

Inspiring Woman Against the Terror in a Dressmaker from Khair Khana

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Abstract - This research reveals the struggle, the strong will of the women who live among the terror, the powerful regime and disorder country, that is Afghanistan. Many people have known that Afghanistan is under the oppression of unpredictable situation in many years. The sufferings often experience especially by the women. The chaos inspired a young woman who becomes the leader for the other women to survive reflected in the main character in this novel. How she tried to embody and stay in unstable condition attract me to put all her effort in this writing. I want to show how one strong woman has a great effort to keep fighting among the repression, dominance and war and become the inspiration for others. It is covered by the symbolic violence which is often happened and experienced by the women in many countries in the world. The method of close reading and library research is used to do this research. Finally, the writer found that among the novels written by Afghanistan writers still there is a novel can show the power of woman to survive and be the savior. She becomes the inspiring person who can share idea, action and dreams to give hope that every woman can do the same just like what she has done.

Keywords: Afghanistan, inspiring woman, repression, symbolic violence

I. AFGHANISTAN: A SHADOW OF WAR AND VIOLENCE

AFGHANISTAN is a kaleidoscope for every different ethnicities, tribes, sub-tribes, families and others (Hosseini, 2008). The history of Afghanistan as a country fulfilled with war, regime violence, women repression which against human rights often become the topics discussed by many people in the world. The side of humanism which is experienced by Afghan people always touch our personal emotion and feelings. The monarch system, the Soviet invasion and occupation, the civil war till the repression of Taliban take turns to occupy Kabul, as the nation's capital of Afghanistan. Common people: men, women, children are really oppressed with the violence mostly in their whole life in that terrible periods. An Islamic state is immediately declared. On occasion the seven factions in the IUAW, together with three Shia groups from western Afghanistan, do manage to work in harmony. But it is a fragile truce, shattered by outbreaks of internecine warfare around Kabul. The capital is frequently bombarded by rival guerrilla forces trying to assert themselves. 1, 5 million inhabitants (75% of the total) flee the city.¹

In 1994 the most significant group in present-day Afghanistan emerges unheralded and without fanfare. A mullah in Kandahar, Mohammad Omar Akhund (commonly known as Mullah Omar), forms a group which he calls

Taliban, meaning 'students' – in this case Sunni students of the Qur'an. In the violence and chaos of Afghanistan, the Taliban inevitably become a guerilla group; and compared to the blatant self-interest of certain other Mujaheddin, the Taliban's simple message of Muslim fundamentalism proves immensely attractive.²

Recruiting mainly among Pashtun tribesmen in the east of the country and from refugee camps in Pakistan, the Taliban gain rapidly in numbers and in strength. After Kandahar itself, Herat falls to Taliban militiamen in September 1995 – to be followed by Jalalabad at the other extreme of the country a year later. Within weeks of taking Jalalabad, the Taliban achieve the ultimate success. They have been besieging Kabul for twelve months and more, while at the same time fighting other guerrilla groups engaged in the same activity. Now, in September 1996, with surprising sudden they burst into the city.

In order to describe the worst situation happened in Afghanistan, An Afghan writer, Khaled Hosseini stated his real experience in one interview about the worse situation happened in Afghanistan. "When the Communist Coup, as opposed to the coup that happened in '73, was actually very violent. A lot of people rounded up and executed, a lot of people were imprisoned. Virtually anybody that was affiliated or associated with the previous regime or the royal family was persecuted, imprisoned, killed, rounded up, or disappeared. And people would hear news or friends and acquaintances and occasionally family members to whom that had happened that were either in prison or worse, had just disappeared and nobody knew where they were, and some of them never turned up (Hosseini, 2008).

Their first act is the people go to the United Nations and seize the ex-president Najibullah. Within hours Hosseini and his brother are swinging from a concrete structure, among grinning tribesmen at Kabul's main traffic intersection. And the chaos has begun. The strict rules and bannings showed up to the women. They started to live under the Taliban's control on behalf of Islam. Most Afghan people experienced such a terrible thing in their life, full of terror and haunted by the bomb, violence and repression. This writing focuses on the discussion of one novel *The Dressmaker of Khair Khana* written by Gayle Tzemach Lemmon. She is a journalist and senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations. *The Dressmaker of Khair Khana*, a New York Times best-seller published in March 2011 by HarperCollins, telling about a young entrepreneur who supported her community under the Taliban.

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² Ibid

Lemmon is actively helps and writes the report for the women entrepreneur in conflict and post-conflict zones in some countries such as: Afghanistan, Bosnia and Rwanda. Her works has inspired me to investigate and conduct a study.

This research will reveal a discussion: How does the inspiring Afghan woman fight the terror in the novel? Since we know that the background of the novel took place in Afghanistan, a country fulfilled with conflicts, terror started from the Soviet's invasion, the regimes, of religion between Sunni and Siah and the last is the repression of Taliban. To analyze the question, the writer uses the Symbolic Violence from Pierre Bourdieu to get a deep analysis.

The method which is used to analyze this article is close readings and library research since the main data is a novel written by Gayle Tzemach Lemmon, a journalist and a reporter which observe directly in Afghanistan. Lemmon has reported on Afghanistan since 2005, when she made her first trip to the country.³ Some sources related with Afghanistan are taken to complete the analysis.

II. SYMBOLIC VIOLENCE BECOMES TRAGEDY FOR WOMEN

Bourdieu (1991; 1996) defined symbolic violence as a class based social selection, which remains invisible. The idea of Symbolic Violence indicates that fair selection whose original aims was to deconstruct the power structure of the past and to increase social mobility, in fact, contributes to the reproduction of class positions. Contrary to the social inequality caused by social exclusion, Symbolic Violence is possible when the nature of social selection appears inclusive. In a symbolic fight, there always forces to a dress one thing officially, monopolize the legitimate vision of the social world, and forcing the views of a group over another. In a symbolic fight competition among social actors also occur with the ultimate goal to power. The purpose of the authority in the form of power is to control perception, sight, vision, also one's world view and social groups. Perceive and appreciate the differences in the social world into the first milestone for the continuity of the symbolic fight. Arena of struggle for gaining power must be interpreted as an effort to produce and display a view of the world that want to be recognized, most true and legitimate. All these boils are down to the interests of legitimacy or recognition that only the view refers to "them" that most legitimate than "others" (Bourdieu, 2002:72-75). World-forming power through the most legitimate view is called the symbolic power.

Symbolic power-in the sense of Bourdieu- refers to a power to construct reality through noseological order, which is the closest meaning of the social world of a group or person (Bourdieu, 1991:166). Symbolic power is the power of the invisible and only recognizable from the goal of gaining recognition. A symbolic power, although it is not recognized by their original form but he still recognized. Symbolic power works by using symbols as instruments of "coercive" to the subordinate groups that contribute to reproduce the social order in accordance with the wishes of the dominant group. In this novel, it is described the Taliban as the ruling class uses symbols and religious rules to force the subordinate group in

this case for Afghan women submissive and obedient to run all rules and restrictions smoothly. As described by Bourdieu: "What creates the power of words and slogans, a power capable of maintaining or subverting the social order, is the belief in the legitimacy of words and of those who utter them" (Bourdieu, 1991: 170).

Symbolic violence that is intended to provide protection against Afghan women in an attempt to create a social mechanism that is objective which controlled just accepted it. However, this violent effort was followed by violence and torture physically and mentally. Symbolic violence can happen anywhere and anytime, in this novel both frontal violence and symbolic violence often color the storyline. When the Taliban produce various rules, ban, certain ideologies spread to the Afghan society in there the symbolic violence occurs.

People thought the emergence of Taliban replaced the invasion of Soviet is a great wish to lead the country but it's only a hoax. As described in *The Dressmaker of Khair Khana*, the women uprooted from their comfort zones, works, dreams, and previous life. They just became the victim of the civil war of power to rule the country.

From the repression of the most minor to severe, women are forced to be passive, can't fight and obey the rules and bannings. They just lived under the powerful group of people which have a strong will to change the system of the nation. Taliban's banning and rules reflected the symbolic violence over the women. Bourdieu's understanding of class has a number of features that set it apart from other treatments of the subject. These includes its conceptualization of the class structure as a multidimensional social space; its emphasis on consumption, viewed as an arena of social life in which the possession of economic and cultural capital can be "theatrically" displayed and its relentless focus on the symbolic dimension of practices, identified as the indispensable bridge between the structural proximity, one the one hand and co-membership in a social class (or fraction) on the other. At the same time, however, in developing the account of Bourdieu's class theory and class analysis, I have necessarily simplified the social world delineates all forms of domination were left to the side. Besides, therefore there are elements as ethnicity and in particular, gender to the account. The Masculine Domination (2001b) examining their implications for the movements of Taliban to repress Afghan women.

There is an understanding that is slightly odds with Bourdieu's symbolic violence to the Afghan women as victims of patriarchy and the Taliban are likely to intimidate, i.e. when the Symbolical Violence that is usually very soft, does not feel, and is not visible to the victims. This violence involves communication and knowledge. Communication and knowledge is purely symbolic. Or rather it must be said that the violence was carried out by means of humiliation, confession or to some extent by means of symbolic sense (Bourdieu, 1998). In this novel, the women on the one hand feel protected when nowhere to go should be accompanied by a Mahram as the embodiment of symbolic violence, but on the other hand, they also feel intimidated by the rules and restrictions imposed. No more rights and freedom to determine

³ [http:// www.gaylelemmon.com/](http://www.gaylelemmon.com/)

the pace and purpose of life. All matters relating to the dreams and hopes of the modern women to have gender equality with men must be silenced and turned off.

A kind of contradiction happened between the symbolic violence that refers to the concept Bourdieu with the fact that experienced by Afghan women. It is very interesting to observe that this novel also seeks to establish the activities of women strength, not easily give up and dare to explore desire and dream to become an independent woman in a chaotic situation, repressed in a period of time and the regime without any certainty when it will be tipped.

The concept of symbolic violence is for the weak people especially women that they themselves never feel they have been being the victim. Here, there is also a contradictory changing the thought to maintaining their positive and hidden activities. The woman realization brought their dark life into bright one.

III. MASCULINITY'S DOMINANCE REPRESS WOMEN'S FREEDOM

The men's dominance over the women often emerge the repression while the Afghan women realized or not. Basicly, the over protection on behalf of religion was often taken Taliban to repress the women freedom. They just received and hopeless reminding that they prefer doing some tormented, abuse and bullying action. From the radio, Afghan women knew that there will be a prohibition not to go to school, can't leave the house for doing the job outside

Male domination symbolized by the Taliban regime in the novel describes the condition of women are kept in the house without allowing to participate in the public domain and having a relation of friendship to develop the community (Woolf, 1977). Domestic sphere which refers to the house and its parts are domestic place worthy to continue to respect the position of Muslim women. There was an attempt to castrate emancipation and gender equality between women and men. Women repressed, removed his right so could only surrender, accept and wait for a miracle to come and change things.

The application of the rules and prohibitions against women as a symbolic dimension that is typical in masculine domination. One should look for ways that can be done to avoid adverse alternate between "material things" and "spiritual things" or "ideal case" (at this age are preserved through the opposition between studies that say "materialist" the explain the inequality between the sexes to clarify the conditions that caused the a symmetry, and studies that say "symbolic" often becomes an important and partial).

Order of masculine strength seen in the fact that it comes with a justification order: andosentris vision required as neutral and do not need to be mentioned in the discourse which is designed to legitimize it (Merllie, 1990). The existing order and carried out by the Taliban against Afghan women serves as a very large machine and tend to ratify the underlying masculine domination: the order is in the form of sexual division of labor, which is a very tight distribution of activities divided to each sex, which is the workplace and the things that are allowed by the women who only revolves

around the function and role of women in terms of gender rather than on gender.

In Bourdieu's concept, the division of space in the domestic domain structure that is houses, still there are distinctions between women and men. Examples that is occurred in Qubail's society shows that in any house, there is a division between the masculine part is the kitchen fireplace and feminine parts, namely the cage, water and vegetable gardens. This order is the structure of the time, day, agricultural year, or cycle life with moments of discontinuity which is masculine and lengthy periods of growth, which is feminine (Bourdieu, 1998).

Reflection of this concept refers to a limitation or public domain for Afghan women who can only perform the activities at home. For some cases, women who have special skills, such as character Doctor Maryam still allowed to practice in hospitals but only help the women and children (Lemmon: 2013: 146-148). This consequence will bring a great impact for skilled women, they can't do the job professionally. The strict prohibition only make women are being repressed both mentally and materially. It is really against the human rights, since women's freedom is a part of human rights, too.

What has experienced by most women in Afghanistan shows us women is put in the second class, everything is under control by men's power which apply all the bannings and rules in the name of religion, protection and safety. The way the system applied did not give freedom and choice for women. All strict bannings and rules only put the women as the main victim in the hopeless situation. These worst effects of war and terror often become the background of many Afghan writers with the intention everybody in the world will catch their voice of peace and live in harmony.

In historical records, the results of studies, or reports of Human Rights, almost certainly will be revealed that the war or armed conflict or hostility between ethnic, religious and tribal claimed, injure or expense of human rights. Traumatic problem often occurs in women in conflict areas. Women and children are the most vulnerable group of psychiatric illness.

The cases of women who were repressed by male dominance and atrocities and war as an attempt to provide an overview toward the adverse effects of various upheaval. The story of women who can provide motivation and enthusiasm is needed to tell the actual facts about the meaning of an achievement of women exposed to the effects of war and violence experienced by the women, that is one of the purposes of Lemmon as the writer of the novel.

IV. THE VOICE OF ENTREPRENUR WOMEN IN THE DRESSMAKER OF KHAIR KHANA

The theme decorates many Afghan writers focus on repression, oppression and the violence of the regime and Taliban. But, this novel gave a different theme by showing the fight of an ordinary woman, inspiring and never hopeless with the ruining of Taliban. She is Kamila Shidiqqi as the main character in this novel. At the first, ordinary citizens welcome the arrival of the Taliban for one of their outstanding qualities, incorruptibility. But the price is high in the ruthless imposition of Muslim fundamentalism. Women now are not only forced

to wear Burqa in public. They are prevented from working other than in the home, they are denied access to education, they are allowed to go shopping only if accompanied by a male relative. Meanwhile the strictest version of Sharia (Islamic law) is introduced. There are amputation of hands for theft and public executions and floggings.

In short, the novel tells about Sidiqi's family. Mister Sidiqi has 9 daughters and 2 sons. The three eldest daughters already became teachers and do not live in their house in Khair Khana. There are 8 daughters and sons left in that house. Five among them are girls; they are Malika, Kamila, Saaman, Laila, and Nasrin) and the two of them is boys namely Najeeb and Rahim. Kamila is the main character in this novel. She becomes the lighter for her sisters and brothers. Imagining that there is a strict limitation and boundary for women that they can't continue their study at school and universities, Kamila kept her dreams to release their suffering to be a productive woman. Kamila got the skill of sewing from her eldest sister, Malika. The way Kamila run her business of sewing motivate her sisters to follow her steps. The real terror can't stop her spirit to keep moving on, how to feed the family make the young Afghan women brave to make every effort becomes real.

The symbolic violence can't deter the bannings through her way to start learning sewing from her eldest sister, Soraya her tireless effort led her to master and become a reliable tailor. She opens the network with the shop owners in some markets in Kabul to offer her sewings. She organized many women, both teenagers and young energetic and enthusiastic to be the backbone of the family since there are many widows and old women can't support their needs. She actively motivates herself to be the lighthouse, the mover for every people who need the real action to support their daily need (Lemmon, 2013).

The way Kamila became the motivator for her sisters and then followed by the other women: teenagers and widow in her district, Khair Khana represented the effortless of young inspiring woman for their community in the small area and then for the country, Afghanistan in the large area. As the writer, Lemmon who has investigated and searched the inspiring woman which is really pioneer in running the business really attract to take her profile in the novel. Since the women in one country full with conflict always become the victim of the violence (Lemmon, 2013: xix-xx).

The writer tries to tell to all women in the world to show that the terror can't make the women stop running their business at home. They became stronger and stronger even they must face all the difficulties, challenges and punishment from the powerful group. Besides, opening the sewing business at home, Kamila also participate became the trainer and join with the UN organizations, Habitat. Her ability is needed to persuade, motivate and drive the women to be strong for herself and the family (Lemmon, 2013: 194-196). When women are educated and can earn and control income, a number of good results follow: infant mortality declines, child health and nutrition improve, agricultural productivity rises, population growth slows, economic expand, and cycles of poverty are broken (Coleman, 2013: 13). The empowerment of women really gives a huge influence for the nation in big scale and the family and themselves in small scale.

Kamila's effort to enlarge her spirit for other women in Afghanistan brings her to get the offer to join with United Nations organization, Habitat. She maintains her spirit by giving training of sewing and how to run business. Kamila started to struggle of a home-based business in the area of Khair Khana to reach many areas in Afghanistan to alleviate poverty and helplessness as a result of the worst of the war. Afghanistan may be destroyed but not with passion to improve the mental citizens who still hope to see Afghanistan become a peaceful country after the conflict ended.

Kamila also got a chance to speak in front of the public in America. She became the representative of the modern Afghan women who have the desire to keep trying and never stop to dream. A dream in her childhood to become a useful woman in her society is coming true. Gender equality that she strived will lead every woman in Afghanistan, and other women in the world to follow her step.

The strength of women entrepreneurs who started the business from the zero point, without the large capital, up and down in establishing the relationships, and her persistence in the fight against the Taliban that often apply rules that limit the movement of women into the exciting and interesting to make this novel characterizations in terms of character and theme of the story. The story of women entrepreneurs in countries with conflict becomes a reflection of the success to defeat the symbolic violence that also occurs there.

The plot of the story brought us to the way the strong woman maintains her spirit of business to build the network, relationship and partner in running the business. Her efforts become the motivator and inspirator to fight every challenge and difficult situation faced by the women. And she becomes the winner to win all the challenges, difficulties and the variety to make her down and give up.

V. GAYLE TZEMACH LEMMON AND EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN IN A *DRESSMAKER OF KHAIR KHANA*

One concept that is used as an important point of Gayle Tzemach Lemmon is an awareness of gender equality. Her experience as a journalist by doing the action as an observer directly in conflict-affected countries makes her very aware of the various problems experienced by women as the main victims of war, ethnic clashes, religious stream. For Lemmon, in accordance with the educational background in economics from Harvard University, there is a desire to empower women independent financially. She saw the worst side of a dispute are children and women.

A dressmaker from Khair Khana that she wrote based on the personal interviews and direct observation in Afghanistan bring the readers into the real investigation of Afghanistan condition. Kamila's figure is not a fictional character, but it is real. Lemmon's idea to write the story of Kamila and her sisters are intended to illustrate the story of women entrepreneurs in the country who are struggling to recover from conflict fought unyielding in business. These women are the brave figures who work every day to support their families and grow the economy; but also a role model for the next younger generation to see the power of entrepreneurs woman to create better circumstances.

In Afghanistan, the United States has made strengthening the role of women in Afghan society a central element of its counterinsurgency strategy. To this end, the U.S. military is experimenting with setting aside some contracts for Afghan women entrepreneur to supply uniforms for the national police and army (Coleman, 2010: 17). This effort is as a favour to empower entrepreneur women in Afghan to develop the economic aspects in their bottom lines.

There are a variety of women's struggles are also Lemmon described in this novel, the women who teach and provide courses for children to be able to read and write, to study Koran, the Holy Book for Muslim at home in an attempt surreptitiously without the knowledge of the Taliban conducted by other female characters in the story, the sister of Kamila, Malika (Lemmon, 2013: 134-135). The other strong and dedicated women named Sara. Sara is a widow with three children who had to support her family after her husband died. Without higher education and have not had a job but having sewing skills that took her to meet Kamila. Tenacity and strong intention make her became an independent woman (Lemmon, 2013: 113-114). Then there is the figure of Mahnaz, a seventeen-year-old girl who has a wonderful talent in installing beautiful beads for the production of bridal gowns of Kamila (Lemmon, 2013: 138). Being a tailor is a sideline business that can be done when there is a ban on the Taliban for women to go to school. Mahnaz's main goal is to become a teacher one day when the ban is lifted so she can go to school. Two other female figures who also have a role and be a driving force to promote other women in Afghanistan are Mahbooba and Hafiza, female activists who joined the organization of the United Nations, Habitat. They are recruited by UN to help people overcome the problems of sanitation and local infrastructure and began to build schools and health clinics in the local environment for women and girls. Hafiza has a background of a scientist, while Mahbooba is a lecturer at Kabul University (Lemmon, 2013: 182-184).

The real condition of female characters written in the novel are women who actually observed by Lemmon. In accordance with her scientific capacity, Lemon wants to explore the stories of women who could struggle to sustain themselves and their families alive and out of hard times when their country buffeted by conflict. The existence of the same angle with her field of scientific, economic, make Lemmon investigated by direct observation in the field in an attempt to decipher a true story that is factual accountable and inspire.

Lemmon builds a process and step for every woman character in the story from the zero into the hero character. Some are told in the last chapter of the novel. Kamila Sidiqi continue her study in MBA program for two weeks in Thunderbird Global Management School in Arizona, America. Kamila also got an invitation to be a speaker in Washington, D.C from Condoleezza Rice, the minister of Foreign Affairs of America. She got this great chance cause she has expanded her field of business started from the home sewing bussiness into the construction. She spoke in front of the Congress, businessman, and diplomat. Kamila also named his new business with Kaweyan after she got success in doing her sewing business in five years. For Kamila, "Money is the power for women. If the women have their own income for their family, they can contribute and make their own decision.

Brothers, husbands, and all the families will respect to them. It will become the important aspect for the women, women always ask the money from their husband. The training and the ability will change and support many Afghan women to live better (Lemon, 2013: 233-234). Kamila also starts to open a new business and named Kaweyan. She married with her cousin and gave birth a son, Naweyan. Mahnaz, another woman character is also success become a young lecturer in Kabul. Her sister also becomes a doctor and dedicates her life for her patients. Dr. Maryam continues her passion being a doctor and always support her daughters to have a higher education and follows her step being a doctor. (Lemmon, 2013: 238). Sara, the potential asisstant for Kamila also can support her family. Her two sons studies in university. She can afford to buy her own house so they do not live with their big family. She lives as a free woman with her great skills in sewing, cook and housewife in Kabul (Lemon, 2013: 238). Saaman, Kamila younger's sister who like novels and poem can complete her study in Literature in university. Laila also can graduate from university. And Malika as the elder sister becomes one of the busiest women in Kabul. She also can complete her study in university and run some business. She lives happily with her four children and her husband.

Those points are the important notes that is stressing by Lemon to empower the women in Afghanistan. Women must be free to determine their life, free from the pressure, intimidacy, and get their honors in the society. The description which is built through the sad moment till the happy ending from each character as an effort to give the understanding every woman deserve to choose their own life. The gender equality and consciousness must be applied and understood by people to create the awareness to respect.

VI. CONCLUSION

The symbolic violence which repressed many Afghan women can't stop their effort even they are living in an unstabil country. Every violence becomes the trigger to challenge the future and brilliant hopes. Kamila Sidiqi, the main character in the novel is an inspiring woman for others. This novel shows the women's power to take roles over the man dominance and repression to show their ability to be the leader in the superior regime. Knowing their mission to keep struggling and never give up over the Symbolic Violence, the repression and the intimidation give us lesson that women in the conflict area still can survive and be the role model to never stop fighting and inspiring. This story becomes a mirror for other women and people in the world about the bravery to share the spirit to move on, never surrender surrounded by the violence and repression.

Knowing that every woman deserves to raise their dreams and hopes, Kamila and her sisters strive and struggle to live a decent in the conflict area. The men dominance and the Symbolic Violence that repressed the women in Taliban era support their steps and give them more power to fight. Issues of exploitation against women in conflict areas suggests that women who experience oppression both physically and inwardly in Afghanistan should also be encouraged to continue to survive, independent, and recover from emotional wounds suffered.

As a conclusion of this paper, the important role of women in conflict-affected countries is a thing that is often overlooked despite the fact that the role of small and not considered, but they can still survive and can prove that success to be able to empower women in the country is the biggest points that must be recognized by the state. The woman told in this novel is a reflection of an ordinary woman who could give a lot of good sense for herself, faithful and love family and support as well as other women in Afghanistan. Many women are inspired by Kamila's spirit to keep fighting and changing fate. Her great effort to motivate and give spirit to many Afghan women brings her to be the public speaker in America. She became the lighter in the dark area, talented, strong and full of dedication for her nations. Build the spirit and the power to bring back the peace of Afghanistan. Every woman Afghan will have their own role to build their beloved nation, Afghanistan.

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