

Historical Investigation and Realistic Enlightenment of the CPC's Construction of International Discourse Power: Taking the Translation and Dissemination of Mao Zedong's Works in Vietnamese as an Example

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Abstract

Throughout the process of translating and disseminating of Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese, it can be found that their types and quantities have gone through different periods with the evolution of Sino Vietnamese relations, exhibiting strong “revolutionary” characteristics, distinct “combat” characteristics, and strong “construction” characteristics. Based on the practical need of external dissemination of the CPC's ideological theories and policy propositions, the Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese published by Chinese publishing institutions are superior to Vietnamese publishing institutions in both types and quantities. As an important carrier for enhancing political mutual trust between the governments of China and Vietnam, as well as promoting friendly exchanges between the two peoples, the translation and dissemination of Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese not only provided important guidance for Vietnam's independence, liberation, and economic and social development, but also had a significant impact on the dissemination of Mao Zedong Thought in Vietnam and the construction of China's international discourse power.

Key words: Mao Zedong's works; Vietnam; Translation; International discourse

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INTRODUCTION

Since its establishment, the CPC has been committed to shaping and spreading the international image of political parties, so as to build the international discourse of the CPC. The dissemination of Mao Zedong's works in Vietnam is an important manifestation of this effort. China and Vietnam, as strategic communities with a shared future, are both socialist countries led by the Communist Party. The translation and dissemination of Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese language have developed with the evolution of China Vietnam relations, and the process reflects distinct characteristics of the times. The dissemination of Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese has played an important role in enhancing China's cultural soft power, telling Chinese stories well, and building China's international discourse power.

Currently, there has been no specialized research in the academic community on the translation and dissemination of Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese. The author systematically combs through the archives and literature of China and Vietnam, aiming to clarify the translation and dissemination history of Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese, and combines the translation and dissemination of books and periodicals with the process of China and Vietnam opposing foreign aggression, striving for national independence and prosperity, and building socialism, in order to reveal the origin, dissemination channels, and valuable experience of Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese.

The translation and publication of Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese were mainly presented in the abstract format of Mao Zedong's revolutionary views and social construction theory in the early days. Due to China and Vietnam being socialist countries led by the Communist Party, this political background provided important conditions for the translation and introduction of Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese. In this context, based on his practical experience in engaging in the national revolutionary movement in China, Ho Chi Minh believed that it was necessary to strengthen propaganda work when opposing the colonial policies of foreign powers. Especially, attention should be paid to the translation, publication, and distribution of revolutionary theoretical works, which is of great significance for the development and growth of the revolution.

The early translation and dissemination of Mao Zedong's works in Vietnam had a profound historical background. On the one hand, the older generation of revolutionaries from China and Vietnam, represented by Mao Zedong and Ho Chi Minh, have a deep friendship, laying an important foundation for promoting the translation and dissemination of Mao Zedong's works in Vietnam. During the Great Revolution, literature on the Chinese revolution, represented by Ho Chi Minh's *The Road to Revolution*, appeared in Vietnam, marking the beginning of the dissemination of Mao Zedong's works in Vietnam. In September 1925, Mao Zedong arrived in Guangzhou, the center of the Great Revolution, from Changsha with great ambition. On October 5th, Mao Zedong was elected as the Acting Minister of the Propaganda Department of the Central Party Headquarters of the Kuomintang and took office on the same day.

During this period, Mao Zedong founded the revolutionary newspaper *Political Weekly*. The purpose of this magazine is to carry out propaganda campaigns against counter revolutionaries in order to break the propaganda of counter revolutionaries. The establishment of the purpose of the newspaper reflects the basic logic of the CPC, represented by Mao Zedong, in constructing Marxist revolutionary discourse during the Great Revolution. On December 1, 1925, Mao Zedong published an article titled *Analysis of Various Classes in Chinese Society*. The article points out, who are our enemies? Who are our friends? This issue is the primary issue of revolution.

In this article, Mao Zedong elaborated on a series of issues such as the object, driving force, nature, and future of the Chinese revolution, which initially constructed the basic content of the New Democratic Revolution. This article was reprinted in the magazines *Chinese Farmers* and *Chinese Youth* on February 1 and March 13, 1926, and was published in a single volume in Shantou, Guangdong. Later, it was included in the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* and became an important literature that

people from all walks of life at home and abroad eagerly read.

While Mao Zedong was carrying out revolutionary propaganda work in Guangzhou, Ho Chi Minh, who was involved in the Vietnamese national and ethnic independence movement, established the Vietnamese Youth Revolutionary Comrades Association in Guangzhou. In order to strengthen revolutionary education for Vietnamese youth, Ho Chi Minh founded the official publication of the Vietnamese Youth Revolutionary Comrades Association, *Youth Weekly*. This publication is printed in Vietnamese and contains a large number of articles on Marxism and reflecting the Chinese revolution, demonstrating rich content, profound thinking, and strong targeting.

From 1925 to the spring of 1927, *Youth Weekly* published a total of 88 issues. With the assistance of the Seamen's Union led by the CPC, the magazine was secretly shipped to Vietnam and widely circulated among Vietnamese people from all walks of life, which strongly promoted the spread of Marxism and Chinese revolutionary ideas in Vietnam. In order to further cultivate revolutionary backbone and cultivate a group of well-trained military and political cadres, Ho Chi Minh held three special political training courses in Guangzhou from the second half of 1925 to the spring of 1927, based on the Vietnamese Youth Revolutionary Comrades Association. Ho Chi Minh invited Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai, and others to serve as training class teachers.

During this period, Ho Chi Minh attached great importance to the teaching and management of training classes. He compiled the speeches from the training class into a book and created a textbook called *The Road to Revolution*. This textbook explains the major issues of the proletarian revolution in easy to understand language. Upon examining the manuscript of *The Road to Revolution*, it can be found that the book extensively cites the discourse of Marxist classic writers.

For example, the cover of the book quoted Lenin's famous quote in his article *What to Do*, stating that without revolutionary theory, there would be no revolutionary movement. It can be seen that Ho Chi Minh borrowed Lenin's classic statement to elucidate the important guiding role of scientific theory in revolutionary practice. In the main body of the book *The Road to Revolution*, Ho Chi Minh first elucidated the purpose of writing this book, stating that the purpose is to clearly tell everyone who our friends are on the revolutionary road? Who are our enemies? At the same time, Ho Chi Minh used easy to understand language in *The Road to Revolution* to deeply explain the reasons for the occurrence of class revolution, the driving force for its advancement, the nature of revolution, the practical path and methods of revolution, and other issues.

Obviously, as Vietnam's first Marxist work, *The Road*

to Revolution elucidates the basic principles of Marxism and the basic path of the Chinese revolution. It is worth noting that Ho Chi Minh's main content and central idea in *The Road to Revolution* are closely related to Mao Zedong's views in *Analysis of Various Classes in Chinese Society*. This reflects the important influence of Mao Zedong's works in Vietnam and is also the earliest Vietnamese literature on Mao Zedong's revolutionary theory seen so far.

THE OVERALL SITUATION OF THE TRANSLATION AND PUBLICATION OF MAO ZEDONG'S WORKS IN VIETNAMESE

With the concentrated publication of Mao Zedong's works during the Yan'an period and the evolution of the Vietnamese revolutionary situation, single volume editions of Mao Zedong's works began to appear in Vietnamese. In order to lead the Vietnamese people in resisting French colonial rule, Ho Chi Minh presided over the establishment of the National United Front Vietnam Independence Alliance in May 1941. During this period, Ho Chi Minh vigorously promoted the translation of Mao Zedong's works in Vietnam. At that time, he not only translated Mao Zedong's book *Prolonged War* in French, but also translated Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese. Based on a deep understanding of the Chinese revolutionary road and practical experience, Ho Chi Minh believes that after the success of the Indochina revolution, the international situation will certainly change dramatically, and the whole world will be like a pot of boiling water. The situation abroad will affect the revolutionary situation domestically. At this time, the proletariat will take a great step forward in history, carry out proletarian revolution, establish proletarian dictatorship, build socialism, and transition to communism.

After the establishment of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in 1945, the Vietnamese people engaged in an arduous war against France. During this period, there was a large number of translations of Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese, and the scope of publication was also quite extensive. On the one hand, Vietnamese publishing institutions represented by Fact Publishing have organized the translation and publication of numerous Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese. Starting from 1946, Vietnam's August Publishing House translated Mao Zedong's important work on economic and financial issues in Yan'an, titled *Yan'an Economy and Finance*. This is currently the earliest known Vietnamese language version of Mao Zedong's work published by Vietnamese publishing institutions. From 1946 to 1979, Vietnamese publishing institutions translated and published varying numbers of Vietnamese language versions of Mao

Zedong's works each year, with a total of 61 versions. Among them, 16 versions were published in 1949 and 1953, which was the highest number of publications in history, while the Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese published in 1950, 1955, 1958, and 1959 were all over 10 versions, with a relatively considerable total circulation.

Among the Vietnamese language versions of Mao Zedong's works translated and published by Vietnamese publishing institutions, *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* occupy an important position. According to statistics, since the Vietnamese Fact Publishing House and Literature Publishing House first translated *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* in 1958, the translation and publication work of the Vietnamese version of *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* continued until 1978. During this period, Vietnam Fact Publishing House translated and published the Vietnamese version of *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*, volumes 1 to 3, in 1960, with an annual circulation of over 16000 copies; In 1967, it translated and published the fourth volume of *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*, totaling 10035 volumes, sparking a wave of translation and publication of Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese.

On the other hand, since 1956, Chinese publishing institutions represented by Foreign Language Publishing House have organized the translation and publication of a huge number of Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese. In April 1956, the first Vietnamese version of Mao Zedong's work *Agricultural Cooperation Issues* appeared in the form of a single volume, with 62465 volumes printed at once. Although the Foreign Language Publishing House only published four types of Mao Zedong's works in 1956, the total circulation of that year was as high as 337783 volumes, which was quite considerable at that time.

In 1967, the Vietnamese version of Volume 1 of *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* was first published by Foreign Language Publishing House. Due to its widespread popularity among the Vietnamese people, *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* was reprinted twice. With the increasing frequency of mutual visits between leaders of China and Vietnam, the exchanges between the two countries in politics, economy, military, culture, and other aspects are also becoming closer.

In early 1968, Ho Chi Minh visited Beijing. Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai, and other leaders of the Communist Party of China had in-depth conversations with him. Mao Zedong made an important exposition on Vietnam's War of Resistance Against the United States and National Salvation from a strategic and tactical perspective. He pointed out that when a country invades others, the people of the invaded country do not like it. The Vietnamese people do not like Americans because they control the people of other countries, which makes them detached from the people and very isolated. Your victory in this war is certain. It can be seen that Mao Zedong, based on the experience of the Chinese people's resistance

against foreign aggression, provided important strategic guidance for the Vietnamese people to carry out the War of Resistance against America and National Salvation.

From the above situation, it can be seen that publishing institutions in China and Vietnam have translated and introduced a large number of Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese. Among them, the Vietnamese publishing house, represented by the Fact Publishing House, translated 61 types Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese from 1946 to 1979. Chinese publishing institutions, represented by foreign language publishing houses, translated and introduced 161 types from 1949 to 1978, with a total volume of over 17.9 million volumes. Obviously, from the translation and publication of Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese, both in terms of type and quantity, Chinese publishing institutions are far superior to Vietnamese publishing institutions, which reflects the historical situation of China actively translating and introducing Mao Zedong's works to the outside world.

Especially in 1968 and 1969, the types and quantity of Vietnamese versions of Mao Zedong's works translated and published in China showed an explosive growth trend. According to statistics, in 1968, Foreign Language Publishing House translated and published 65 types of Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese, with a total of 13.486 million volumes. The number of types increased by 56 compared to the previous year, and the number of volumes increased by about 21 times. In 1969, this trend continued, with 66 types of Mao Zedong's works in volumes translated and published throughout the year, totaling over 4.24 million volumes.

THE BASIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE TRANSLATION AND PUBLICATION OF MAO ZEDONG'S WORKS IN VIETNAMESE

By examining the themes, content, and quantity of Vietnamese translations and publications of Mao Zedong's works in different periods, it can be found that there are some typical phased characteristics. In summary, with the evolution of Sino Vietnamese relations and the needs of Vietnamese revolution and social construction, the translation and publication of Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese have shown strong revolutionary characteristics, distinct combat characteristics, and strong construction characteristics.

Especially in the 1960s, Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese were extensively translated and reprinted, and the Vietnamese version of Mao Zedong's works on military issues became a focus of translation and publication. According to statistics, during this period, Vietnam Fact Publishing House, People's Army Publishing House, and others organized professional

personnel to translate and publish works related to Mao Zedong's military ideology, such as *Comrade Mao Zedong's Discussion on the People's Army and the People's War*, *On Enduring War*, *Strategic Issues in the Chinese Revolutionary War*, and *Concentrate Dominant Forces, Destroy Enemies Individually*.

At the same time, Chinese foreign language publishing houses and other institutions have also translated and published a large number of Vietnamese language versions of Mao Zedong's military thoughts. Among them, there were only 45 Vietnamese versions of Mao Zedong's writings on military issues translated and published by Foreign Language Publishing House from 1967 to 1969, totaling over 5.4 million volumes.

The translation and publication of Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese during this period, which were extensively presented on military issues, should be related to Vietnam's ongoing armed struggle for national independence, which requires guidance and reference from military theory.

As stated by Vietnam's Minister of National Defense and Commander in Chief of the People's Army, Wu Yuanjia, in his article *The Main Experience of the Vietnamese Labor Party in Leading Armed Struggle and Building Revolutionary Armed Forces*, the armed struggle of the Chinese people against imperialism and feudalism aims to achieve the political goals of national democratic revolution and pave the way for China to move towards the stage of socialist revolution. Similarly, the armed struggle of the Vietnamese people to overthrow imperialism and reactionary feudal forces, like China, aimed to achieve the political goal of national democratic revolution. The ultimate result of this goal is to achieve national independence, enable farmers to obtain land, and thus create conditions for advancing towards socialism.

At the end of 1951, Vietnam achieved victory in the peace campaign. In commemoration of the significant victory of the Anti French War, the Vietnamese People's Daily reported that during this battle, the Vietnamese army made significant progress in combat thinking and military tactics with the military training provided by the People's Liberation Army of China. This victory is not only a victory in military cooperation between China and Vietnam, but also a victory achieved by combining Vietnam's experience with Mao Zedong's military ideology.

In order to resist the invasion and colonial rule of the United States against Vietnam, as well as to strive for the national unity of Vietnam, the Southern National Liberation Front of Vietnam issued the Political Platform, which clearly stated that the Vietnamese people received strong support from socialist countries and people, including China. It can be said that China and Vietnam have a high degree of compatibility in resisting foreign aggression and seeking national and ethnic independence, which undoubtedly provided an important opportunity

for promoting the translation and publication of Mao Zedong's works on military issues.

After the liberation of northern Vietnam in 1954, Vietnamese publishing institutions actively translated and introduced literature on China's political, social, and cultural construction, including Mao Zedong's works, based on the consideration of building a socialist country, reflected a strong characteristic of construction. From 1956 to 1970, in just over a decade, Vietnamese publishing institutions translated 28 types of Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese, covering 59 versions. Among them, there were 16 types of Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese, which related to national construction issues, covering 36 versions.

There are 54 types of Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese, which related to national construction issues, translated and introduced by Chinese publishing institutions, totaling approximately 7.229 million volumes. Among them, the book *On the Issue of Agricultural Cooperation* was published more than 60000 volumes, the book *On the Issue of Correctly Handling Internal Contradictions Among the People* was published more than 125000 volumes, and the book *Preface and Postscript of Rural Investigations* was reprinted three times, with a total circulation of nearly 600000 volumes.

The extensive translation and publication of Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese provided important guidance for Vietnam to correctly understand and solve social contradictions, as well as to determine the central task of socialist construction.

Taking the correct handling of internal contradictions among the people as an example, the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Labor Party of Vietnam, Le Sun, stated in his article *Advancing towards Science and Vigorously Promoting the Socialist Revolution in the North* that, the socialist revolution is the greatest, most profound, and most thorough revolution in history. The current socialist revolution has produced new contradictions, and we must conduct in-depth research and solve them. Among these contradictions, the contradiction between the state and the people, the contradiction between the working people, and the contradiction between the two forms of socialist ownership are non confrontational. The contradiction between the Vietnamese people, American imperialism, and reactionary groups is a confrontational contradiction, a contradiction between ourselves and the enemy. The solution to the above contradictions is to implement socialist transformation. Only in this way can Vietnam be transformed from a backward agricultural country into a socialist country with modern industry, modern agriculture, advanced culture, and science.

Vietnamese Prime Minister Pham Van also stated in his 1959 government work report that Vietnam regards the socialist revolution as the most fundamental task in various aspects including economy, politics, culture,

ideology, etc. The current central task is to vigorously promote the socialist transformation of individual economic components of farmers, artisans, and small merchants, as well as the transformation of capitalist economic components, in order to transform individual and capitalist production relations into socialist production relations. Only in this way can Vietnam smoothly and truly carry out socialist construction.

The above understanding of Li Sun and Fan Wentong draws on China's valuable experience in socialist construction, which is certainly related to Vietnam's policy of moving towards socialism through agricultural cooperation. At the same time, the translation of Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese provides an important source of thought for them.

The extensive translation and publication of Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese provided valuable reference for Vietnam's socialist construction. As Mao Zedong stated in the book of *On the Issue of Agricultural Cooperation*, the climax of social reform in rural China's cooperation is about to arrive nationwide. This is a large-scale socialist revolutionary movement with a rural population of over 500 million, which has extremely great global significance.

In response, Le Sun, the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Vietnamese Labor Party, stated in his article *Revolution is the Cause of the Masses* that China's extremely rich experience in socialist construction has provided Vietnam with a new concept for rural socialist construction. Chinese farmers can implement cooperation without machines and embark on the path of socialism, and the Vietnamese people will definitely be able to do so.

On June 2, 1969, Ho Chi Minh, Chairman of the Central Committee of the Vietnamese Labor Party, passed away due to illness. In his will, Ho Chi Minh expressed sincere gratitude to countries including China for supporting and assisting Vietnam in its revolutionary cause. However, with the passing of Ho Chi Minh, the trend of independence and autonomy within Vietnam has been increasing, and the traditional friendly relationship between China and Vietnam has been exposed to cracks. By February 1979, conflicts broke out in the border areas between China and Vietnam, and the two countries completely severed diplomatic ties due to the outbreak of the Sino Vietnamese self-defense counterattack.

During this period, Chinese publishing institutions translated three Vietnamese versions of Mao Zedong's works in 1970, and in 1977, and 3024 volumes of Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese. However, throughout the 1970s and beyond, Chinese publishing institutions did not distribute Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese. Vietnamese publishing institutions have only released two Vietnamese versions of Mao Zedong's works: *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* and *Strategic Issues in the Chinese Revolutionary War*.

CONCLUSION

The translation and dissemination of Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese have roughly gone through the process of abstract translation of main viewpoints and ideas, the dissemination of specialized works in individual volumes, and the overall dissemination of large-scale reprints and reprints. From the overall situation of the translation of Vietnamese versions of Chinese literature by publishing institutions in China and Vietnam, it can be seen that Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese are undoubtedly the main body, with a quantity and variety far exceeding other types of books. This undoubtedly reflects the historical situation of Mao Zedong Thought's widespread dissemination in Vietnam.

Marx pointed out that the degree to which a theory is realized in a country always depends on the degree to which the theory meets the needs of that country. Marx's statement can be said to provide a good annotation for the extensive translation and dissemination of Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese. To this day, the process of resorting out the translation and dissemination of Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese is worth summarizing the following experiences:

Firstly, the translation and dissemination of Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese have gone through different historical periods with the evolution of Sino Vietnamese relations, and exhibit phased characteristics. During the Great Revolution, literature on Mao Zedong's revolutionary ideas, represented by Ho Chi Minh's *The Road to Revolution*, appeared in Vietnam, marking the beginning of the translation and dissemination of Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese. After the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Vietnam in 1950, Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese were widely disseminated in Vietnam, marking the development of translation and dissemination. After the death of Ho Chi Minh, there were cracks in Sino Vietnamese relations, and the distribution of Vietnamese versions of Mao Zedong's works sharply decreased or even interrupted.

During the period of Great Revolution, Vietnam translated and introduced Chinese revolutionary literature based on the need to lead and launch the democratic revolution movement. Mao Zedong's works were extensively translated and disseminated in Vietnamese, demonstrating strong revolutionary characteristics in terms of dissemination motivation and purpose. After the establishment of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in 1945, Vietnam engaged in a difficult and arduous war against France. A large number of works on Mao Zedong's military versions were translated and published, and the main content of their dissemination exhibited distinct combat characteristics. After the liberation of northern Vietnam in 1954, Vietnam actively translated and introduced literature on the political, social, and cultural construction of the Communist Party of China, including

Mao Zedong's works, based on the consideration of building a socialist country, reflecting a strong characteristic of construction.

Secondly, the translation and dissemination of Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese were influenced by objective conditions, resulting in multiple dissemination paths and modes. On the one hand, Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese were mainly disseminated to Vietnam through channels such as promotion by the Comintern and translation by publishing institutions in China and Vietnam. On the other hand, Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese were mainly disseminated to Vietnam through gifting, borrowing, sales, and online channels. This mainly includes the following channels: first, the conditional opening of official book gifts and national collections by the governments of China and Vietnam. second, the Vietnamese education, academic, theoretical, news, and private book gifts. The third is book market trade and online book trading. The fourth is modern e-books and new media communication.

Thirdly, the translation and dissemination of Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese have a guiding role in Vietnam's opposition to Western aggression, pursuit of national and ethnic independence, and socialist state construction. On the one hand, the translation and dissemination of Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese provided important guidance for Vietnam's independence, liberation, and economic and social development. On the other hand, the translation and dissemination of Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese had a significant impact on the dissemination of Mao Zedong Thought in Vietnam, the formation of ideological concepts among Vietnamese Communists, and the development of Vietnamese political culture. In addition, the translation and dissemination of Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese provide an important carrier for enhancing political mutual trust between the governments of China and Vietnam, as well as promoting friendly exchanges between the two peoples.

Fourthly, the process of translating and disseminating Mao Zedong's works in Vietnamese provides valuable experience and important inspiration for further promoting the international dissemination of socialist literature with Chinese characteristics. On the one hand, we should strengthen cross-cultural mass communication, create a three-dimensional international communication mechanism, and build a multi-dimensional, wide channel, and multifunctional collaborative communication system. On the other hand, we should take the promotion of the dissemination of social literature with Chinese characteristics as an opportunity to further build original discourse expressions that integrate Chinese and foreign languages, achieve a combination of precise and three-dimensional dissemination, and provide assistance for further constructing international discourse power.

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