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Comparative Politics of the Global South: Linking Concepts and Cases

FIFTH EDITION

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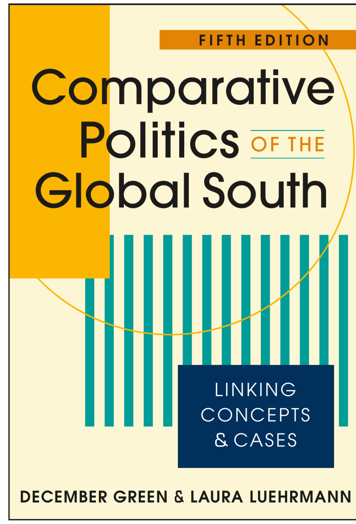

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Comparing and Defining an Interdependent World

> No human culture is inaccessible to someone who makes the effort to understand, to learn, to inhabit another world. —*Henry Louis Gates*[1]

In periods of crisis, some things become clearer. During the Covid PANDEMIC,* we all became acutely conscious of the ways in which even our day-to-day lives and most basic routines can be impacted by things that happen thousands of miles away. Even though analysts have long forecasted that the world was likely due for a pandemic scenario (most notably after the Ebola epidemic in West Africa), it is striking to consider the many ways, both dramatic and subtle, that our world, and our interactions with others, has changed since the March 11, 2020, declaration by the World Health Organization (WHO) that the novel coronavirus labeled Covid-19 was indeed a pandemic.[2] Facing such upheaval, the entire world seemed to change. "Working from home" became the norm in nearly every part of the globe, as all but those deemed "essential" were instructed to "shelter in place" as much as possible to help stop the spread of this highly contagious respiratory virus. Long-used terms like "public health" and "remote learning" stood alongside concepts infused with new meanings, including "social distancing" and "Zoom," as we all tried to figure out the best way to navigate a rapidly moving, seemingly ever-changing landscape. At once, borders and geography seemed both crucial (as countries closed to all but the most essential traffic)[3] and irrelevant (travel blockades were largely impotent against stopping the global advance of the virus and its variants, even if they did slow the spread of the disease).[4] The events of recent years provide a vibrant laboratory from which we can analyze our engagement with the world.

In this book we take a comparative approach to the study of Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East. How should we refer to this immense collection

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*Terms appearing in SMALL CAPITAL LETTERS are defined in the Glossary, which begins on p. 493.

of countries, people, and cultures, comprising more than 75 percent of the world's population? As you'll see, we are not the first to struggle with what's in a name. In fact, it was only in the prior edition of this text that we changed the title from *Comparative Politics of the Third World* to *Comparative Politics of the Global South*. Some may argue this change was long overdue. This shift in terminology reflects not only our ongoing discomfort with the "three worlds" terminology, but also a heightened recognition—by scholars, practitioners, citizens, and activists alike—that, despite its drawbacks, the concept of the "global south" is the least offensive and most value-neutral label (despite some obvious geographic inaccuracies).[5] To understand a bit of the controversy, let's begin with a short review of some of the terminology and disputes surrounding characterizations of the majority of the world's population.

There are numerous labels we may employ. One of the most common (and, indeed, the most provocative), is "third world." Why? The term "third world" (tiers monde) was coined by French demographer Alfred Sauvy. In a 1952 article, Sauvy borrowed from eighteenth-century writer Emmanuel Joseph Sieyes to compare relatively poor countries of the world to the "third estate" (the people) at the time of the French Revolution. Sieyes characterized the third estate as ignored, exploited, and scorned. Sauvy characterized the third world similarly, but pointed out that it, like the third estate, has the power to overcome its status.[6]

So what's so off-putting, then, about the term "third world"? First and foremost, it is objectionable for both logical and emotional reasons. Former World Bank president and US deputy secretary of state Robert Zoellick once declared that there is no longer a third world.[7] Not only do critics of the term disdain the concept as unwieldy and obsolete, but they also fault it as distorting reality in attempting to geopolitically and economically classify a diverse group of countries.

And let's face it, the term "third world" can be fighting words. The phrase carries a lot of negative baggage, and is viewed to be antiquated and offensive terminology.[8] Many people cringe at hearing the term and avoid using it because, at the very least, it sounds condescending and quaintly racist. It is not unusual for "third world" to be flung as an insult. For some, the term suggests backwardness. Third world countries are often thought to play a peripheral role in the world, having no voice and little weight or relevance. That is certainly not the case, as this book demonstrates.

The geopolitical use of the term "third world" dates back to the Cold War, the period of US-Soviet rivalry from approximately 1947 to 1989, reflecting the ideological conflict that dominated international relations. For decades following World War II the rich, economically advanced, industrialized countries, also known as the "first world," were pitted against the Soviet-led, communist "second world." In this rivalry, each side described what it was doing as self-defense, and both the first and second worlds claimed to be fighting to "save" the planet from the treachery of the other. Much of this battle was over who would control the nonaligned "third world," which served as the theater for many Cold War conflicts and whose countries were treated as pawns in this chess game. Defined simply as the remainder of the planet—being neither first nor second—the concept of the third world has always been unwieldy, often bringing to mind countries that are poor, agricultural, and overpopulated.

Yet, consider the stunning diversity that exists among the countries of every region of the world: surely they cannot all be lumped into a single category and characterized as such today. For example, how do we categorize China? It is clearly led by a communist party (and therefore may be considered second world), but during the Cold War it viewed itself as the leader of the third world. What about Israel? Because of the dramatic disparities within it, the country can be categorized as third world or first, depending on where we look. The same can even be said for the United States. Visit parts of its inner cities, the rural South, or Appalachia, and you will find the so-called third world, or what some even characterize as "fourth world."[9] With the Cold War long over, why aren't the former republics of the Soviet Union included in most studies of the third world? Certainly, the poorest of them are more third world than first.

The fact is, many countries fall between the cracks when we use the three-worlds typology. Some of the countries labeled third world are oil-rich, while others have been industrializing for so long that even the term "newly industrializing countries" (NICs) is dated (it is still used, but has largely been replaced by "emerging economies"). Therefore, in appreciation of the diversity contained within the third world, perhaps it is useful to subdivide it, to allow for specificity by adding more categories. Under this schema, the emerging countries and a few others that are most appropriately termed "emerging and developing countries" are labeled "third world" (e.g., India, South Korea, Brazil, Mexico). "Fourth world" countries could include those states that are not industrializing, but have some resources to sell on the world market (e.g., Nigeria, Afghanistan, and Egypt), or some strategic value that wins them some foreign assistance. The label "less developed country" (LDC) is the best fit in most of these cases since it simply describes their situation and implies little in terms of their prospects for DEVELOPMENT. And finally, we have the "fifth world," which Henry Kissinger once callously characterized as "the basket cases of the world." These are the world's poorest countries. Sometimes known as "least–less developed countries" (LLDCs), they have been under-developed. With little to sell on the world market, they are eclipsed by it. The poorest in the world, with the worst ratings for virtually every marker of human development, these countries are marginalized and utterly dependent on what little foreign assistance they receive.

Today, it is more common to hear the STATES of these regions variously referred to as "developing countries," "less developed countries," or "underdeveloped countries." Currently in vogue are also the stripped-down, minimalist terms "low-income countries" (LICs), "high-income countries" (HICs), and even low- and lower-middle-income countries (LMICs). These are just a few of the labels used to refer to a huge expanse of territories and peoples, and none are entirely satisfactory. First, our subject—comprising four major world regions—is so vast and so heterogeneous that it is difficult to speak of it as a single entity. Second, each name has its own political implications and each insinuates a political message. For example, although some countries contained within these regions are better off than others, only an optimist would label all of them as "developing countries." It is a real stretch to say that some of the countries we'll be looking at are developing. Some are under-developing—losing ground, becoming worse off.[10]

Those who prefer the term "emerging and developing countries" tend to support the idea that the capitalist path of free markets will eventually lead to peace and prosperity for all; it implies a hopeful notion of what is possible. Capitalism is associated with rising prosperity in some countries such as South Korea and Mexico, but even in these countries huge numbers of people have yet to share in many of its benefits. However, the relative term "less developed countries" prompts the question: Less developed than whom—or what? The answer, inevitably, is what we arbitrarily label "developed countries": the rich, industrialized states of Western Europe, Canada, and the United States, also known as "the West" (a term that, interestingly enough, includes Japan but excludes most of the countries of the Western Hemisphere).

Although some are now more careful to say "economically advanced," and people often throw about the terms "advanced," "developed," or "less developed" as a shorthand measure of economic advancement, often such names are resented because they imply that "less developed" countries are somehow lacking in other, broader measures of political, social, or cultural development. Use of the term "developing," or any of these terms for that matter, may sound optimistic, but it suggests that countries can be ranked along a continuum. Such terms can be used to imply that the West is best, that the rest of the world is comparatively "backward," and that the most the citizens of the rest of the world can hope for is to "develop" using the West as a model.

In the 2015 annual letter of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the famed investors turned philanthropists contended that such terminology has outlived its utility. Why, for example, should Mozambique and Mexico be grouped together?[11] Critics contend that the terminology is intellectually lazy, outdated, and judgmental. The World Bank got rid of the "developing countries" terminology in 2016, in part to highlight measures of economic success, and in part to point out the importance of differences existing within countries themselves.[12] They now classify countries into low-income, lower-middle-income, upper-middle-income, and high-income economies, based on gross national income (GNI) per capita, adjusted annually for inflation. As it phases out the use of "developing or developed" world from within its databases, the World Bank focuses less on general characterization and more on the priority of promoting SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.

If we look at the issues in terms of sheer numbers, focusing on the size of the populations of the countries we are analyzing, perhaps we should adopt the terminology of "majority world," given that, according to the World Bank, more than 50 percent of the global population may be categorized as either poor (living on less than $1.90/day) or the higher poverty threshold ($3.20/day), with a significant increase in the so-called new poor being traced to the negative impacts of Covid.[13] In fact, as we discuss throughout the book, Covid is reversing much of the progress that had been achieved in the years prior to 2020, especially in terms of the growth of the global middle class, most notably in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa; and the world is risking a "two-speed recovery" of diverging rates for rich, compared to poorer, countries.[14] Demographically, the countries that are included in our "global south" category constitute more than 50 percent of the world's population, lending some credence to this "majority world" label.[15]

Geography is the point of reference for some, including those who argue that the West developed only at the expense of the rest of the world. For these analysts, under-development is no natural event or coincidence. Rather, it is the outcome of hundreds of years of active under-development by today's developed countries. Some have captured this dynamic as the all-inclusive "non-Western world." As others have demonstrated, it is probably more honest to speak of "the West and the rest" if we are to use this kind of term, since there are many non-Wests rather than a single non-Western world.[16] At least "the West and the rest" is blatantly straightforward in its Eurocentric center of reference, dismissing 75 percent of the world's population and treating "the rest" as "other." In the same manner that the term "nonwhite" is demeaning, "non-Western" implies that something is missing. Our subject becomes defined only through its relationship to a more central "West."

Resistance to such treatment, and efforts to change situations, is sometimes referred to as the "North-South conflict," or the war between the haves and the have-nots of the world. The names "North" and "South" are useful because they are seemingly stripped of the value judgments contained within most of the terms already described. However, they are as imprecise as the term "West," since "North" refers to developed countries, which mostly fall north of the equator, and "South" is another name for less developed countries, which mostly fall south of the equator. Similar to any dichotomy, this terminology invites illusions of superiority and "otherness," homogenizing differences and elevating one's own culture or lifestyle.

So, why has the phraseology of global south seemingly come into vogue? Some argue that it has long been the preferred term for what used to be called the third world, even if it must be "used elastically."[17] Used with increasing frequency within the United Nations in the 1970s, "global south" has, in many circles, replaced a three worlds construct that became increasingly irrelevant after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.[18] Even if today the metaphor is used to highlight both the empowerment and shared circumstances of many around the world, its origins, traced to the Brandt Commission reports of the early 1980s, are now viewed as patronizing in their call for the financial support of the "north" for modernization efforts undertaken within the "south."[19] Similar to each of the constructs we discussed above, its lines are fuzzy, and we must recognize it for the created construct that it is. To the extent that it helps us grasp some of the common challenges and innovations of people and governments, and how some of these issues are viewed differently than from the vantage point of the developed north, the term "global south" may be useful, albeit imperfect.

Clearly, none of the names we use to describe the countries of Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East are satisfactory, and any generalization is going to be limited. Even the terms "Latin America" and "Middle East" are problematic. Not all of Latin America is "Latin" in the sense of being Spanish- or Portuguese-speaking. Yet we will use this term as shorthand for the entire region south of the US border, including the Caribbean. And the idea of a region being "Middle East" only makes sense if one's perspective is distinctly European—otherwise, what is it "middle" to? The point is that most of our labels reflect some bias, and none of them are fully satisfactory. These names are all ideologically loaded in one way or another. Because there is no simple, clearly most appropriate identifier available, we use each and all of them as markers of the varying worldviews presented in this text. Ultimately, we leave it to the reader to sift through the material presented here, consider the debates, and decide which arguments—and therefore which terminologies—are most representative of the world and therefore most useful.

What's to Compare?

In this introduction to the COMPARATIVE STUDIES of Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East, we take a different spin on the traditional approach to discuss much more than politics as it is often narrowly defined. As one of the social sciences, political science has traditionally focused on the study of formal political institutions and behavior. In this book, we choose not to put the spotlight on governments and voting patterns, party politics, and so on. Rather, we turn our attention to all manner of political behavior, which we consider to include just about any aspect of life. Of interest to us is not only how people are governed, but also how they live, how they govern themselves, and what they see as their most urgent concerns.

We employ a political interaction approach. It is an eclectic method that presents ideas from a variety of contemporary thinkers and theories. Our approach is also multidisciplinary. We divide our attention among history, politics, society, and economics to convey more fully the complexity of human experience.[20] Instead of artificially confining ourselves to one narrow discipline, we recognize that each discipline offers another layer or dimension, which adds immeasurably to our understanding of the "essence" of politics.[21]

Comparative politics, then, is much more than simply a subject of study—it is also a means of study. It employs what is known as the comparative method. Through the use of the comparative method, we seek to describe, identify, and explain trends—in some cases, even predict human behavior. Those who adopt this approach, known as comparativists, are interested in identifying relationships and patterns of behavior and interactions between individuals and groups. Focusing on one or more countries, comparativists examine CASE STUDIES alongside one another. They search for similarities and differences between and among the elements selected for comparison. For example, one might compare patterns of female employment and fertility rates in one country in relation to those patterns in other countries. Using the comparative method, analysts make explicit or implicit comparisons, searching for common and contrasting features. Some do a "most similar systems" analysis, looking for differences between cases that appear to have a great deal in common (e.g., Canada and the United States). Others prefer a "most different" approach, looking for commonalities between cases that appear diametrically opposed in experience (e.g., Bolivia and India).[22] What is particularly exciting about this type of analysis is stumbling upon unexpected parallels between ostensibly different cases. Just as satisfying is beginning to understand the significance and consequences of the differences that exist between cases assumed to have much in common.

Most comparative studies textbooks take one of two roads. Either they offer case studies, which provide loads of intricate detail on a handful of states (often the classics: Mexico, Nigeria, China, and India; curiously, the Middle East is frequently ignored), or they provide a CROSS-NATIONAL ANALYSIS that purports to generalize about much larger expanses of territory. Those who take the cross-national approach are interested in getting at the big picture. Texts that employ it focus on theory and concepts to broaden our scope of understanding beyond a handful of cases. They often end up making fairly sweeping generalizations. The authors of these books may reference any number of countries as illustration, but at the loss of detail and context that come only through the use of case studies.

We provide both cross-national analysis and case studies because we don't want to lose the strengths of either approach. We present broad themes and concepts, while including attention to the variations that exist in reality. In adopting this hybrid approach, we have set for ourselves a more ambitious task. However, as teachers, we recognize the need for both approaches to be presented. We have worked hard to show how cross-national analysis and case studies can work in tandem, how each complements the other. By looking at similar phenomena in several contexts (i.e., histories, politics, societies, economics, and international relations of the global south, more generally), we can apply our cases and compare them, illustrating the similarities and differences experienced in different settings.

Therefore, in addition to the cross-national analysis that composes the bulk of each chapter, we offer eight case studies, two from each of the major regions of the third world. For each region, we include the "classics" offered in virtually every text that applies the case method to the non-Western experience: Mexico, Nigeria, China, and Iran. We offer these cases for the same reasons that so many others see fit to include them. However, we go further. To temper the tendency to view these cases as somehow representative of their regions, and to enhance the basis for comparison, we submit alongside the classics other, less predictable case studies from each region. These additional cases are equally interesting and important in their own regard; they are countries that are rarely (if ever) included as case studies in introductory textbooks: Peru, Zimbabwe, Egypt, and Indonesia (see the maps and country profiles in Figures 1.2 to 1.9 at the end of this chapter).

Through detailed case studies, we learn what is distinctive about the many peoples of the world, and get a chance to see the world from a perspective other than our own. We can begin to do comparative analysis by thinking about what makes the people of the world alike and what makes us different. We should ask ourselves how and why such differences exist, and consider the various constraints under which we all operate. We study comparative politics not only to understand the way other people view the world, but also to make better sense of our own understanding of it. We have much to learn from how similar problems are approached by different groups of people. To do this, we must consider the variety of factors that serve as context, to get a better idea of why things happen and why events unfold as they do.[23] The better we get at this, the better idea we will have of what to expect in the future. And we will get a better sense of what works and what doesn't work so well—in the cases under examination, but also in other countries. You may be tempted to compare the cases under review with the situation in your country. And that's to be encouraged, since the study of how others approach problems may offer us ideas on how to improve our own lives. Comparativists argue that drawing from the experience of others is really the only way to understand our own systems. Seeing beyond the experience of developed countries and what is immediately familiar to us expands our minds, allows us to see the wider range of alternatives, and offers new insights into the challenges we face at the local, national, and international levels.

The greatest insight, however, comes with the inclusion of a larger circle of voices—beyond those of the leaders and policymakers. Although you will certainly hear the arguments of leaders in the chapters that follow, you will also hear the voices of those who are not often represented in texts such as this. You will hear stories of domination and the struggle against it. You will hear not only how people have been oppressed, but also how they have liberated themselves.[24] Throughout the following chapters, we have worked to include the standpoints and perspectives of the ostensibly "powerless": the economically poor, youth, and women. Although they are often ignored by their governments, including the US government, hearing their voices is a necessity if we are to fully comprehend the complexity of the challenges all of us face. Until these populations are included and encouraged to participate to their fullest potential, development will be distorted and delayed. Throughout this book, in a variety of ways, we give attention to these groups and their interests within our discussions of history, economics, society, politics, and international relations.

Interdependence: Mutual Vulnerability

As mentioned earlier, we believe that any introductory study of the global south should include both the specificity of case study as well as the breadth of the cross-national approach. Throughout the chapters that follow, we follow a similar pattern: we introduce some of the dominant issues facing the global south, which are approached from a number of angles and serve as a basis for cross-national comparison. For example, not only is it interesting and important to understand the differences in the experience of disease in Zimbabwe as opposed to Iran, it is just as important to understand how religion, poverty, and war may contribute to the perpetuation of public health challenges. Additionally, in trying to understand the impact of climate change throughout the global south, we should be aware of its impact on economic development, how ordinary people are attempting to cope with it, and what they (with or without world leaders) are prepared to do to fight it. After the thematic and conceptual discussion in each unit, we apply these ideas within our eight case studies, as a way to more clearly illustrate these concepts in operation.

Time and again, we return to a recurring theme of INTERDEPENDENCE. By "interdependence," we refer to a relationship of mutual (although not equal) vulnerability and sensitivity that exists between the world's peoples. This shared interdependence has grown out of a rapidly expanding web of interactions that tie us closer together. Most Americans understand that what we do as a nation often affects others—for better or worse. On the other hand, it is more of a stretch to get the average American to understand why we should care and why

Figure 1.1 Global Village of 1,000 People

There are approximately 7.8 billion people living in our world today. It can be difficult to grasp a sense of comparison with this large size. So, instead, imagine that the world is a village of 1,000 people. Who are its inhabitants?

600 Asians
172 Africans
100 Europeans
47 North Americans
81 Latin Americans and residents across the Caribbean

Within this population, a total of 67 have earned a college degree. Within this village, 863 are able to read and write (90 percent of men and 83 percent of women); and 140 are considered illiterate. Approximately half of the village owns or shares a computer, and 801 own a smartphone.

The people of the village have considerable difficulty communicating:
123 speak Mandarin Chinese
60 speak Spanish
51 speak English
51 speak Arabic
35 speak Hindi
33 speak Bengali
30 speak Portuguese
21 speak Russian
17 speak Japanese

And 579 speak other languages as their first language. The six languages recognized as official languages by the United Nations (Arabic, Mandarin Chinese, English, French, Russian, and Spanish) are the first or second language of approximately 45 percent of the world's population, or about 450 of our village of 1,000 people.

In this village of 1,000 there are
310 Christians
250 Muslims
150 Hindus
70 Buddhists

Approximately 60 people believe in other religions, and 160 are not religious or do not identify themselves as being aligned with a particular faith.

One-third of these 1,000 people in the world village are children, and only 100 are over the age of sixty-five. More than half of the population (approximately 57 percent, or 570) lives in cities, with this rate increasing by nearly 2 percent each year. Approximately 10 percent (100) of the village suffers from hunger. Just over half of the women in the village would have access to and use modern contraceptives. With the birth rate outpacing the death rate, the population of the village next year will be 1,011.

In this 1,000-person community, 523 people receive 10 percent of the world's income; another 84 are in the bottom 50 percent share of the income. Even though 900 people in the village have electricity, only 180 people own an automobile (although some of them own more than one automobile). Of the 1,000 people, 260 lack access to safe drinking water, nearly 300 lack basic soap and water, and 323 lack access to safe sanitation.

Of the earth's surface, approximately 30 percent is land (with 71 percent of this being habitable), and just over 70 percent ocean. About 50 percent of the habitable land is used for agriculture, and only 1 percent is used for cities, town, roads, and other forms of infrastructure (despite increasing rates of urbanization).

Due in part to the increasing expansion of educational opportunities in the village, the ratio of students to faculty in our village has been declining; there is now 1 teacher for every 23 students enrolled in primary education. This is not evenly distributed across our global village, though, with 1 teacher for every 42 students in Africa, while there is 1 teacher for every 15 students in North America. Of these teachers, nearly two-thirds of them (64 percent) are women. In our village of 1,000 citizens, there are only 2 doctors.

Sources: Adapted from Donella H. Meadows, "If the World Were a Village of One Thousand People," Sustainability Institute, 2000. Updated using data from the CIA World Factbook, "World" category (www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/world/) as well as "Our World in Data" (www.ourworldindata.org).

we need to understand what is happening in the world around us—even in far-off "powerless" countries. However, whether we choose to recognize it or not, it is becoming more and more difficult to escape the fact that our relationship with the world is a reciprocal one. What happens on the other side of the planet, even in seemingly less powerful countries, does affect us—whether we like it or not.

Some have used the image of a "butterfly effect" to capture these dynamics. They highlight the possibility of small, simple actions, like the flapping of a butterfly's wings in Brazil, having complex and potentially huge effects far away, like creating a tornado in Texas.[25] Others have taken this concept to apply it to politics, showing how seemingly small actions can have faraway, potentially large, complex impacts.[26] Given events of recent years, this interconnectedness seems to go without saying. Climate change and the Covid pandemic are easily recognizable examples, but there are many others. Perhaps you remember when a single Taiwan-operated mega tanker (the size of the Empire State Building) collided with the banks of the Suez Canal (the transit point for an estimated one-tenth of world trade), blocking the channel for over a week, stranding hundreds of cargo vessels on either side of the blockage. This singular mishap dealt a significant sucker punch to supply chains around the world.[27] Of course, the Covid pandemic had already revealed the many ways in which component parts of critical supplies, including pharmaceuticals, basic safety equipment like face masks, and even computer chips, relied on the smooth operating of a complex web of just-in-time global supply chains that promote specialization and count on the normally efficient worldwide web of trade. Yet, interdependence introduces unpredictable fragilities, and a combination of unforeseen events brought these weaknesses in stark relief.[28]

For example, most are aware that China is the world's supplier for car parts, toys, and many electronics, but few Americans realized that Chinese pharmaceutical companies supply more than 90 percent of antibiotics used in the United States, as well as most acetaminophen, ibuprofen, and even vitamin C.[29] India, the global leader in generic medicine production, depends on China for 80 percent of its active pharmaceutical components, the chemicals that provide medicinal properties to drugs.[30] Business sectors as wide-ranging as the automotive industry and consumer goods (including washing machines and smartphones) have all been impacted by the bottlenecks in component delivery.[31] Multinational corporations (MNCs), government agencies, and municipalities around the world found themselves re-evaluating even their most basic ways of conducting business, which had been based on the rapid "just in time" production and delivery systems of GLOBALIZATION. And none of this is exclusively economic: Freedom House, a NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION (NGO) that monitors the status of democracy, political freedoms, and human rights around the world, speaks of the "long arm" of Covid. The global pandemic has exposed previously existing weaknesses in democracy and liberty around the world, irrespective of government type or level of development.[32] In other words, while Covid is not the cause of many of these challenges, it has magnified awareness of many strains that exist around the world. Pressure has been mounting, demanding our attention.

Conclusions: It Depends on Whom You Ask

Let's put it plainly: There will be no simple answers to many of the questions we have raised here or raise throughout the chapters that follow. The best we can do is to present you with a wide range of thinking and alternative perspectives on many of the challenges faced to some degree by all of us. In this book, we look at a series of issues of interdependence, like migration, public health, and climate change, from a number of angles. Before you make up your mind about any of the contending theories we present here, we ask that you judge each on its merits. We firmly believe that reflecting on another's point of view and considering more than one side of any story is the only way to begin to understand the complex social phenomena we now set out to discuss.

Linking Concepts and Cases

The information in this section is provided as a primer for the case studies we discuss throughout the rest of the book. Figures 1.2 through 1.9 should serve as a point of reference as you read about the histories, economies, and politics of the eight case studies introduced here. Throughout the book, we will return to the same countries, applying the ideas introduced in the conceptual chapters to the reality of their experiences.

Now It's Your Turn

From a simple examination of the statistical information that follows, what would you expect to be the key issue, or the most pressing problem each country faces? What can a sketch like this tell you about life in each of these eight countries? Which ones appear most similar, and in what ways? What are some of the most striking differences between these countries? What other information not included here do you consider deserving of attention? Why?

Notes

1. Henry Louis Gates, "'Authenticity,' or the Lesson of Little Tree," *New York Times Review of Books,* November 24, 1991, p. 30.

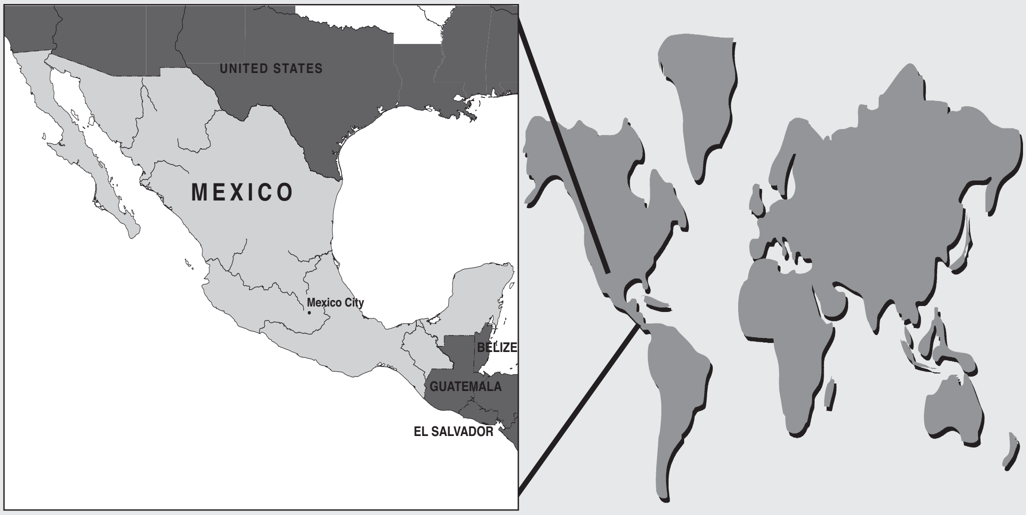
2. On January 30, 2020, the WHO declared a "public health emergency of international concern," after thousands of new cases were acknowledged within the People's Republic of China. On February 11, the WHO proposed the official name for the disease caused by the novel coronavirus, Covid-19. See Derrick Bryson Taylor, "A Timeline of the Coronavirus Pandemic," *New York Times,* March 17, 2021.

3. According to the COVID Border Accountability Project, 189 of the world's countries, totaling roughly 65 percent of the world's population, closed all land, sea, and air ports of entry to their country; Europe, South Africa, and Asia saw the most closures. See Covidborderaccountability.org.

4. "Border Closures, Pre-travel Tests of Little Use Against COVID-19 Spread: EU Agency," *Reuters*, May 27, 2020; "Countries Slammed Their Borders Shut to Stop Coronavirus. But Is It Doing Any Good?" NPR, May 15, 2020.

5. For some examples of the lively terminological debate, see the special twenty-fifth anniversary issue of the *Third World Quarterly* 25, no. 1 (2004); the special issue of *The Global South* 5, no. 1 (Spring 2011); Marc Silver, "If You Shouldn't Call It the Third

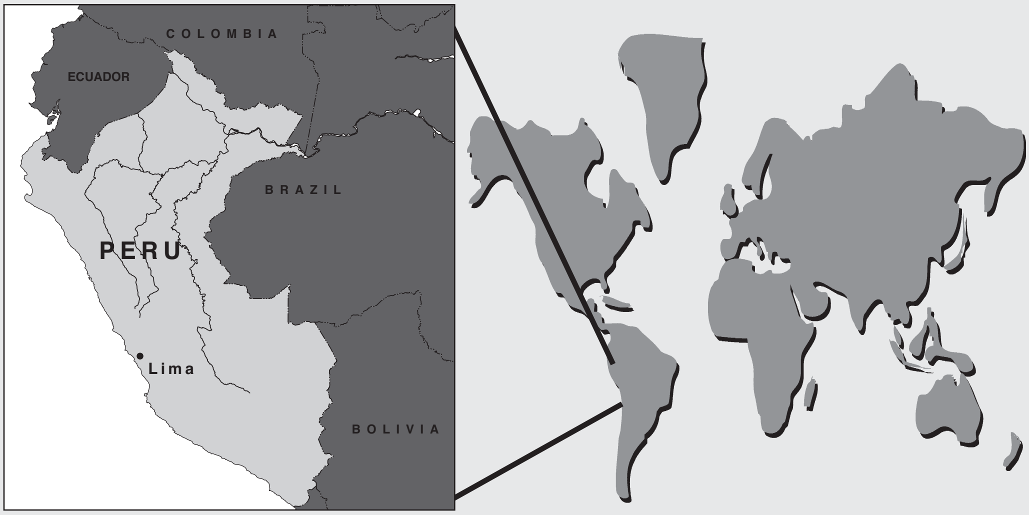
Figure 1.2 Mexico: Profile and Map



Formal name:	United Mexican States
Area, km^2:	1.97 million
Comparative area:	Slightly less than three times the size of Texas
Capital:	Mexico City
Establishment of present state:	September 18, 1810
Population:	130 million
Age under 15 years:	26%
Population growth rate:	0.51%
Fertility rate (children per woman):	2.1
Infant mortality (per 1,000 births):	11
Life expectancy:	77
HIV prevalence (adult):	0.4%
Ethnic groups:	Mestizo 62%, predominantly Amerindian 21%, Amerindian 7%, other 10%
Literacy rate:	95%
Religions:	Roman Catholic 82%, Protestant 8%, other 5%, none 5%
GDP per capita (PPP):	$17,900
GDP growth rate:	–0.3% (2019)
Labor, major sectors:	Services 62%, industrial 24%, agriculture 13%
Population in poverty:	42%
Unemployment rate:	3.5% (with extensive underemployment)
Export commodities:	Cars and vehicle parts, computers, delivery trucks, crude petroleum
External debt:	$456 billion

Source: CIA, *World Factbook 2021.*

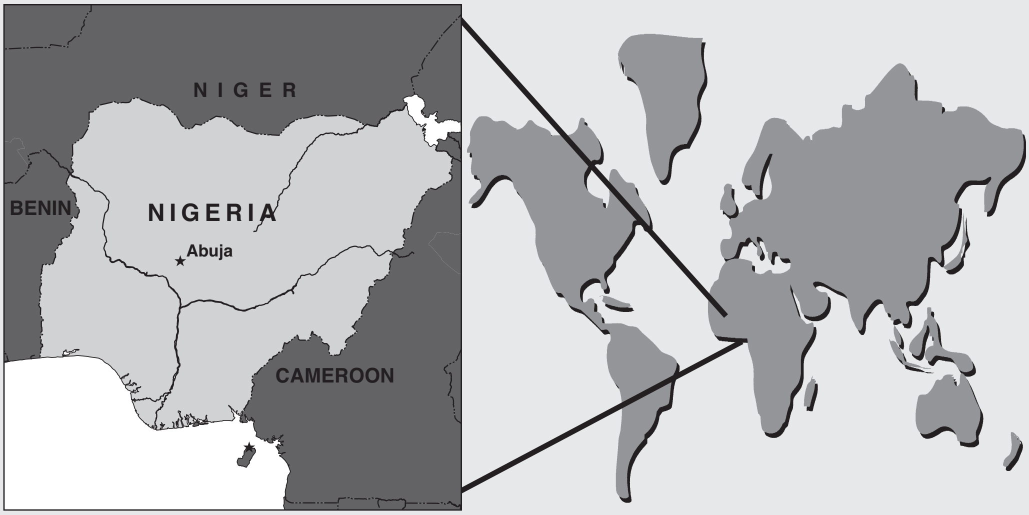
Figure 1.3 Peru: Profile and Map



Formal name:	Republic of Peru
Area, km²:	1.28 million
Comparative area:	Almost twice the size of Texas; slightly smaller than Alaska
Capital:	Lima
Establishment of present state:	July 28, 1821
Population:	32 million
Age under 15 years:	25%
Population growth rate:	0.88%
Fertility rate (children per woman):	2
Infant mortality (per 1,000 births):	19
Life expectancy:	75
HIV prevalence (adult):	0.3%
Ethnic groups:	Amerindian 26%, mestizo 60%, white 6%, African descent 4%, other 3.5%
Literacy rate:	95%
Religions:	Roman Catholic 60%, Evangelical 11%, other Christian 3.5%, other 3.5%, none 4%
GDP per capita (PPP):	$11,300
GDP growth rate:	2.1% (2019)
Labor, major sectors:	Services 57%, agricultural 25%, industrial 17%
Population in poverty:	20%
Unemployment rate:	6.5% (data for metropolitan Lima; with extensive underemployment)
Export commodities:	Copper, zinc, gold, refined petroleum, fishmeal, tropical fruits, lead, iron
External debt:	$81 billion

Source: CIA, *World Factbook 2021.*

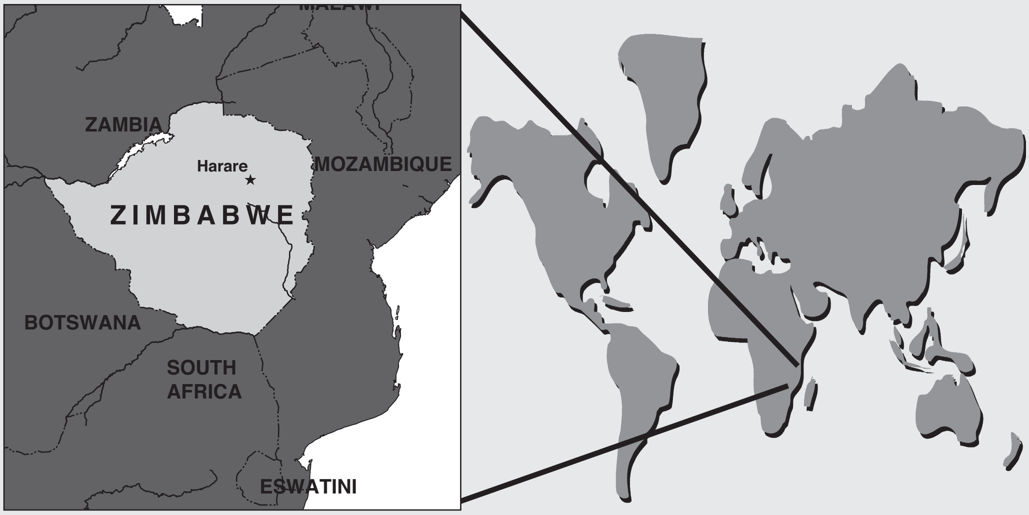
Figure 1.4 Nigeria: Profile and Map



Formal name:	Federal Republic of Nigeria
Area, km^2:	923,768
Comparative area:	About six times the size of Georgia; slightly more than twice the size of California
Capital:	Abuja
Establishment of present state:	October 1, 1960
Population:	219 million
Age under 15 years:	41%
Population growth rate:	2.5%
Fertility rate (children per woman):	4.6
Infant mortality (per 1,000 births):	58
Life expectancy:	60
HIV prevalence (adult):	1.3%
Ethnic groups:	More than 250 groups including Hausa and Fulani 36%, Yoruba 15%, Ibo 15%, Ijaw/Izon 1.8%, Kanuri 2.4%, Ibibio 1.8%, Tiv 2.4%, other 24.7%
Literacy rate:	62%
Religions:	Muslim 53.5%, Christian 46%, other 0.6%
GDP per capita (PPP):	$4,900
GDP growth rate:	0.8% (2017)
Labor, major sectors:	Agriculture 70%, services 20%, industrial 10% (1999)
Population in poverty:	40%
Unemployment rate:	16.5%
Export commodities:	Crude petroleum, natural gas, scrap vessels, cocoa beans
External debt:	$27 billion

Source: CIA, *World Factbook 2021.*

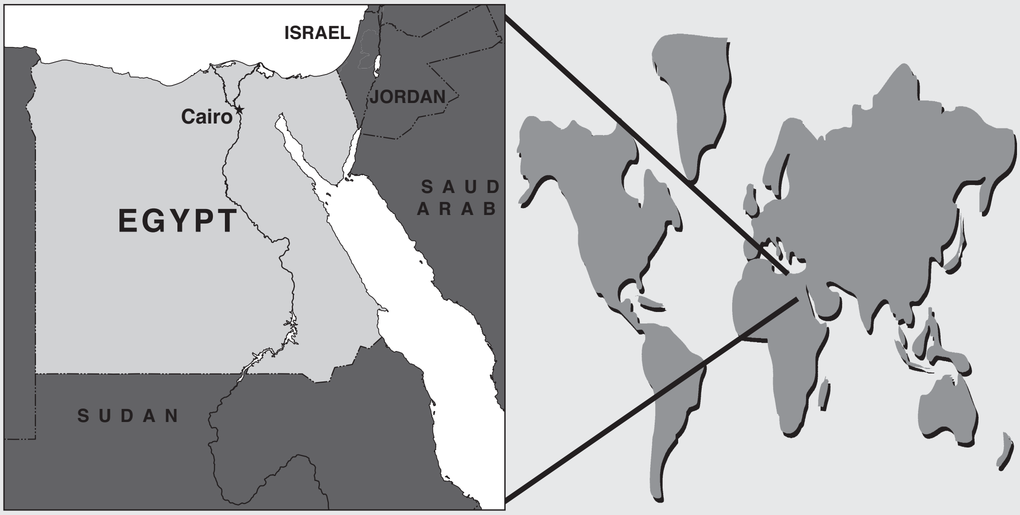
Figure 1.5 Zimbabwe: Profile and Map



Formal name:	Republic of Zimbabwe
Area, km^2:	390,757
Comparative area:	Slightly larger than Montana
Capital:	Harare
Establishment of present state:	April 18, 1980
Population:	14 million
Age under 15 years:	38%
Population growth rate:	1.9%
Fertility rate (children per woman):	4
Infant mortality (per 1,000 births):	29
Life expectancy:	63
HIV prevalence (adult):	12%
Ethnic groups:	African 99.4% (Shona and Ndebele), other 0.4%, unspecified 0.2%
Literacy rate:	87%
Religions:	Protestant 75%, Roman Catholic 7%, other Christian 5%, Muslim 0.5%, other 0.1%, none 10.5%
GDP per capita (PPP):	$2,700
GDP growth rate:	3.7% (2017)
Labor, major sectors:	Agriculture 66%, services 24%, industrial 10% (1996)
Population in poverty:	38%
Unemployment rate:	11%
Export commodities:	Tobacco, gold, ferroalloys, diamonds
External debt:	$9.3 billion

Source: CIA, *World Factbook 2021.*

Figure 1.6 Egypt: Profile and Map



Formal name:	Arab Republic of Egypt
Area, km^2:	1 million
Comparative area:	More than eight times the size of Ohio; slightly more than three times the size of New Mexico
Capital:	Cairo
Establishment of present state:	July 23, 1952
Population:	106 million
Age under 15 years:	33%
Population growth rate:	2.1%
Fertility rate (children per woman):	3.2
Infant mortality (per 1,000 births):	18
Life expectancy:	74
HIV prevalence (adult):	0.1%
Ethnic groups:	Egyptian 99.7%, other 0.3%
Literacy rate:	71%
Religions:	Muslim 90%, Christian 10%
GDP per capita (PPP):	$12,000
GDP growth rate:	4.2% (2017)
Labor, major sectors:	Services 49%, agriculture 26%, industrial 25%
Population in poverty:	32.5%
Unemployment rate:	7.8%
Export commodities:	Crude petroleum, refined petroleum, gold, natural gas, fertilizers
External debt:	$109 billion

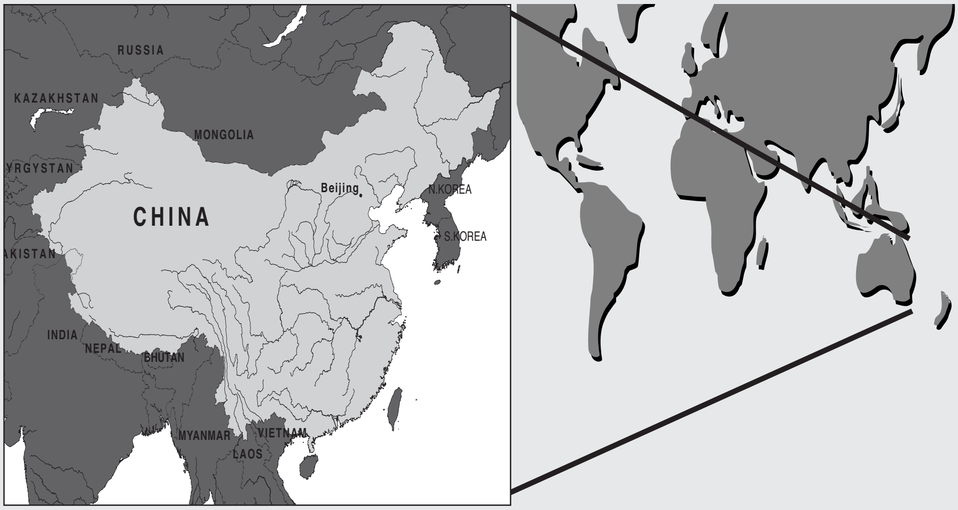
Source: CIA, *World Factbook 2021.*

Figure 1.7 Iran: Profile and Map

Formal name:	Islamic Republic of Iran
Area, km²:	1.65 million
Comparative area:	Almost 2.5 times the size of Texas; slightly smaller than Alaska
Capital:	Tehran
Establishment of present state:	April 1, 1979
Population:	85 million
Age under 15 years:	24%
Population growth rate:	1%
Fertility rate (children per woman):	1.9
Infant mortality (per 1,000 births):	15
Life expectancy:	75
HIV prevalence (adult):	0.1%
Ethnic groups:	Persian, Azeri, Kurd, Lur, Baloch, Arab, Turkmen and Turkic tribes
Literacy rate:	85%
Religions:	Shia Muslim 90–95%, Sunni Muslim 5–10%, other 0.3%, unspecified 0.2%
GDP per capita (PPP):	$12,400
GDP growth rate:	3.79% (2017)
Labor, major sectors:	Services 49%, industrial 35%, agriculture 16% (2013)
Population in poverty:	19%
Unemployment rate:	12%
Export commodities:	Crude petroleum, polymers, industrial alcohols, iron, pistachios
External debt:	$8 billion

Source: CIA, *World Factbook 2021.*

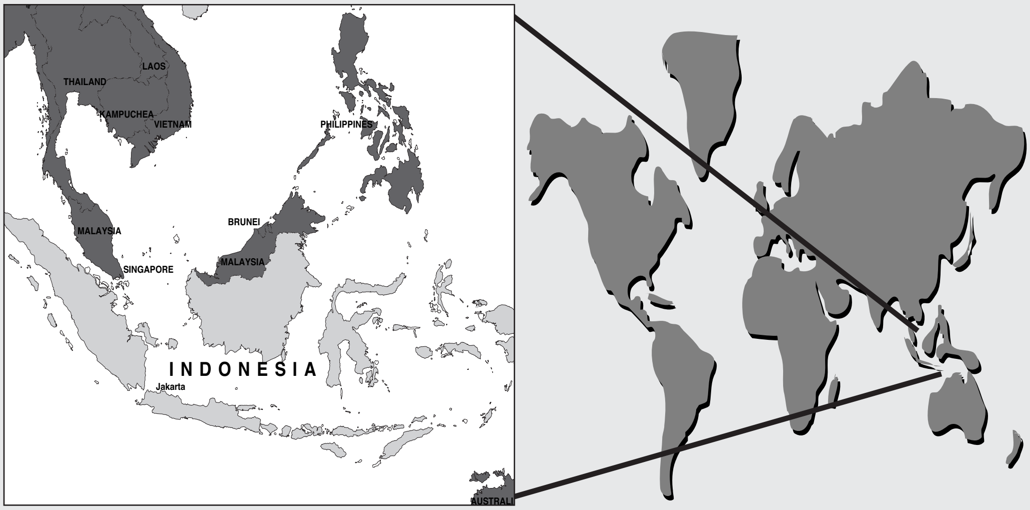
Figure 1.8 China: Profile and Map



Formal name:	People's Republic of China
Area, km^2:	9.60 million
Comparative area:	Slightly smaller than the United States
Capital:	Beijing
Establishment of present state:	October 1, 1949
Population:	1.39 billion
Age under 15 years:	17%
Population growth rate:	0.26%
Fertility rate (children per woman):	1.6
Infant mortality (per 1,000 births):	11
Life expectancy:	76
HIV prevalence (adult):	not reported
Ethnic groups:	Han 92%, Zhuang 1%, other (including Hui, Manchu, Uighur, Miao, Yi, Tibetan, Mongol, Dong, Buyei, Yao, Bai) 7%
Literacy rate:	97%
Religions:	(Officially atheist), Buddhist 18%, Christian 5%, Muslim 2%, folk religion 22%, other 1%, unaffiliated 52%
GDP per capita (PPP):	$16,400
GDP growth rate:	6.1% (2019)
Labor, major sectors:	Services 43.5%, agriculture 27%, industrial 29%
Population in poverty:	0.6%
Unemployment rate:	3.6% (urban: excludes private enterprises and migrants)
Export commodities:	Broadcasting equipment, computers, integrated circuits, office machinery, phones
External debt:	$2 trillion

Source: CIA, *World Factbook 2021.*

Figure 1.9 Indonesia: Profile and Map



Formal name:	Republic of Indonesia
Area, km^2:	1.90 million
Comparative area:	Slightly less than three times the size of Texas
Capital:	Jakarta
Establishment of present state:	August 17, 1945
Population:	275 million
Age under 15 years:	24%
Population growth rate:	0.8%
Fertility rate (children per woman):	2
Infant mortality (per 1,000 births):	20
Life expectancy:	73
HIV prevalence (adult):	0.4%
Ethnic groups:	Javanese 40%, Sundanese 16%, Malay 4%, Batak 4%, Madurese 3%, Betawi 3%, Minangkabau 3%, Buginese 3%, Bantenese 2%, Banjarese 2%, Balinese 2%, Acehnese 1%, Dayak 1%, Sasak 1%, Chinese 1%, other 15% (2010)
Literacy rate:	96%
Religions:	Muslim 87%, Protestant 7%, Roman Catholic 3%, Hindu 2%, other 1.4%
GDP per capita (PPP):	$11,400
GDP growth rate:	5% (2019)
Labor, major sectors:	Services 47%, agriculture 32%, industrial 21% (2012)
Population in poverty:	9.4%
Unemployment rate:	5.3%
Export commodities:	Coal, palm oil, natural gas, cars, gold
External debt:	$393 billion

Source: CIA, *World Factbook 2021.*

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