

geopolitics and warfare

geopolitics and warfare are deeply intertwined concepts that have shaped the course of human history and continue to influence global stability today. Geopolitics involves the study of how geographic, economic, political, and cultural factors affect international relations and power dynamics among nations. Warfare, on the other hand, refers to the organized conflict between states or groups, often driven by geopolitical interests such as territory, resources, or strategic advantage. This article examines the complex relationship between geopolitics and warfare, exploring how geographic strategies impact military conflicts and how warfare shapes geopolitical landscapes. We will delve into historical examples, current global hotspots, and the evolving nature of warfare in the context of modern geopolitics. Understanding these elements is essential to grasp the forces that drive international security and conflict in the contemporary world.

- The Foundation of Geopolitics and Warfare
- Historical Interplay Between Geopolitics and Warfare
- Modern Geopolitical Conflicts and Warfare
- Technological Advancements and Their Impact on Warfare
- Geopolitical Strategies in Contemporary Warfare

The Foundation of Geopolitics and Warfare

Geopolitics is rooted in the analysis of geographical space and its influence on political power. It examines how physical features such as mountains, rivers, and oceans affect the strategies nations adopt to protect their interests. Warfare emerges as a tool employed when diplomatic and economic measures fail to resolve conflicts. The foundation of geopolitics and warfare lies in the pursuit of power, security, and resources.

Geographical Determinism in Geopolitics

Geographical determinism suggests that the physical environment sets limits on political behavior and economic development. For instance, landlocked countries face different strategic challenges than those with coastal access. The control of chokepoints like the Strait of Hormuz or the Panama Canal plays a significant role in shaping global trade and military strategy. Understanding these geographic realities is crucial for comprehending how states position themselves in the international arena.

War as an Extension of Political Objectives

Warfare often serves as an extension of geopolitical objectives when peaceful measures fail. Clausewitz famously described war as “the continuation of politics by other means.” Military conflicts are frequently driven by aims such as territorial expansion, protection of resources, or maintaining regional influence. This perspective highlights the inseparable link between geopolitics and warfare.

Historical Interplay Between Geopolitics and Warfare

Throughout history, geopolitics and warfare have interacted in ways that have redefined borders and shifted global power balances. From ancient empires to the world wars of the 20th century, military conflicts have been influenced by geographic considerations and, in turn, have reshaped geopolitical realities.

Ancient and Classical Eras

In ancient times, empires like Rome and Persia expanded through warfare facilitated by geographic advantages such as access to rivers and fertile lands. Control over trade routes and natural barriers often determined military strategies and political dominance. The geographic position of city-states and kingdoms played a vital role in their survival and expansion.

World Wars and Geopolitical Shifts

The two World Wars exemplify the profound influence of geopolitics on warfare. Strategic considerations such as control over colonies, sea lanes, and industrial resources motivated large-scale conflicts. The aftermath of these wars led to dramatic geopolitical changes, including the redrawing of national boundaries and the emergence of new superpowers.

- Territorial ambitions and alliances in Europe
- Colonial interests driving global conflict
- Geographic strategies in naval and land warfare

Modern Geopolitical Conflicts and Warfare

In the contemporary era, geopolitics and warfare continue to intersect in complex and evolving ways. New arenas of conflict have emerged, including cyber warfare and proxy wars, but traditional geopolitical concerns remain paramount.

Regional Conflicts and Power Rivalries

Many ongoing conflicts around the world are rooted in geopolitical rivalries. Examples include disputes in the South China Sea, tensions in the Middle East, and power struggles in Eastern Europe. These conflicts often involve competition for strategic territories, natural resources, and influence over regional blocs.

Proxy Wars and Geopolitical Influence

Proxy wars have become a common feature of modern geopolitics and warfare. Powerful states support local factions or governments to advance their geopolitical objectives without engaging in direct conflict. This strategy allows for influence expansion while minimizing the risks of full-scale war.

Technological Advancements and Their Impact on Warfare

Technological innovation has transformed the nature of warfare and its relationship to geopolitics. Advances in weaponry, intelligence, and communication have expanded the scope and scale of military operations.

Cyber Warfare and Information Control

Cyber warfare represents a new frontier in geopolitics and warfare. Nations invest heavily in cyber capabilities to disrupt adversaries' infrastructure, steal sensitive information, and influence public opinion. Control over information flows has become a critical component of geopolitical power.

Precision Weaponry and Drones

Modern military technology, including precision-guided munitions and unmanned aerial vehicles (drones), has increased the efficiency and lethality of warfare. These technologies enable states to project power remotely while reducing casualties, shifting geopolitical calculations regarding the use of force.

Geopolitical Strategies in Contemporary Warfare

Contemporary states employ a variety of geopolitical strategies to navigate the complexities of warfare and international relations. These strategies are designed to maximize national security and geopolitical influence.

Balanced Power and Alliances

Forming strategic alliances remains a cornerstone of geopolitical strategy in warfare. NATO, regional coalitions, and bilateral defense agreements serve to balance power among competing states and deter aggression. Alliances also provide access to collective intelligence and military resources.

Economic Sanctions and Hybrid Warfare

Economic sanctions are used as non-military tools to weaken adversaries and achieve geopolitical goals without direct warfare. Hybrid warfare combines conventional military tactics with cyber attacks, misinformation campaigns, and economic pressure to destabilize opponents in multifaceted ways.

1. Diplomatic engagement and negotiation
2. Military deterrence and force projection
3. Information warfare and propaganda
4. Economic measures and sanctions

Frequently Asked Questions

How is the rise of China impacting global geopolitics?

The rise of China is reshaping global geopolitics by challenging the US-led international order, expanding economic and military influence through initiatives like the Belt and Road, and increasing regional tensions in the South China Sea and Taiwan Strait.

What role does cyber warfare play in modern conflicts?

Cyber warfare has become a critical component of modern conflicts, enabling

states and non-state actors to conduct espionage, disrupt critical infrastructure, influence public opinion, and degrade military capabilities without traditional kinetic engagements.

How has the Russia-Ukraine conflict influenced NATO's strategic priorities?

The Russia-Ukraine conflict has prompted NATO to reinforce its eastern flank, increase defense spending among member states, enhance military readiness, and deepen cooperation to deter Russian aggression and ensure collective security.

What are the geopolitical implications of the competition for Arctic resources?

As melting ice opens new shipping routes and access to untapped resources, Arctic nations are vying for territorial claims, leading to increased military presence and geopolitical competition that could affect global trade and security dynamics.

How do energy resources influence geopolitical alliances and conflicts?

Energy resources like oil and gas shape geopolitical alliances and conflicts by creating dependencies, motivating territorial disputes, and influencing diplomatic relations, as countries seek to secure stable supplies and control strategic energy corridors.

What is the significance of unmanned systems in contemporary warfare?

Unmanned systems, including drones and autonomous vehicles, have revolutionized contemporary warfare by providing enhanced surveillance, precision strikes, and reduced risk to personnel, while also raising ethical and strategic challenges.

How does geopolitical instability affect global economic markets?

Geopolitical instability can disrupt global economic markets by causing uncertainty, affecting supply chains, increasing commodity prices, and reducing investor confidence, which in turn impacts global trade and economic growth.

In what ways are hybrid warfare tactics changing

traditional military strategies?

Hybrid warfare tactics blend conventional military force with cyber attacks, misinformation, economic pressure, and proxy forces, complicating traditional military responses and requiring integrated approaches that combine military, intelligence, and diplomatic efforts.

Additional Resources

1. *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives*

This book by Zbigniew Brzezinski explores the geopolitical strategies that the United States must adopt to maintain its global dominance. He emphasizes the importance of Eurasia in global politics and outlines how control over this region is key to world power. The book provides a detailed analysis of international relations and strategic planning in the post-Cold War era.

2. *On War*

Written by Carl von Clausewitz, this classic treatise delves into the philosophy and theory of warfare. Clausewitz discusses the nature of war, its relationship with politics, and the concept of "fog of war." The book remains foundational for military strategists and political leaders alike in understanding the complexities of armed conflict.

3. *The Revenge of Geography: What the Map Tells Us About Coming Conflicts and the Battle Against Fate*

Robert D. Kaplan examines how geography shapes global politics and conflicts. He argues that physical landscapes, resources, and location fundamentally influence national strategies and international relations. The book provides insights into how geography continues to dictate the fate of nations in the modern world.

4. *War and Peace in the 21st Century: The Future of International Conflict*

This collection of essays edited by T.V. Paul analyzes the evolving nature of warfare and peace in contemporary geopolitics. It covers topics such as cyber warfare, nuclear proliferation, and the role of international institutions. The book offers perspectives on how future conflicts might be managed or avoided.

5. *The Art of War*

Sun Tzu's ancient Chinese military treatise is a seminal work on strategy, tactics, and leadership in warfare. The concise aphorisms emphasize flexibility, deception, and the importance of intelligence. Its principles have been applied beyond the battlefield, influencing business and political strategy worldwide.

6. *Prisoners of Geography: Ten Maps That Tell You Everything About Global Politics*

Tim Marshall's book explores how geography limits and shapes the political choices of nations. Through ten detailed maps, he explains conflicts, alliances, and rivalries across the globe. The narrative makes complex

geopolitical concepts accessible and highlights the enduring power of terrain in international affairs.

7. *Clausewitz in the Twenty-First Century*

This modern analysis revisits Clausewitz's theories in the context of contemporary warfare and geopolitics. It considers how new technologies, asymmetric warfare, and globalized politics challenge traditional military doctrines. The book bridges classical strategic thought with current and future conflict scenarios.

8. *Destined for War: Can America and China Escape Thucydides's Trap?*

Graham Allison investigates the historical pattern where a rising power threatens to displace an existing one, often leading to war. Focusing on the U.S.-China relationship, the book assesses the risks of conflict and explores diplomatic strategies to avoid confrontation. It combines historical analysis with current geopolitical trends.

9. *The Utility of Force: The Art of War in the Modern World*

General Rupert Smith argues that modern warfare has fundamentally changed, moving away from traditional battles toward conflicts involving irregular forces and political goals. He discusses the implications for military strategy and how force is used as a tool of policy in today's complex global environment. The book challenges conventional military thinking and offers a fresh perspective on conflict.

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geopolitics and warfare: The Future of Land Warfare Michael E. O'Hanlon, 2015-08-31

What happens if we bet too heavily on unmanned systems, cyber warfare, and special operations in our defense? In today's U.S. defense policy debates, big land wars are out. Drones, cyber weapons, special forces, and space weapons are in. Accordingly, Pentagon budget cuts have honed in on the army and ground forces: this, after the long wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, seems like an appealing idea. No one really wants American boots on the ground in bloody conflicts abroad. But it is not so easy to simply declare an end to messy land wars. A survey of the world's trouble spots suggests that land warfare has more of a future than many now seem to believe. In *The Future of Land Warfare*, Michael O'Hanlon offers an analysis of the future of the world's ground forces: Where are large-scale conflicts or other catastrophes most plausible? Which of these could be important enough to require the option of a U.S. military response? And which of these could in turn demand significant numbers of American ground forces in their resolution? O'Hanlon is not predicting or advocating big American roles in such operations—only cautioning against overconfidence that we can and will avoid them. O'Hanlon considers a number of illustrative scenarios in which large conventional forces may be necessary: discouraging Russia from even contemplating attacks against the Baltic states;

discouraging China from considering an unfriendly future role on the Korean peninsula; handling an asymmetric threat in the South China Sea with the construction and protection of a number of bases in the Philippines and elsewhere; managing the aftermath of a major and complex humanitarian disaster superimposed on a security crisis—perhaps in South Asia; coping with a severe Ebola outbreak not in the small states of West Africa but in Nigeria, at the same time that country falls further into violence; addressing a further meltdown in security conditions in Central America.

geopolitics and warfare: Technology, Energy and Warfare in Evolving Geopolitics

Sandeep Tripathi, Kirill Sablin, 2025-11-10 This book puts forward a new conceptual framework for emerging geopolitics through the lens of technology, energy, and warfare. Drawing on rich case studies from across the globe, it illuminates how power dynamics are being fundamentally reshaped across nations, governments, international organizations, and individuals. It highlights three interrelated aspects of the evolving geopolitics: the close connections between technology and geopolitics, and their mutual influence; the interaction between energy and geopolitics, and the problem of ensuring global security; and warfare affecting global politics. The volume discusses cutting-edge trends and developments in artificial intelligence, the expanding domain of cyberwarfare as well as hybrid warfare, ongoing energy transitions, emerging renewable energy hubs, and structural shifts in global energy markets. Through rigorous analysis, the authors track the economic, social, and political transformations triggered by these interconnected developments across the international landscape. This book will be of great interest to scholars and researchers of international relations, security and intelligence studies, information technology, and artificial intelligence. It will also be of special interest to professionals such as policymakers, security and intelligence practitioners, and professionals working with embassies.

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Originally published in 1983, this broad-ranging book provides penetrating insights on the role of geography in both historic and modern-day warfare. Tactically at a local level, strategically at the campaign level and geopolitically at the global level geographical knowledge is crucial. This book analyses geographical solutions to technical questions of logistics and transportation, the impact of climatology on planning for military action and the understanding of spatial geography for urban and guerrilla wars.

geopolitics and warfare: Geopolitics of the World System Saul Bernard Cohen, 2003

Cohen argues that the emergence of the United States as the world's sole superpower and the process of globalization have failed to remove the importance of geography as a political and strategic factor of great import. After laying out the structural basis for his theory of geopolitical theory, he launches into an examination of how geopolitical realities have developed since World War II, a period that witnessed greater change than the preceding two and a half centuries. He then turns his attention to the meat of the book, separate examinations of each of the major world regions, including examinations of the important countries and their individual geopolitical realities.

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geopolitics and warfare: War and Peace (Annotated: History, Philosophy and Geopolitics) Leo Tolstoy, 2025-03-19

War and Peace by Leo Tolstoy is a monumental novel that blends historical narrative, philosophical reflection, and fiction. Set against the Napoleonic Wars, the novel interweaves real events and personages with the lives of several aristocratic Russian families. Tolstoy's historical account of Russia's part in the wars is remarkably detailed and, as one study notes, "a reliable narrative" of that era. At the same time, War and Peace includes extensive

philosophical essays pondering the forces that drive history and the nature of human agency. This unique structure – history, fiction, and philosophy – has long fascinated critics. The result is not only an immersive story of the 1805 campaign and the 1812 French invasion, but also a deep exploration of how events unfold and whether individuals have freedom in the face of historical forces. This review will examine how *War and Peace* portrays the Napoleonic Wars and reflects on history and human agency, especially Tolstoy's views on determinism versus free will. It will also discuss how the novel's themes – the impact of war on society, the nature of leadership, and the unpredictability of historical events – resonate with contemporary global geopolitics.

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Determinism, Chaos, and Leadership: Re-examining Tolstoy's *War and Peace* Through Modern Geopolitical Realities - Introduction - Portrayal of the Napoleonic Wars in *War and Peace* - Tolstoy's Reflections on History and Human Agency - Determinism vs. Free Will in *War and Peace* - Contemporary Resonances and Geopolitical Parallels - - The Chaos of War and Its Human Toll - - Leadership, "Great Men," and the Limits of Control - - The Unpredictability of Historical Change - - Moral Agency and Private Lives in Times of Upheaval - Conclusion - Bibliography

geopolitics and warfare: *Geopolitics* Jason Dittmer, Jo Sharp, 2014-06-27 It has been increasingly impossible to think about our changing world without coming across the term 'geopolitics'. In the wake of the invasion and occupation of Iraq by the United States, United Kingdom, and others, geopolitics has been offered as an explanation for the occupation's failure to reinvent the Iraqi state and as a blueprint for future action. But what is 'geopolitics'? Drawing both on academic and political material, this book introduces readers to the concept of geopolitics, from the first usage of the term to its more recent reconceptualisations. The concept of geopolitics is introduced through four thematic sections - Imperial Geopolitics, Cold War Geopolitics, Geopolitics after the Cold War and Reconceptualising Geopolitics. Each section includes key writings from a range of diverse and leading authors such as Said, Agnew, Dalby, O Tuathail, Gregory, Barnett and Kaplan, and is accompanied by a critical introduction by the editors to guide the reader through the material. This Reader establishes the foundations of geopolitics while also introducing readers to the continuing significance of the concept in the 21st century. This Reader provides an essential resource that exposes students to original writing. The Editors provide a pathway through the material with Section Introductions to assist the readers understanding of the context of the material and impacts of the writings. The readings included draw from a range of authors, writing from a range of locations. The Reader concludes with the latest changes in geopolitical thought, incorporating feminist and other perspectives.

geopolitics and warfare: *War, Identity and the Liberal State* Victoria Basham, 2013-07-24 This book critically examines the significance of gender, race and sexuality to wars waged by liberal states. Drawing on original field-research with British soldiers, it offers insights into how their everyday experiences are shaped by, and shape, a politics of gender, race and sexuality that not only underpins power relations in the military, but the geopolitics of wars waged by liberal states. Linking the politics of daily life to the international is an intervention into international relations (IR) and security studies because instead of overlooking the politics of the everyday, this book insists that it is vital to explore how geopolitical events and practices are co-constituted, reinforced and contested by it. By utilising insights from Michel Foucault, the book explores how shared and collectively mediated knowledge on gender, race and sexuality facilitates certain claims about the nature of governing in liberal states and about why and how such states wage war against 'illiberal' ones in pursuit of global peace and security. The book also develops post-structural work in international relations by urging scholars interested in the linguistic construction of geopolitics to consider the ways in which bodies, objects and architectures also reinforce particular ideas about war, identity and statehood.

geopolitics and warfare: Last War of the World-Island: The Geopolitics of Contemporary Russia Alexander Dugin, 2015-05-26 Alexander Dugin traces the geopolitical development of Russia from its origins in Kievan Rus and the Russian Empire, through the peak of its global influence during the Soviet era, and finally to the current presidency of Vladimir Putin. Dugin sees Russia as the primary geopolitical pole of the land-based civilizations of the world, forever destined to be in conflict with the sea-based civilizations. At one time the pole of the seafaring civilizations was the British Empire; today it is represented by the United States and its NATO allies. Russia can only fulfill its geopolitical mission by remaining in opposition to the sea powers. Today, according to Dugin, this conflict is not only geopolitical in scope, but also ideological: Russia is the primary representative and defender of traditional values and idealism, whereas the West stands for the values of liberalism and the market-driven society. Whereas Russia began to lose sight of its mission during the 1990s and threatened to succumb to domination by the Western powers, Dugin believes that Putin has begun to correct its course and return Russia to her proper place. But the struggle is far from over: while progress has been made, Russia remains torn between its traditional nature and the temptations of globalism and Westernization, and its enemies undermine it at every turn. Dugin makes the case that it is only by remaining true to the Eurasian path that Russia can survive and flourish in any genuine sense – otherwise it will be reduced to a servile and secondary place in the world, and the forces of liberalism will dominate the world, unopposed.

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geopolitics and warfare: Theorizing Medieval Geopolitics Andrew Latham, 2012-03-12 Over the past two decades or so, medieval geopolitics have come to occupy an increasingly prominent place in the collective imagination—and writings—of International Relations scholars. Although these accounts differ significantly in terms of their respective analytical assumptions, theoretical concerns and scholarly contributions, they share at least one common – arguably, defining – element: a belief that a careful study of medieval geopolitics can help resolve a number of important debates surrounding the nature and dynamics of international relations. There are however three generic weaknesses characterizing the extant literature: a general failure to examine the existing historiography of medieval geopolitics, an inadequate account of the material and ideational forces that create patterns of violent conflict in medieval Latin Christendom, and a failure to take seriously the role of religion in the geopolitical relations of medieval Latin Christendom. This book seeks to address these shortcomings by providing a theoretically guided and historically sensitive account of the geopolitical relations of medieval Latin Christendom. It does this by developing a theoretically informed picture of medieval geopolitics, theorizing the

medieval-to-modern transition in a new and fruitful way, and suggesting ways in which a systematic analysis of medieval geopolitical relations can actually help to illuminate a range of contemporary geopolitical phenomena. Finally, it develops an historically sensitive conceptual framework for understanding geopolitical conflict and war more generally.

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geopolitics and warfare: Geo-Economics: The Interplay between Geopolitics, Economics, and Investments Joachim Klement, 2021-04-28 Today's investors need to understand geopolitical trends as a main driving force of markets. This book provides just that: an understanding of the interplay between geopolitics and economics, and of the impact of that dynamic on financial markets. To me, geo-economics is the study of how geopolitics and economics interact in international relations. Plenty of books on geopolitics have been written by eminent experts in politics and international affairs. This book is not one of them. First, I am neither a political scientist nor an expert in international affairs. I am an economist and an investment strategist who has been fascinated by geopolitics for many years. And this fascination has led me to the realization that almost all books and articles written on geopolitics are useless for investors. Political scientists are not trained to think like investors, and they are not typically trained in quantitative methods. Instead, they engage in developing narratives for geopolitical events and processes that pose risks and opportunities for investors. My main problem with these narratives is that they usually do not pass the "so what?" test. Geopolitical risks are important, but how am I to assess which risks are important for my portfolio and which ones are simply noise? Because geopolitics experts focus on politics, they do not provide an answer to this crucial question for investors. What could be important for a geopolitics expert and for global politics could be totally irrelevant for investors. For example, the US wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have been going on for almost two decades now and have been an important influence on the political discussion in the United States. But for investors, the war in Afghanistan was a total nonevent, and the war in Iraq had only a fleeting influence, when it started in 2003. Geopolitics experts cannot answer the question of which geopolitical events matter for investors and which do not. Unfortunately, some experts thus claim that all geopolitical risks matter and that these risks cannot be quantified but only assessed qualitatively. Nothing could be further from the truth. In the chapters that follow, I discuss geopolitical and geo-economic events from the viewpoint of an investor and show that they can be quantified and introduced as part of a traditional risk management process. I do this in two parts. The first part of this book focuses on geopolitics that matters to investors. It reviews the literature on a range of geopolitical events and shows which events have a material economic effect and which do not. The second part of this book puts the insights from those first chapters into practice by applying them to current geopolitical trends. In this second part, I stick my head out and examine the impact the geopolitical trends have on the economy and financial markets today and their likely development in the coming years.

—Joachim Klement, CFA

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contributions by eleven noted specialists on peace and security issues in the Caribbean. All chapters are based on recent research on the radically transformed regional situation in the post Cold-War context. Particular emphasis is placed on the formulation of security policies by the most relevant security actors, including both external powers present in the region, independent states and subregional groupings. This discussion is placed in the framework of post Cold-War security outlooks which focus on 'non-traditional' threats, mainly drugs and illegal migration.

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geopolitics and warfare: ICCWS 2023 18th International Conference on Cyber Warfare and Security Richard L. Wilson, Brendan Curran, 2023-03-09

geopolitics and warfare: *Cultural Politics of Targeted Killing* Kyle Grayson, 2016-07-15 The deployment of remotely piloted air platforms (RPAs) - or drones - has become a defining feature of contemporary counter-insurgency operations. Scholarly analysis and public debate has primarily focused on two issues: the legality of targeted killing and whether the practice is effective at disrupting insurgency networks, and the intensive media and activist scrutiny of the policy processes through which targeted killing decisions have been made. While contributing to these ongoing discussions, this book aims to determine how targeted killing has become possible in contemporary counter-insurgency operations undertaken by liberal regimes. Each chapter is oriented around a problematisation that has shaped the cultural politics of the targeted killing assemblage. Grayson argues that in order to understand how specific forms of violence become prevalent, it is important to determine how problematisations that enable them are shaped by a politico-cultural system in which culture operates in conjunction with technological, economic, governmental, and geostrategic elements. The book also demonstrates that the actors involved - what they may be attempting to achieve through the deployment of this form of violence, how they attempt to achieve it, and where they attempt to achieve it - are also shaped by culture. The book demonstrates how the current social relations prevalent in liberal societies contain the potential for targeted killing as a normal rather than extraordinary practice. It will be of great use for academic specialists and graduate students in international studies, geography, sociology, cultural studies and legal studies.

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