiated and joined many collaborative efforts that would leverage on other libraries’ resources and take it to the forefront in the community of academic libraries and service provision.

- 2000
Became the mirror site outside China for China Journal Net, the first and foremost full-text database of Mainland Chinese journals. The Libraries subsequently became the China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI) Databases Exchange Centre in 2002.
- 2002
Joined OCLC (Online Computer Library Center) and participated in record sharing with the world’s largest consortium of libraries. The Libraries was the largest contributor in original cataloguing records in 2006, 2009 and 2010.
- 2005
Became the first member, outside of North America, of the Center for Research Libraries (CRL), giving users access to over 4 million publications within the CRL collections through interlibrary loan and electronic delivery.
- 2005
Following a pilot 2-year experiment with two local university libraries, took a leading role in establishing the Hong Kong Academic Library Link (HKALL), a union catalogue and inter-university service which allowed students and staff of the eight UGC-funded libraries to search and make direct requests for items in the combined collection of over 9 million books.
- 2007
Partnered with the Hong Kong Central Library to launch the first referral service for public library readers to apply for a temporary pass to an academic library in Hong Kong.

Into the future

On 1 January 2011, Mr Peter Sidorko became the sixth university librarian. The last twenty years have seen the HKU Libraries transform itself as technology advanced. This is likely to continue as computing and data technology companies, the publishing industry and academe strive to outperform other players in meeting and anticipating the needs of their clients and users. There will be many challenges amidst the waves of changes. The university curriculum will change to a four-year curriculum in 2012 and budget constraints loom. Nothing seems certain, but with a solid foundation built over the years and spanning the entire history of the university, the HKU Libraries will be able to stay true to its mission in supporting HKU as a preeminent university.



Students rush in when the library opens



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