Sociology of symbolic violence and its relationship to school ideology according to Pierre Bourdieu

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Abstract:
In this article, we would like to address the most important contributions made by Pierre Bourdieu on the sociology of hidden violence, which is one of the valuable studies that characterize his theoretical legacy. In it, we presented the conceptual approach to symbolic violence, and then the theories behind it, so that we may come to the element of the school's ideology, which is It is a fertile field for the manifestation of this type of violence that produces classism and inequality and the selection of its heirs, according to Bourdieu.
Keywords: symbolic violence, school ideology, class, educational action, the authority of symbols, cultural capital.

1. Introduction:

The sociological excavations of Pierre Bourdieu contributed remarkably to highlighting the most important concepts related to the sociology of education, including the phenomenon of violence, or rather symbolic violence, which has become a concept closely associated with the term of naming it, as this form of imperceptible violence appears in education and upbringing, starting with school, which Bourdieu considered A container or arena for generating class disparity in the social sphere, and what necessarily follows in the overall indicators of inequality and marginalization in social life and education, in a symbolic way.

2. A conceptual approach to symbolic violence:

2.1 The concept of violence:

From a linguistic standpoint, violence is a violation of an order and a lack of kindness towards and against it.

He is violent with violence, for all that is good in kindness is evil in violence, and among the meanings of violence is violating an order, rebuking, and blaming, all of which are synonymous with violence.

It is also known **linguistically** as every action or statement that opposes compassion, gentleness, and softness. It is an act that embodies energy or physical force to harm another person.[1]

As for the **terminological definition**, it is all aggressive behavior that leads to the illegal use of force or threats to harm others. Violence is associated with coercion, assignment, and restriction, and it is the opposite of kindness because it is a form of force exerted illegally to subject one party to the will of another party.[2]

The Sociology Dictionary also defines violence as an act that is legally prohibited and socially unapproved, and means all behavior that violates the law and societal values.[3]

This means that there are two types of violence:

The first type is physical: where it involves causing physical, material, or organic harm to others.[4]

The second type is symbolic: it involves causing moral and intellectual harm to others.

2.2 The concept of symbolic violence:

The concept of symbolic violence is considered of great importance in the intellectual production of Pierre Bourdieu, as it is considered one of his most important intellectual discoveries, as a means of exercising power over a social actor with the aim of coercing him.

Symbolic violence is characterized by intelligence, cunning, and the ability to conceal and ambush victims at various ideological levels.

This violence is manifested in values, emotional, moral and cultural practices that rely on symbols as tools of control and domination. This violence also manifests itself in the practice of moral symbolism against the victims[5], and this type of violence uses symbols, connotations and meanings to control the other, impose dominance over him, and subjugate him ideologically and ideologically.[6]

2.3 The concept of ideology:

The term "ideology" was used for the first time by the thinker Destut de Tracy in his book "The Elements of Ideology Project" in 1801, where he means the study of ideas in the general sense of the phenomena of consciousness, their advantages and laws, and their relationships with the signs they represent especially their origin.

Di Tracy used the term ideology as the science of studying ideas and meanings as they exist in historically defined reality, not ideas in themselves, but for themselves in their meanings, expressions, methods, manifestations, uses, and connotations in a specific society, in specific social situations, and a specific cultural civilizational context.[7]

Parsons defined ideology as a system of guiding ideas that have an empirical origin, which gives man an explanation of the empirical nature of the group and the positions in which it stands, as well as the processes by which it has grown until its present state, then the goals to which the members collectively direct, and their relationship to the course of events in the future.

Habermas also touched on the term ideology in its relationship to social consciousness, at its material and theoretical levels.

According to Habermas, social criticism using ideological criticism requires revealing the social force that has an interest in promoting certain ideas. Ideology is a mask that hides more than it reveals, and falsifies more than it explains.

As for Karl Mannheim, he says that the term ideology emerges from political conflicts, and that leadership groups may be linked intellectually to maintaining a certain situation, and that they are not aware of some of the facts that harm their desire to control, and this requires obscuring the real conditions of society by interest groups. Every ideology is a mask for an interest.

3. Theories explaining symbolic violence:

3.1. Social dominance theory:

It is concerned with studying symbolic violence among individuals in groups (social, professional, educational) with high positions in the studied society, as these individuals resort to using symbolic violence as a means to achieve their goals and interests, through the supremacy of the group empowered through its positions and maintaining their social position, power, and social values.

According to it, violence achieves the following functions:

- Satisfying the needs of superior groups through domination over competing groups to maintain their prestige and facilitate the extension of their influence and authority over individuals in other groups.
- Maintaining the authority of group members and social status.
- Protecting members of superior groups from competition from other groups.[8]

3.2 Moral Disintegration Theory:

This theory believes that symbolic violence appears in educational and social institutions that exist in societies suffering from disintegration and collapse in the prevailing moral system, as it indicates that the absence of human relations between individuals and the lack of manifestations of respect for human rights, in addition to the dominance of some social and class groups in society, It leads to the erosion of society's values and the collapse of its moral ties and ties that emphasize love, tolerance, and coexistence, allowing symbolic violence to emerge as legitimate violence among members of society, which is expressed in light of negative competition, the attempt of those with influence to dominate those of lower status, as well as the widespread manifestations of hostility, social domination, and human exploitation. Therefore, symbolic violence always appears after poor social integration.[9]

3.3 Bourdieu's theory of symbolic violence:

Through his research in the 1960s and 1970s, Bourdieu concluded that violence can appear on multiple types and dimensions of behavior, as violence is not limited only to physical and physical existence; Rather, there is an indirect type of violence that appears explicitly in social relations between individuals, especially among those who occupy high social and professional positions.[10]

Bourdieu called this type "symbolic violence," which means that individuals who hold social, professional, and political functions direct certain speeches, signs, and linguistic symbols, as well as hidden ideas and images, to those of lower status and function, to subjugate them, control them, and determine their behavior to a greater extent. Therefore, this type of violence does not inflict physical harm on individuals, but rather causes them psychological harm, such as feeling threatened, deprived of rights, insulting the individual's dignity, and belittling his or her self-esteem, and this violence can be measured and identified through individuals' awareness of the deprivation and verbal and symbolic violence practiced against them while they are exposed to it in their personal and social lives.[11]

Bourdieu points out that this violence may be characterized by legitimacy in the eyes of its practitioners under the name of legal and functional authority, which makes it moral violence and an apparent fact of existence. He also believes that violence has many methods, including:

a. Belittling: It is a behavior characterized by condescension, discrimination, and belittling the value and status of others who are lower in status. This behavior is represented by contempt, belittlement, and social and professional exclusion.

b. Value denial: It consists of denying the abilities and skills of individuals, to control them, determine their abilities, and suppress the energies and talents that they possess.

c. Psychological alienation: It consists of depriving individuals of their rights and the legitimate social and professional privileges they enjoy, in addition to depriving them of the opportunity to express their ideas, opinions, and trends.

d. Declared hostile expression: It is represented by the use of symbols, verbal signals, and physical expressions that indicate the strength of the aggressor, his rejection, and the imposition of his functional and social dominance over others.

Thus, Bourdieu emphasizes that symbolic violence is not based on any moral or intellectual standards, because it aims to insult the dignity of the individual, make him feel inferior, deprive him of his human rights, and ignore his psychological and social needs.[12]

The concept of symbolic violence according to Pierre Bourdieu:

Symbolic violence is considered one of the most important intellectual inventions of Pierre Bourdieu through most of his scientific contributions, as he aims through it to reveal that symbolic violence imposes a system of meanings and images that are socially legitimized, especially through his treatment of the dialectical and unclear relationship between it and education, where he explored the most important Manifestations that will appear later on the individual and collective levels.

Accordingly, we find that Bourdieu views symbolic violence as soft, hidden violence that is invisible and unknown to both its practitioners and its victims at the same time. This violence is manifested in values, emotional, moral and cultural practices. It also employs symbolic tools such as language, images, signs, connotations, and meanings, and this violence often manifests itself in the shadow of a moral symbolic practice against its victims.[13]

As his companion Jean Passeron defines in their book (Reproduction) that every authority seeks to impose meanings, and seeks to impose them as legitimate, and is capable of concealing the relations of power, of which they are the basis of its power:[14]

In order to reach the correct perception of symbolic violence and determine its precise indicators, we can compare it with sensory or physical violence, and this in terms of the consequences and effects that each of them has, as physical violence harms the subject (on whom violence is practiced) physically in the body, or in the rights, Or in interests or security...etc. While symbolic violence harms the subject psychologically in the subjective sense of security, reassurance, dignity, consideration, and balance.[15]

Therefore, symbolic violence may be more effective and effective than physical violence, or rather; this type of violence is more powerful and effective than physical violence. Based on this apparent comparison between symbolic and material violence, it can be concluded that the definition established by Bourdieu for

symbolic violence is that: every authority is able to impose a system of connotations and meanings as legitimate, through the process of concealing the relationships of influence and power that exist at the origin of this power itself.[16]

5 .The manifestation of symbolic violence in education:

5.1 Educational symbolic violence according to Bourdieu:

Bourdieu compares the concepts of pedagogical action and symbolic violence, and emphasizes that pedagogical action is a symbolic act, and therefore any educational activity is a dimension of symbolic violence, originating from a specific social entity.[17]

Through this proposition by Bourdieu, we understand that any pedagogical process or educational system is based on a specific ideological background, without reference to consultation on the content of this educational system by other or dominant social groups, according to Bourdieu, who have never contributed to the formulation of this educational activity, which is considered - According to Bourdieu - symbolic violence practiced on all segments of society, because it defines educational activity objectively, on the one hand, as symbolic violence, which is the fact that the power relations between the groups and classes that make up the social formation qualify arbitrary influence as a condition for concluding the educational communication relationship, to impose and consolidate An arbitrary cultural model, according to an arbitrary pattern of imposition and consolidation (education).[18]

Through this context, Bourdieu tried to define the influential functions of symbolic violence in the reality of the general public in society, and that the dominant classes produce what is called cultural abuse towards the conquered classes, through educational institutions, especially the school institution.

On the other hand, educational activity appears as symbolic violence, insofar as it carries out the process of discrimination and isolation that it follows, and this by imposing and consolidating some connotations - insofar as it entails rejection - worthy of educational activity reproducing them, by reproducing the arbitrary selection that it carries out, objectively, a group or class through its cultural arbitrariness, and within its framework.[19]

Through this trend in meaning, Bourdieu sees that symbolic violence legitimizes the reproduction of cultural domination; or rather education works to reproduce relationships characterized by force and self-imposition, which are socially defined by the exploiting class and the exploited class; although, in the end, it works to demarcate the cultural capital of the dominant social groups, and legitimize it socially.

6. Mechanics of symbolic violence:

6.1 The educational system (the school as a source of symbolic conflict):

Educational sociologists were keen to employ the concept of cultural conflict, and adopted it in the sociological analysis of the school. The cultural conflict is, in its essence, a conflict of connotations, symbols and meanings, as it is considered a hidden conflict that penetrates the circle of school life, affecting school results, as it leads to the exclusion of children of the working classes and strengthens the children of the bourgeois class.

Perhaps it is useful to reiterate that all forms of cultural conflict take at their core the sign and significance of symbolic violence, which means that any cultural, doctrinal, and ideological conflict in school is a symbolic conflict in its essence, and any cultural capital is symbolic capital, and therefore any cultural conflict constitutes an image of the symbolic conflict in school.[20]

In this sense, Bourdieu views the school as a mirror reflecting the culture of the socially dominant class, as he stated in writing "The Reproduction" that the structure and function of the school system work to translate inequality from its social level continuously, and according to multiple symbols, to symbols of inequality at the school level.[21]

Accordingly, the success of school children does not only depend on the extent to which they represent the scientific aspect of the school's culture, but it also depends on the extent of their ability to represent its behavioral standards and in their emergence of its symbolic cultural values. The school is a psychological and social environment before it is a cognitive environment, and when some children cannot represent these values and standards that take a symbolic nature, they will not be able to achieve school success, regardless of their mental abilities.[22]

Regarding the distinction between the effect of children's cultural differences on the level of school achievement, Bourdieu believes that children of bourgeois groups find in school culture a continuation of their culture, and in school life a continuation of their family life, while children of working groups find in school

culture an invasion of their cultural identity and a renewal of their social identity, and they follow their learning in school involves a high degree of tension, emotionality, and effort, and school education is for them nothing more than a kind of social normalization or cultural hegemony.[23]

Bourdieu looks at cultural variation between social groups according to the concept of variation in symbolic capital, where he sees that cultural capital reproduces itself and accumulates according to the principle of economic profit. The rich cultural experience for children of affluent social groups, which is characterized by an abundance of cultural stimuli, such as books, videos, television, a high level of education for their families, and recreational trips and scientific activities, does not only make this cultural environment homogeneous with the school culture, rather, it makes it -in addition- an advanced cultural medium, rich in comparison to school culture, on the cognitive and educational level.

It is self-evident that school success is an organic product of their rich cultural experience. On the contrary, the cultural experience of children from humble cultural and social backgrounds not only makes the school culture a culture different from their culture, but it also makes it a culture that is contradictory and contradictory to their culture and cultural experience. And while the children of the bourgeois groups find in the school an extension and continuation of their family atmosphere, this school appears to the children of the poor social groups as a strange world, contradictory to their standards and cultural and social lifestyles.[24]

This is what Bouquier Evelyn confirmed when she said: Children of the bourgeois groups come to school armed with its standards and values, while children of the poor groups come to it devoid of these weapons by virtue of their reference culture. Their meager cultural resources, according to school standards, do not allow them to enter into fair competition with others in terms of academic success and excellence.[25]

The influence of the reference cultural milieu does not stop at the stage of entry into school, but rather continues its continuity and dominance throughout all stages of school achievement, as the rich cultural milieu not only continues to enhance children's path to school success, but also doubles the positive impact of children's progression in the school educational ladder.

Otherwise, the negative impact of the popular cultural environment multiplies as the child moves up the school ladder. While parents from the lowest rung of the educational ladder can help their children overcome school difficulties in the primary stage (such as helping them read and write, for example), they are unable to provide such assistance in the secondary and university stages, and they are also unable to secure sufficient material conditions to provide the appropriate environment for their education (educational courses or private lessons), as happens in socially and culturally affluent circles.

All educational processes that take on the nature of conflict and lead to exclusion in school are a type of symbolic activity that is based on penetrating the wall of awareness and infiltrating the collective unconscious of pupils to establish a type of cultural and psychological perceptions, as culturally legitimate.[26]

6.2 The symbolic power of language:

Both Bourdieu and Passeron worked on analyzing the relationship between the power of language and the power of symbols in shaping the social structure and reproducing power and class relations, because language in their perspective constitutes the pillar of educational action, the effective tool in shaping symbolic violence, and influencing the formation of bright minds into a class formation. Since myths, languages, arts, and sciences constitute symbolic tools for constructing knowledge, therefore symbolic systems - as tools of knowledge - impose themselves as an educational authority, and thus constitute the authority to construct reality and produce it in a symbolic manner.

Symbolic authority, being able to form the given, through verbal expressions, and in terms of the power of clarification and persuasion, has the ability to build a specific vision of the world, and can create the ability to transform it and influence its formation mentally.

Bourdieu and Passeron emphasize the legitimacy of the symbolic power of language so that it takes an active character in people's lives, which gives words their power, and makes them capable of preserving or breaking the system, through belief in the legitimacy of words and those who pronounce them. On this basis, the symbolic authority of language takes its vital place in the space of educational institutions, especially in the field of school, which turns into an arena for symbolic conflict between the various social forces active within society. The prevailing symbolism in school constitutes a kind of social authority that attempts to shape children into the nature of the prevailing ideology. In this regard, we find that Bourdieu Passeron, in his various works on the

symbolic power of language and symbolic violence, believes that the educational act is primarily a linguistic symbolic act, and therefore any educational activity is objectively a type of symbolic violence, as a force imposed by a specific social body.[27]

6.3 The symbolic power of the media:

The various types of media - especially television - are among the most prominent means of influencing the trends, values and opinions of the individual and the group in this regard. In his book "Television and the Mechanisms of Manipulating Minds," Bourdieu analyzed the structure of technology, especially the ideological relationship of the latter and the hegemony it produces over opinions and trends.

According to Bourdieu, during the past years of the last century and even the next century, soft ideologies appeared, represented in those daily, even instantaneous, doses broadcast by modern media, where these daily doses prevail and flow into the minds of viewers, readers, and listeners quietly and without noise, with its ideological implications.[28]

Accordingly, Bourdieu strove, with his theoretical skill, to break down and analyze the content of the media and the hegemony and violence it conceals, translating it into symbols. The latter acknowledges that television channels are no longer merely channels that provide programs for entertainment or education only, but rather have become tools for political and social control and control in current societies, or according to the term used by Bourdieu, they are tools of symbolic violence practiced by the social classes that dominate and govern these tools.[29]

The reality of the dominance of media symbols actually exists, according to Bourdieu, and is represented in the world of television, which is a space in which actors are distinguished by the producers of programs from another class, which strips them of critical awareness and creativity, so the screen has come to provide ready-made thought or quick cultural food, as a type of cultural nutrition that has been prepared in advance, and that has been thought out in advance.[30]

There are also indicators of the dominance and power inherent over participants in media meetings, determining the time spent, and the content of the topic under discussion, and the same is the case with journalistic professionals, which is what Bourdieu confirms, as participation in television programs is met with massive censorship and a loss of independence. The conditions of communication and dialogue are imposed, and the time limits imposed on participants' speech impose particularly strict limits, so that the possibility of freedom of expression becomes unlikely.[31]

The economic interest of television also has an urgent place, according to Bourdieu, since this institution practices symbolic violence that is parallel to its interests, and against those who oppose the interests of the owner of the media institution - the channel in particular -, so it is not possible to present ideas that were not determined in advance by those who own these determinants (advertisers who pay The price of their advertising).

Through all of these dimensions and indicators that Bourdieu showed about the dominance of the symbolic violence of the media, it does not sweep away individuals and groups by physical force, but rather penetrates the minds with fluidity and influential cultural softness, thus exercising symbolic violence on the future of the media material broadcast by all media outlets.

7. School ideologization as an indicator of symbolic violence according to Pierre Bourdieu:

Bourdieu set out to build his sociological theory to criticize class ideology and the class role of the school that is biased towards the dominant classes in society. It is clear in this vision that there is an integration in the form of conspiracy between the educational system and the social system in generating the ideology of domination, where the family and the school work together in the process of producing class-differentiated social structures.

7.1 School as a source of social class:

Bourdieu tried to uncover the circumstances of the school's role in society's reproduction of the images of class disparity inherent in it, by exposing the class educational practices in the school, and revealing its mechanisms, symbolism, projections, and secrets.

For Bourdieu, the school is a product of class division in society itself, and at the same time it is a tool for society itself in its reproduction of itself in a class manner.

According to Bourdieu's theory, the school takes its place in the circle of class stakes in social life, dedicated to reproducing social and cultural disparity and variation. On this basis, the capitalist system identified three basic stages to achieve three capitalist goals for the school, which are:

The first stage: The school was established by the bourgeoisie to perform ideological roles against feudalism and the proletariat at the same time, as it transformed the school into an ideological tool to impose the hegemony of bourgeois culture in the field of work, life and production. In this stage, the school is required, in addition, to its scientific role - to work on building good citizens who are imbued with bourgeois morals and who resist the possibility of an independent workers' culture.

The second stage: The school was entrusted with the process of providing the capitalist system with qualified labor, competencies, and scientific expertise necessary for industry and the growth of capitalist institutions. At this stage, the function of the school was no longer limited to transmitting bourgeois values, but rather it became concerned with transferring scientific knowledge necessary for production and the productive process.

The third stage: The school was integrated into the production process and transformed into a capitalist institution that is fundamentally linked to the wheel of capitalist and industrial production, as capitalist institutions began a broad activity to completely integrate the school into the functional life of the industrial capitalist society, and meet its educational and consumer needs.[32]

In this context, Bourdieu distinguishes between three classes in society:

The first class (bourgeoisie): This is the class that dominates and prevails, and its cultural and economic capital is the largest and most important among the social classes.

The second (middle) class: This is the class that contains senior cadres and educated employees, and its total capital is lower than the first class, but it is characterized by a great tendency toward social ascent.

The third (popular) class: This is the class that includes workers and peasants, and lacks real capital at the economic and cultural levels.

7.2 School is a source of inequality:

According to Bourdieu, the educational system aims to reproduce society in such a way that each individual believes that he or she is achieving his or her interests, and this in turn leads to the production and reproduction of conditions of class domination. Here, according to him, lies the importance of the hidden curriculum of the school or the educational system, as the educational act takes the form of symbolic violence, a type of violence that allows the dominant class to impose its cultural hegemony on the other classes as the only ideal model that gains its educational legitimacy.

Bourdieu calls this symbolic process of violence the concept of cultural arbitrariness or cultural arbitrariness, because it does not have a legitimate objective basis for its existence, and therefore there is no justification for this cultural superiority of the ruling class in society.

In light of this arbitrary presence of class culture, according to Bourdieu, education turns into a necessary, legitimate and required activity for the oppressors and the oppressed in the class and social sense of the word, as the school takes its place in the depth of this circle in terms of the dominance of the interests of the dominant, and in this context it exercises additional oppression related to the issue of mobility and social change.

Hence, the school performs the function of educational preservation of the current conditions, as its function remains within the circle of pedagogical concealment, which means that the dynamics of school success and advancement work in a hidden and intelligent way, to produce and reproduce the conditions for excellence and success for the children of the dominant classes in society, at the expense of the children of The working and popular classes.

Hence, the internal function of the school is integrated with its external function, which is to confirm the dominance of the bourgeois class in society, by reproducing power relations and class influence in society through its selective educational activities. According to this activity, the school classifies children into class categories and exercises class influence over them, which confirms every time the influence and dominance of the members of the upper and middle classes in society.[33]

7.3 Choosing the heirs of the school according to Bourdieu:

School selection, according to Bourdieu, is based on selecting children from a culture that is homogeneous with the school culture, and the latter translates this matter through acquired class cultural capital, represented in children's ways of expression, writing style, body movement, and the symbolic wealth they possess. Children of

the upper classes have a different cultural spirit than others, and they are more in harmony with the cultural character of the school, and this is determined by the influence of the cultural capital of their class, which prevails in society and dominates it.

Linguistic levels differ according to social classes, as the language of the marginal popular classes is different from the school language and relatively far from it, which means that the children of the popular class will face greater difficulties than the children of the bourgeoisie who feel that the school language is a natural extension of their language in the class and social milieu in which they live.

Therefore, those who possess the conditions for school success are often those who are saturated with its culture in their family environment, while the matter is more difficult and challenging for those who do not find the school culture in their social environment.

Hence, those who suffer in selection tests often belong to class and family circles whose culture is far from that of the school, and they are children of the humble class who possess cultural and linguistic capital that is less compatible with the structure of the school culture and its requirements. The children of these classes did not learn how to express themselves in a school manner or in a typical manner required by the school culture, due to the low cultural capital of their families, which is evident in the various events and activities of the pedagogical life in the school, which is inspired by the bourgeois model, consolidates it, and adopts it in the various educational activities of the school.

This is what makes the school reduce the educational aspirations of children of the lower classes, while enhancing them among the children of the upper typical classes of society. Hence, we find that school selection, which is based on tests and grades, greatly affects the level of actual aspirations of individuals according to their social and class status, and this exposes children of the lower social classes -who are trying to reach the higher levels of education (university education) - to a great degree of intense selection, which leads to the exclusion of most members of the working class.

Bourdieu also emphasizes that the school not only excludes these children because of their family culture, but also makes them suffer in the process of reaching the required school culture, because they lose the ability to coexist with this new culture, which is the school culture closest to the culture of the ruling class in society.

People of the popular classes are required to look at things, understand them, and act on them in a way that is different from what they were accustomed to in their family and class circles. This process is under the influence of an alienated cultural adaptation process in the school, causing children of the lower classes to lose their true sense of belonging to their world and their original environment, through the image of unequal normalization to which pupils are subjected in order to represent the educational model required in the school institution.[34]

8. Conclusion:

Everything that Bourdieu produced is a theoretical legacy, especially related to the sociology of education, but his study on symbolic violence in the educational field will remain exceptional, and will continue to be analyzed and explored by interested people and researchers who came and will come after him.

Bourdieu was a pioneer, and he emphasized to everyone in this field that the symbolic world moves with symbolic violence in itself, and within this same world appears the ideology that supports the concepts of social domination, perhaps the most prominent of which are the concepts of class and inequality, which Bourdieu brought out from the womb of the school in particular, as the latter according to Bourdieu, produces socio-educational illusions, therefore, the issue must be addressed objectively in order to understand the school's socio-cultural contradictions, as well as rebuild a more equitable and humane educational edifice.

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