

LINGUISTIC THOUGHT IN MOSCHOPOULEAN SCHEDOGRAPHY¹

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Summary: This paper contains a discussion of the *Περὶ σχεδῶν* of Manuel Moschopoulos (ca. 1265-1316), with a special focus on his treatment of the topics of pronunciation and spelling (1), preposition and case (2), and etymology and derivation (3). The purpose is to show how the linguistic thought contained in older grammars, from antiquity and the Byzantine era, is translated into what may be the need of students.

0 Introduction

Of current scholarship concerned with Byzantine Greek, some is devoted, not primarily to the language as such, but to understanding what the Byzantines thought about language and how Greek was taught in schools.²

As is evident, grammars are prime examples of texts that may be studied for the purpose of understanding Byzantine linguistic thought.³ It is clear enough that they have pedagogical ambitions but arguable to what

- 1 My sincere thanks are due to the anonymous reviewer provided by the editors of the journal.
- 2 The most important hub at present for this kind of research is Ghent University, with the ERC project *MELA: The Meaning of Language. A Digital Grammar of the Greek Taught at Schools in Late Constantinople*, conducted by A. Cuomo. The following is a revised version of a paper read at a workshop in Ghent, 2 June 2023 (*Teaching and Learning Greek in Byzantium 1: Schedography*).
- 3 For general discussions of Byzantine grammatical literature, which is very much indebted to Dionysios Thrax (ca. 170-90 BCE) and the tradition of Alexandria, see Robins 1993 and Wahlgren 2024 (with an overview of the main writers). See also further references below.

extent they were written for direct use in the classroom.⁴ As far as the late Byzantine period is concerned, there is at least one example of an author who, if nothing more, seems to be aware of the needs of different kinds of audiences and who writes, sometimes for a scholarly, sometimes for a less sophisticated audience. This is Maximos Planoudes (ca. 1260–1305), with his *Περὶ γραμματικῆς διάλογος*, *Dialogue on Grammar* (directed, in a fairly simple language, at a student and with few abstract concepts), and the *Περὶ συντάξεως*, *On Syntax* (for an audience with a considerable linguistic knowledge).⁵

Probably close to the students' experience is so-called schedography (short texts, *schede*, with their commentary), whereby it should be noted that the terminology is vague and the very word *σχεδογραφία* seems to refer to different phenomena at different times.⁶ This paper discusses schedography as it occurs in the *Περὶ σχεδῶν* of Manuel Moschopoulos (ca. 1265–1316), a pupil of the already mentioned famous linguist and teacher Maximos Planoudes.⁷ The purpose is to identify some types of

- 4 Proof of a pedagogical aim is of different kinds. First, many texts are written in the form of questions and answers (eminently so the *Περὶ γραμματικῆς διάλογος* by Maximos Planoudes, for whom see below). Secondly, some texts are expressly dedicated to students (the first truly Byzantine example being the *Μέθοδος περὶ τῆς τοῦ λόγου συντάξεως* by Michael Synkellos, 760/61–846). All the same, it is not necessary for the purposes of the present paper to elaborate on whether the existing texts were actually used in a classroom or if these formal properties make part of an elaborate rhetorical game.
- 5 For the texts as such, see Bachmann 1828: 2–101, and 105–66. For a discussion of the *Dialogue*, see Tsiampokalos 2024.
- 6 The term schedography turns up in the eleventh century. For the development over time, see Vassis et al. 2019, Nousia 2017 and 2016, Agapitos 2017 and 2013, Silvano 2015, and Robins 1993.
- 7 A modern edition of the *Περὶ σχεδῶν* (which, as is proven by its preservation in almost fifty mss. and an early print, seems to have been highly successful) is an obvious desiderate (a modern edition is announced here: <https://mycoach.formservice.royalholloway.ac.uk/Research/Moschopoulos.html>); for the time being, it has to be studied in the Stephanus edition of 1545. The commented edition of the two Moschopouleian *schede* contained in the ms. Vat. Graec. 1527 (a fifteenth-century ms. with different linguistic treatises) is also of use: see Nousia 2016 (for specifics about

linguistic argument and to discuss its origin – all in order to show what may have trickled down from cutting-edge theory to what we may suppose to be the Palaeologan classroom.

The schedē of the *Περὶ σχεδῶν*, twenty-two in number, are mostly of two kinds. Roughly the first half is in some sense biblical-Christian, the second (from Stephanus 1545: 160 and onwards) mostly Homeric (with, in between the two main types, one schedos based on a fable, for which see Stephanus 1545: 148).⁸ The first of the biblical texts reads as follows:⁹

(Manuel Moschopoulos, *Περὶ σχεδῶν*) Stephanus 1545: 3:

Κύριε Ἰησοῦ Χριστέ, ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν, ὁ ἀσπόρως εὐδοκήσας τεχθῆναι ἐκ τῆς ἁγίας θεοτόκου καὶ ἀειπαρθένου Μαρίας, ταῖς πρεσβεΐαις αὐτῆς καὶ τοῦ χρυσορρήμονος Ἰωάννου φώτισον τὸν νοῦν τοῦ νέου τοῦ νῦν ἀρξαμένου τοῦ σχεδογραφεῖν, καὶ τὴν καταρχὴν εὐλόγησον τοῦ σχέδους.

Lord Jesus Christ, our God, you who consented to be seedlessly born from the holy god-bearer Mary, ever virgin: through her prayers and those of John of golden speech, enlighten the mind of the young person who now starts upon schedography, and bless the beginning of the schedos.

On this follows Moschopoulos' lemmatisation with commentary, which begins as follows:

the Vat. Graec. 1527, see also Pinakes/Diktyon: <https://pinakes.irht.cnrs.fr/notices/cote/68158/>). A proper overview of the (intellectual) life and activities of Manuel Moschopoulos as well as Maximos Planoudes with biographies is a desiderate. See, however, Pontani 2015: 409-19, and Wilson 1996: 230 (on Planoudes) and 244-47 (on Moschopoulos).

8 Cf. Nousia 2019: 254 and Gallavotti 1983: 3, with the following characterisation of the texts: 1-6 Religious texts, 7-10 Admonitory texts, 11 Aesopic fable, 12-22 Homeric texts.

9 The following citations follow the Stephanus edition faithfully, with exception for its habit to use a grave accent before a comma.

(Manuel Moschopoulos, *Περὶ σχεδῶν*) Stephanus 1545: 3:

ΚΥΡΙΕ ΙΗΣΟΥ ΧΡΙΣΤΕ Ο ΘΕΟΣ ΗΜΩΝ. Πόσα μέρη λόγου εἰσί; Τρία. Κύριε, Ἰησοῦ, Χριστέ, θεός, ὄνομα. ὁ, ἄρθρον. ἡμῶν, ἀντωνυμία. Τὰ γὰρ δύο ὀνόματα ἢ καὶ πολλά, εἰς ἓν συνάγονται, ὄνομα, καὶ ἓν εἰσι μέρος λόγου.

LORD JESUS CHRIST, OUR GOD. How many word classes are represented? Three. ‘Lord’, ‘Jesus’, ‘Christ’, ‘God’ (are examples of) nouns. ‘The’ (scil. ὁ) (is an example of the) article. ‘Our’ (is a) pronoun. For two nouns, or more, are subsumed under one category, noun, and constitute one word class.

In contrast, the first of the Homeric texts reads as follows:

(Manuel Moschopoulos, *Περὶ σχεδῶν*) Stephanus 1545: 160:

Ὁ τοῦ Πριάμου παῖς Ἀλέξανδρος τὰς ἀρχεκάκους ναῦς εἰληφώς, ἃς Φέρεκλος ἐτεκτήνατο, ἐπὶ τὸν τῶν Λακῶνων χῶρον κατέπλευσε. καὶ Ἑλένην τὴν τῆς Λήδας παῖδα, ἣ ὠμευνέται νομίμως ὁ Ἀτρείδης Μενέλαος, ἥρπακώς, ἐπὶ τὴν οἰκίαν αὐτοῦ ὥχετο ἄγων τὴν Ἴλιον καὶ Τροίαν κεκλημένην, καὶ ὠνομασμένην. καὶ πολλοῖς ὀλέθρου αἴτιος ἐγεγόνει.

Priam’s son Alexander took the baneful ships that Phereklos had built, and he sailed to the land of the Laconians. And he seized Helen, the daughter of Leda, with whom Atreus’ son, Menelaos, lived lawfully together, and he brought her to his own country, called and named Ilion and Troy. And he became the ruin of many men.

On this follows Moschopoulos’ lemmatisation and commentary, which begins with a simple statement about case:

(Manuel Moschopoulos, *Περὶ σχεδῶν*) Stephanus 1545: 160:

ΠΡΙΑΜΟΥ. Ἡ εὐθεῖα, ὁ Πρίαμος.

Priam’s. The nominative case form is Priamos.

In sum, already in this juxtaposition of two schede we see some differences that also hold true for others. The first kind more often contains an invocation to God (indeed, the text presented for study is nothing but an invocation with prayer), whereas the second is telling a story. They could be said to represent different text types.

Here, the question arises as to what purpose the choice of topics and general arrangement serve, and whether they exist to facilitate the demonstration of different linguistic phenomena (and not only phonology in so far as this might be relevant for spelling).¹⁰ We may suspect that this is so, first and foremost because the schede differ from each other, not only in content but also in language. Thus, to name one feature from each, the first (see the Biblical schedos cited above) illustrates how expressions of wish may be phrased (here with the imperatives φωτίσον, *enlighten*, and εὐλόγησον, *bless*), whereas the second (see the Homeric schedos cited above) lends itself to a study of how to sustain a narrative by participles (εἰληφώς, *took*, ἥρπакώς, *seized*, ἄγων, *bringing*, along with the non-narrative participles of κεκλημένην, *called*, and ὀνομασμένην, *named*). Also, interestingly enough, the two schede contained in the Vat. gr. 1527 (see n. 7) are one of each type (they are the same as the schede beginning in Stephanus 1545: 108 and 160 respectively), and it seems likely that they are juxtaposed so as to supplement each other. In other words, they are intended to give a comprehensive insight into the genre to a student who has no access to the complete Moschopouleian collection.

1 Pronunciation and spelling

The first linguistic topic to discuss is fundamental to these exercises and makes up a large part of them: pronunciation and spelling.

Spelling Greek in Palaeologan times was difficult because of changes in the pronunciation that had occurred since orthography was fixed in

10 This, of course, comes in addition to the rather obvious fact that schede were used for rhetorical training and to demonstrate points of rhetoric (for this see also Nousia 2019, especially pp. 259-60).

antiquity.¹¹ No doubt for this reason, the schedographer is largely occupied with providing annotated lists of words and their correct spelling, e.g.:

(Manuel Moschopoulos, *Περὶ σχεδῶν*) Stephanus 1545: 4:

Τίνα ἀπὸ τῆς κυ συλλαβῆς ἀρχόμενα, ὑπὸ ταύτην τὴν ἀκολουθίαν εἰσὶ; Ταῦτα. Κύριος, Κῦμα. Κυμαίνει θάλαττα, ἀντὶ κύματα ἐγείρει. Κυλίω, ἀφ' οὗ κύλινδρος κτλ.

Which words beginning with the syllable κυ belong to this category? The following: Κύριος (*Lord*), Κῦμα (*wave*). Κυμαίνει θάλαττα (*the sea is agitated with waves*), instead of κύματα ἐγείρει (*it raises up waves*). Κυλίω (*to roll*), from which the word κύλινδρος (*cylinder*) etc.

As for the linguistic thought in this, the following points are worth stressing.

First, the arrangement is a prime example of normative thinking: there is as little allowance for alternative spellings as in modern times. Yet, the words listed to illustrate a particular spelling do not seem so carefully chosen. In fact, the lists do not seem at all normative if we take it that some kinds of Greek are better than others. Instead, they contain not only a medley of Homeric and poetic, specifically Attic and so-called common (*koina*) words; they also contain late – even Latin – words, such as κοιαίστωρ, *quaestor* (Stephanus 1545: 5; this, however, is marked as an ἀξίωμα Ῥωμαϊκόν, *a Roman office*), and πρίγκιψ, *princeps* (Stephanus 1545: 160).

Secondly, when talking about spelling in relation to pronunciation, the author puts it as follows:

11 For an overview of the main changes in pronunciation, including those of relevance to (the almost unaltered) spelling, see Browning 1983: 56–58, and Holton et al. 2019: 1ff. (Vol. I, part 1).

(Manuel Moschopoulos, *Περὶ σχεδῶν*) Stephanus 1545: 8:

Τίνα ἀπὸ τῆς χρι συλλαβῆς ἀρχόμενα διὰ τοῦ ι^α γράφεται; Ταῦτα. Χρίω κτλ.

What words begin with the syllable χρι and are written with iota? The following: Χρίω (*to anoint*) etc.

A little later, on the same page (l. 8 from below), this is counterbalanced by:

(Manuel Moschopoulos, *Περὶ σχεδῶν*) Stephanus 1545: 8:

Τίνα (scil. ἀπὸ τῆς χρι συλλαβῆς ἀρχόμενα) διὰ τοῦ η^α (scil. γράφεται); Ταῦτα. Χρῆμα κτλ.

What words begin with the syllable χρι and are written with eta? The following: Χρῆμα (*thing/matter*) etc.

This somewhat awkward means of expression is, as should be obvious, a consequence of the fact that the Byzantines did not have a system of phonetic representation and, more generally, had very little grasp of how to make a distinction between form, function and meaning in language.¹² However, one feature of Moschopoulos' arrangement deserves particular attention. The lemmatisation of the words ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ, *Christ*, or ΚΥΡΙΟΣ, *Lord*, leads to a discussion of other similar words. Under the lemma ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ (Stephanus 1545: 7), words beginning with χρι, χρη and χρει are presented (such as χρῆμα, *thing*, see the citation above), implying an identical pronunciation of the vowel sound. However, separated from this, under ΚΥΡΙΟΣ (Stephanus 1545: 3), we find the discussion of words with υ and οι (although there is no discussion of words beginning with κι-, κη-, and κει-), for instance κοίρανος, *tyrant*, so as to indicate that υ and οι are pronounced in the same way yet differently from ι, η and ει.

We know that, in antiquity, υ (upsilon) had a distinct pronunciation, and it is also accepted that the pronunciation of οι merged with this at

12 See for this Robins 1993 and Wahlgren 2024.

some point.¹³ Furthermore, at some later point this (y-)sound turned into [i], that is, the same pronunciation as for ι, η and ει. As for the dating of this second-stage itacism, it seems agreed upon that it happened quite some time earlier than Moschopoulos' age, probably around the eleventh century.¹⁴

In other words, what all of this seems to indicate is that the arrangement in Moschopoulos – with a dividing line between, on the one hand, ι, η and ει, and, on the other, υ and οι – does not really make sense for his own times. Instead, it tells us something about the reality of the past, a time when i and y were distinct phonemes. Therefore, we may suppose that his arrangement is taken over from some older grammarian (it remains unclear who this might be) without much thought.¹⁵

2 Preposition and case

Prepositions and case constitute perhaps the best developed domain of Byzantine syntactic analysis since, in general, much of what the Byzantines would understand as syntax is a matter of how words relate to their immediate neighbours.¹⁶

Moschopoulos' work contains observations on prepositions throughout. However, on this topic the very first schedos as presented in the 1545 Stephanus edition is of especial interest. This is by far the most extensive of the whole collection, and one reason for this is because it includes two long, rather independent dissertations: one on pronouns (running from p. 11, with an introductory heading *Περὶ ἀντωνυμιῶν*, *On pronouns*, until

13 For discussions of the issues raised in this paragraph, see Browning 1983: 56 and Holton et al. 2019 (cf. n. 11).

14 Or, in fact, even earlier: it has been suggested that a distinctive pronunciation of /y/ persisted in educated speech until the mid-Byzantine period, whereas it had disappeared in common pronunciation already in Roman times: see Browning 1983: 56.

15 For his sources in general see Nousia 2016: 78–81.

16 This goes back to Dionysios Thrax and the linguistic tradition of Alexandria at the very least: cf. Robins 1993 and Wahlgren 2024. It is also very well demonstrated by this very text, which contains no other kind of syntactic discussion than that pertaining to prepositions with their neighbours.

p. 15, where it, under the heading ΗΜΩΝ, changes direction into a discussion of all kinds of words with *η*), the other on prepositions (pp. 23–36, introduced as *Περὶ συντάξεως τῶν προθέσεων*, *On the syntax of prepositions*).

The dissertation on prepositions takes up some thirteen pages in Stephanus' edition. It contains, especially in its later parts, a lot of material that, in addition to not being schedographical in its form, it is hard to see as being fit for pedagogical use. It is too specialised, and it deals with the language of the poets, on overarching rules of derivation and composition, and the like. There is not much that a student could internalise and apply. It is optimistic to think that it would be much help in understanding poetry.

In order to extract some linguistic thought fit for students from this all the same, let us focus on what Moschopoulos does before he falls into the trap of the *recherché*. To summarise the following discussion, he starts out with a mostly conventional account of prepositions and their case, yet with some minor points that seem to reflect more recent insights.

First, as is known, some prepositions take one case only, such as ἀπό, ἐν and σύν (these are discussed in Stephanus 1545: 23–24; for ἀπό see also p. 33).¹⁷ Other prepositions take two cases, the genitive and the accusative, such as κατά (discussed on p. 27), or even, like παρά (discussed on p. 29), three cases, the genitive, the dative and the accusative. As far as μετά (discussed on p. 29) is concerned, Moschopoulos states that it occurs with all three cases. This seems to reflect the fact that there is a difference between different earlier grammarians. Some, going back to Dionysius Thrax, have the two-case model, while others, going back to Michael Synkellos (cf. n. 4 above) or, possibly, further, to some unknown authority, the three-case model.¹⁸ This may seem like a minor point, but it

17 This is if we understand 'Greek' as meaning the ancient type – standard literary Greek – as Moschopoulos does. Some Byzantine authors, if they tend towards the vernacular, do use ἀπό with the accusative (for this see Holton et al. 2019: 1993). Also, it is discussed by some grammarians, such as Gregory of Corinth (ca. 1070–1156), but is not mentioned by Moschopoulos – an indication of the nature of his text's normativity.

18 See Wahlgren, forthcoming.

shows how Moschopoulos probably belongs to one grammatical tradition (that of Michael Synkellos) rather than another. The greater matter at stake is whether epic and poetic varieties of Greek count or not (see, for instance, *Iliad* I.525, μετ' ἀθανάτοισι, *among the immortals*, where μετά takes the dative).

Another matter is the distinction between ἐν and εἰς, where ἐν takes the dative, εἰς the accusative. In addition, as pointed out by Moschopoulos (Stephanus 1545: 23–24), both prepositions occur with the genitive in expressions such as ἐν ἀγροῦ, *in the field*/ἐν ᾿Αἰδου, *in Hades*, or even εἰς ᾿Αἰδου, a kind of ellipsis for expressions like ἐν ᾿Αἰδου δόμοις, *in the house of Hades*.

In mentioning this construction, Moschopoulos is on common ground with one or more predecessors.¹⁹ However, in the following, the discussion takes another turn.

As is well known, εἰς infringes upon and, with time, replaces ἐν in the vernacular, so that εἰς is found not only for *going* somewhere, but also for *being* somewhere.²⁰ This in turn leads (among Byzantines concerned with correctness) to a certain confusion regarding the boundaries between εἰς and ἐν.

It is Maximos Planoudes, the very teacher of Moschopoulos, who, in his *Περὶ συντάξεως*, in a discussion of localist functions of the cases, including movement within boundaries, takes up the thread with the following example:²¹

(Maximos Planoudes, *Περὶ συντάξεως*) Bachmann 1828: 123.25–26
ἐν τῇ στοᾷ περιπατεῖν τὸν Σωκράτην.

Socrates walking in the portico.

This, Planoudes says, some consider an error, since you cannot have movement with the dative. However, he continues, it is not wrong, for:

19 It is, for instance, known from Michael Synkellos, cf. Wahlgren, forthcoming.

20 See Holton et al. 2019: 1994 and 1998.

21 This passage in Planoudes is also discussed in Wahlgren, forthcoming.

οὐ τὴν ἀπὸ τόπου εἰς τόπον δηλοῦν κίνησιν βούλεται, ἀλλὰ τὴν ἐν αὐτῷ τῷ τόπῳ ἀναστροφὴν.

The intended meaning is not movement from one place to another, but the to-and-fro movement at one and the same spot.

In conclusion, when Moschopoulos mentions ἐν as the correct preposition for κίνησιν ἔν τινι, I would suggest this could be a reminiscence not of an old tradition, but rather of something as recent as a theory launched by his own teacher.

3 Etymology and derivation

Byzantine modes of reasoning about etymology and derivation constitute a difficult subject for us to approach, at least if we are looking for historically correct explanations of the origin and development of words, as the modern etymologist would do.²²

All the same, it should be mentioned that, in Moschopoulos, there are, from a historical perspective, sometimes perfectly correct statements, for instance when foreign words are explained as such. Foreign words in the *Περὶ σχεδῶν* are either Latin or Hebrew, and one reason why Moschopoulos singles them out is to explain why they are not declined as other words are (the name Ἰησοῦς, *Jesus*, being an example, Stephanus 1545: 6).

This is as far as Moschopoulos goes with etymology proper. In addition, there is some reflection upon derivation. Here, one matter stands out: in a majority of cases (although not all, as I would like to underline), it is claimed that verbs are at the origin of meaning, while corresponding words from other word classes, particularly nouns, are said to be derived from these. Thus, not only is *χριστός*, *anointed*, said to come from *χρίω*, *to anoint* (Stephanus 1545: 7), but the noun *στροφή*, *turn*, from *στρέφω*, *to turn* (Stephanus 1545: 116), and so on.

22 For different discussions of the Byzantine interest in etymology, and its ancient roots, see Robins 1993, especially pp. 21, 22 and 148.

Of course, there are true deverbatives in the Greek language, and *χριστός* is one. Yet, why this is claimed to be the normal course of development is unclear, although, as far as Moschopoulos himself is concerned, the simple explanation is no doubt that earlier grammarians say so.²³ A fact that hampers the Byzantines' analysis is the lack of a clear concept of linguistic root. All the same, Moschopoulos manages to generalise around pairs like *στρέφω* – *στροφή* in an interesting way:

(Manuel Moschopoulos, *Περὶ σχεδῶν*) Stephanus 1545: 116.21-22:

Τὰ ἔχοντα τὸ ἐγκείμενον ἐν τοῖς ῥήμασιν, ἔχουσι τὸ ο ἀντιπαρακείμενον ἐν τοῖς ὀνόμασι.

If there is an ε in the verb, there is a corresponding ο in the noun.

This could have been the starting point for an understanding of *Ablaut*. Also, Moschopoulos (in the following) adds his thoughts on pairs like *ἔχω* – *ἵσχω*, *to have*, *μένω* – *μῖμνω*, *to remain*, and *ῥέπω* – *ρίπτω*, *to incline/throw*. Although this is a case of throwing things together that, from the historical point of view, do not belong together, his approach could have served as a starting point for thinking systematically about word formation.

Another lacking concept is homonymy. From the lemma ΘΕΙΟΤΑΤΟΣ, *most godly* (Stephanus 1545: 112), Moschopoulos arrives at *θεῖος*, *uncle*, implying, we must conclude, that these words are connected.

Moschopoulos' discussion thus proceeds with no understanding of phonetic correspondences and sound laws, no concept of diachrony and historical change, and with little or no attempt to take dialect and genre into account.

No doubt, the same criticism (if we have a right to employ such a concept) can be aimed at other Byzantine grammarians, too. However, a more balanced assessment is possible if we acknowledge that premodern etymology, at least in a European context, does not even try to be historical. It is also to be remembered that, if, as we have suggested, pedagogical aims stand in the foreground, it does, perhaps, not matter so much if it is wrong to connect the *godly* with the *uncle*: more important is that

23 An actual, or even probable, source has not been identified by me.

students make the right associations in their mind and so master their spelling.

4 Conclusion

The schedography discussed in this paper gives little reason to believe that its author had much of an ambition to transmit original linguistic thought into schedography (and therefore, presumably, to students), even though, as in the case of borrowings from Maximos Planoudes, there may be occasional evidence to the contrary. Instead, it mostly provides a light version of the content of the already existing grammatical literature, with the same focal points and ideas, but also – it may be added – while leaving the same areas of language, such as verbal and phrasal syntax, virtually untouched. Even the level of normativity is not oppressive.

In conclusion, schedography may not provide much new insight into linguistic thought (although, as far as the present specimen is concerned, some more topics, such as, for instance, aspect and tense, might prove fruitful to investigate). However, it is still of unexplored interest for the history of pedagogy and language teaching.

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