The Tradition of Melekan Manten:
Cultural Da'wah Strategy of Mudin in Overcoming Social Problem

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Abstract

This research is a results description conducted to describe the social problem at the Melekan Manten event and the role of Mudin in reducing the social problem at the Melekan Manten event through Khataman al-Qur’an. The research is carried out by going directly into the field to investigate phenomena that appear in the real-life context. The process is by constructing phenomena based on the obtained data and critical evaluation based on relevant theories so that the essence of events can be found to be compared to other data and with relevant theories so that their validity, robustness and suitability can be tested and concluded. The study results concluded that the social problem in the Melekan Manten event in Delik and Kedungmaling, Mojokerto, namely playing cards, betting dice and dominoes, and drinking alcoholic beverages until drunk. The role of Mudin in reducing the ill behavior of the society is to implement da’wah management through a cultural approach. The role carried out is the role of community leader and spiritual leader to invite the youth to make Khataman al-Qur’an tradition at every Melekan Manten event.

Keywords:
Melekan Manten, Cultural Da'wah Strategy, Mudin, Social Problem
Introduction

Gambling and drinking are immoral behaviors contrary to the norms that exist in society, such as religious norms, laws, and moral norms. Even for some people, the behavior of gambling and drinking is considered a social problem. Not a few of these behaviors have led to other negative behaviors troubling other society members, such as rioting and vandalism, theft, fraud, and others. Even though gambling and drinking are immoral behaviors, unfortunately, some people still carry out these actions. Data from the Indonesian National Police shows that the crime rate in Indonesia increased in the 24th week of 2020 compared to the previous week. According to available data, the highest increase occurred in gambling cases as there were 52 gambling cases in the 23rd week; and the number doubled to 104 cases in the following week (Halim, 2020). Meanwhile, related to drinking behavior, data from the Indonesian National Police shows that there were 223 cases during the last 3 years, from 2018 to 2020. The number of procuring oplosan (mixed) alcohol cases over the last 3 years amounted to 1,045 cases (Taufan, 2020).

The increase in the number of social problems carried out by some residents in the form of gambling and drinking is a problem that needs to be resolved. Moreover, these social problems have triggered many other criminal acts. Gambling behavior often leads to criminal acts of fraud (Novellino, 2019), theft and even has an impact on the weakening of religious values because people who have won gambling will usually use their profits for personal pleasure, such as using them to get drunk (Achmad Zurohman, 2016).

The impact of drinking alcohol on the emergence of other criminal acts was disclosed by the Indonesian National Police, who stated that there had been hundreds of criminal cases in the last three years that occurred because they were triggered by alcoholic beverages consumed by perpetrators in Indonesia. Head of the Public Information Bureau for Public Relations Division of the Indonesian National Police, Brigadier General Awi Setiyono stated that some conventional cases, such as rape and others, were often the perpetrators or suspects tested positive for consuming alcohol (CNN Indonesia, 2020).

In addition, the behavior of drinking alcohol is also very dangerous for the perpetrators themselves. According to World Health Organization (WHO), as noted by Kompas.com, alcohol kills 3.3 million people worldwide every year. The death rate from alcohol consumption is far above the combined victims of AIDS, tuberculosis, and violence. According to Shekhar Saxena, Chair of the Department of Mental Health and Substance Dependence of World Health Organization in Geneva, this figure is equivalent to one death every 10 seconds (Handoko, 2020).
Although the behavior of drinking and gambling is risky and is a social problem that is contrary to norms, unfortunately, this behavior is still often carried out by some people in some areas. In fact, it is like being part of the culture and tradition that is carried out by the society from generation to generation on certain events, one of which is at the Melekan Manten event as done by society members in Delik and Kedungmaling villages, Mojokerto Regency.

One component of society that consistently tries to reduce society’s drinking and gambling behavior is Mudin. Mudin is a village Kyai (Islam expert) whose existence is attached to the traditional life of Javanese society. He has made an effort to make a tradition of Khataman al-Qur'an activity for several years, especially at the event. In the perspective of da’wah management, this effort can be considered as a form of da’wah that uses a cultural approach. The management of cultural da’wah through Khataman al-Qur'an activity and the technical implementation in reducing the social problem is an important knowledge that needs to be explored, analyzed, and described through research and scientific studies to disseminate the results to the broader community.

**Literature Review**

Social problems are unpleasant or disturbing things or actions that occur in society and are not in accordance with the local society members' religious rules, customs, and etiquette (M. Agha Novrians, 2020). Among the forms of social problems are drinking and gambling, which some people still often practice.

In Mojokerto Regency, especially in Delik hamlet, Balongmojo village, and Kedungmaling Hamlet, Kedungmaling village, some still practice drinking and gambling. This behavior is often carried out at night when there is a wedding celebration. On the night of the event, the villagers usually stay up late and gather at the residents’ homes who hold the event. This activity is known as Melekan Manten. At that time, some residents often use it to play cards or dominoes and drink alcoholic beverages to get drunk.

The behavior of drinking alcoholic beverages, getting drunk, and gambling at the Melekan Manten event is common. It seems like it has become a culture favored by the residents. In fact, this craze increases when families who hold the wedding event bring in sexy dangdut singers to entertain the residents by singing and dancing together. The problem is, this behavior is almost never touched by the law even though the provisions are clear, both in religious law (especially Islamic law) and in the Indonesian Criminal Code (KUHP).

Usually, gambling and drunken behavior at this event only get attention from village government officials or the police when these behaviors cause riots that disturb the residents'
peace, such as causing fights, brawls, vandalism, and others. This society condition is a problem that needs to be resolved by all components of society, including the government, police, religious leaders, education practitioners, and the community itself. Apart from being contrary to religious values and decency, this behavior also negatively impacts life.

Alcoholic drinks in all their intoxicating forms are a part of khamr, which can negatively affect those who drink it shut or lose their minds (al-Ashfāḥānī, 1997). As for gambling, similar to liquor, there is also a great sin in it (Shihab, 2002). The Qur'an denounces these actions and calls them heinous and evil acts that can make people feel hatred and enmity. These acts can also keep the perpetrators away from remembering Allah and performing acts of worship such as prayer and other worship rituals.

**Research Method**

This research is qualitative research using a phenomenological approach introduced by Edmund Husserl, an epistemological approach in science that aims to establish human relationships with reality to find the essential or eidos (essence) of the so-called phenomena (Muslih, 2005). The phenomenon referred to in this study is a disease of society in the form of drinking and gambling at the Melekan Manten event which Mudin tries to reduce the frequency of the behavior by making the Khataman al-Qur'an a tradition.

Subjects and Respondents in this study were: 1) Hamlet Mudin who had attuned the tradition of Khataman al-Qur'an at the Melekan Manten event; 2) Jama'ah who carry out the tradition of Khataman al-Qur'an at the Melekan Manten event; 3) Society members who have and organize weddings (mantenan); 4) Residents who know the implementation of the Khataman al-Qur'an tradition at the Melekan Manten event.

This research was conducted in 2 hamlets in Mojokerto Regency, East Java, namely Delik Hamlet and Kedungmaling Hamlet, Mojokerto Regency. Researchers are instruments and data collectors who come to the research location to observe and conduct interviews, either directly or indirectly, with research subjects and respondents. The researchers also took notes of the information obtained by using field notes, recorded conversations, and documented the activities carried out by the research subjects and respondents.

After the data collection process conducted using the technique above produces the necessary information, the information will be reduced, triangulated, and critically evaluated (Creswell, 2015). Its relevance is tested based on relevant theories. The analysis process is carried out since the data collection process takes place until all data is collected using the Spradley Model Data Analysis technique. Combined with the data collection process, data analysis using
the Spradley Model includes 7 stages, namely: 1) descriptive observations, 2) domain analysis, 3) focused observations, 4) taxonomic analysis, 5) selected observations, 6) componential analysis, 7) theme analysis (Moeloeng, 2000). The process can be described by a cyclical circle as follows:

**Picture 1. Spradley Model Data Analysis**

![Spradley Model Data Analysis Diagram](image)

**Results and Discussion**

In the society structure of Delik and Kedungmaling, Mojokerto, *Mudin* is a village kyai. Therefore, he is not only a trusted figure in terms of helping with marriage and taking care of corpses such as bathing, shrouding, *mentalqin*, leading funeral ceremonies, and *tahlil* rituals. In Delik and Kedungmaling, Mojokerto, *Mudin* has served as a village kyai. One of the reasons this role can be reached is because he is a *santri* who memorizes the Qur'an (*hafidz*) whose mindset, attitude, and behavior are consistent in maintaining the values of the Qur'an.

In the context of reducing the intensity of social problem behavior, *Mudin* of Delik and Kedungmaling, Mojokerto has carried out their roles as village kyai that is a society and spiritual leader. Through these roles, he strives to influence and improve the society's spirituality by inviting them to the *Khataman* al-Qur'an activity at the *Melekan Manten* event as a more positive choice than the *melekan* activity, which is filled with playing cards, dice, and gambling. They play dominoes and drink alcoholic beverages until they get drunk. It is important because spirituality is closely related to divinity and tasawwuf (Rozi, 2018).

*Mudin*’s invitation to fill *Melekan Manten* with khataman al-Qur'an activities was initially addressed to family, relatives, and close friends. However, it gradually affected the people of Delik and Kedungmaling, Mojokerto widely. Therefore, until now, almost all residents of Delik and Kedungmaling, Mojokerto, always filled the wedding celebration event with *Khataman* al-Qur'an activity in the evening.
Khataman al-Qur'an usually starts at 7:30 pm and continues until dawn. The technical activities of Khataman are sequential as follows:

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<th>Introduction</th>
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<tr>
<td>- Mudin, youths, and residents came to the Khataman location, which is the</td>
<td>house of residents who has a wedding celebration.</td>
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<td>- Mudin, together with the youths and residents, has a friendly small chat</td>
<td>with the host or the one who holds the celebration event.</td>
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<td>- Mudin opens the Khataman and leads the reading of Surah al-Fatihah</td>
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<th>Core activities</th>
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<td>- Mudin leads the Khataman and starts it by reading surah al-Baqarah using</td>
<td>a loudspeaker.</td>
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<td>- The youth and residents also read other surahs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- After Mudin finishes reading 1 juz’ of the Qur'an, it was continued by</td>
<td>the youth and residents.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- The youth and residents who are fluent in reciting the Qur'an continue</td>
<td>their reading with loudspeakers in turn.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- The youth and residents who are less fluent read independently according</td>
<td>to their abilities without loudspeakers.</td>
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<td>to their abilities without loudspeakers.</td>
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<td>- Khataman al-Qur'an ends by reading juz’ 30 led by Mudin, which is listened</td>
<td>by all the people and the event’s host.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Khataman activity is closed with a prayer together and eating.</td>
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<td>- Mudin, youth and residents return to their respective homes.</td>
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The series of Khataman al-Qur'an activity are carried out voluntarily and free of charge. Therefore, the host is not obliged to spend funds as pocket money for Mudin and other attendees who carry out Khataman al-Qur'an. However, according to individual conscience, the host usually provides snacks, coffee, cigarettes, and dinner or rice blessing as gifts. The host provides the food according to the ability and awareness; there are no binding provisions.

For the host, the Khataman al-Qur'an activity at the Melekan Manten event is more positive than playing cards or dominoes and drinking alcoholic beverages until drunk. As for the youth and residents, the Melekan Manten activity is interesting and fun because they can socialize with each other, have coffee, smoke cigarettes, and eat a free meal in a positive way.

For residents who cannot read the Qur'an, the Khataman activity is certainly less interesting. They prefer the Melekan Manten according to the old culture by playing cards or dominoes and...
drinking alcoholic beverages. However, with the *Khataman* tradition, they feel ashamed to do the old culture, so they are forced not to gamble and get drunk at the *Melekan Manten* event.

Social problems such as drinking and gambling at the *Melekan Manten* event are reviewed in the context of the underlying factors and the reduction in the frequency of their behavior by the *Mudin* through *Khataman* al-Qur’an tradition fits and can be explained by several theories that are oriented towards behaviorism. The theories in question are as Ivan P. Pavlov's Classical Conditioning Theory, B.F. Skiner, Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory.

In addition, it is also in accordance with several theories oriented to cognitive psychology, such as Jean Piaget's Cognitive Theory about the interaction between the maturity of organisms and environmental influences and other theories from the Transpersonal and Humanistic Psychology of Carl R. Rogers and Abraham Maslow about the free will of humans who have the power to determine their own behavior. Moreover, it can also be explained by using personality theory in Islamic Psychology which examines human behavior.

Conceptually, social problems in drinking and gambling at the *Melekan Manten* event carried out by the residents of Delik and Kedungmaling, Mojokerto Regency and the reduction in the frequency of their behavior by the *Mudin* through *Khataman* al-Qur’an can be described as follows:

**Picture 2. Mudin Conceptualization of Social Problem in the Melekan Manten Event and Reducing their Behavior Frequency.**

Based on the conceptualization of the theories above, it can be explained that a person's behavior, including the behavior of social problems such as gambling and drinking, according to the adherents of Behaviorism, is driven by external factors. They believe that a person’s behavior is better understood in terms of external causes than internal causes. Thus, the individual's external environment in society is a relevant stimulus to the emergence of behavior (SR), as Ivan
P. Pavlov proved that a dog paired with multiple stimuli such as a bell and food could teach it to salivate when the bell is rung (Pear, 2015).

A person's behavior conditioned by external factors or in terms of Behaviorime is referred to as automatic responses to stimuli because it is a response caused by stimuli, according to B.F. Skinner, needs to be strengthened by rewards or punishments after the response (reinforcement, positive reinforcement & negative reinforcement). It is operant conditioning that becomes the learning in which behavior is modified based on consequences in the form of rewards and punishments.

In addition, social problems are behaviors that a person learns from the environment where he learns about various social behaviors (classical conditioning) of the community through modeling that stimulates the emergence of a response. The 3 models in question are: (a). Live models, which come from real life, such as the parents behaviour at home, the behavior teachers, peers behavior or behavior that is seen in the environment daily; (b). Symbolic model, which comes from a parable or description of behavior in the mind, such as stories in books, radio, TV, and others; (c). Verbal description model, which is stated in a verbal description (words) or a model that is not in the form of behavior but in instructions, such as instructions or directions to do something (Bandura, 1971).

According to the adherents of Behaviorism, a social problem is carried out by a person because the social situation has developed in such way to condition the behavior that he is not able to control. In addition, this behavior can also be caused by non-positive family relationships as several studies cited by Kathryn Geldard and David Geldadrd (2010), including research by Swanson (1991), Smith (1997) and also O'Koon (1997) which states that fragile or unsatisfactory attachments during childhood with parents have a major influence on early sexual activity and high-risk sexual behavior, and also cause them to develop psychological and drug or alcohol abuse problems.

Furthermore, various behaviors that can be described as social problems will slowly be studied by other residents of the next generation with various reinforcements to become a character that shapes culture in society. However, the behaviorism assumption about the process of a person's behavior occurrence without involving mental factors, in reality, is opposed by many. For some people, what happens in this world is a series of positive, neutral, and negative events. However, the emergence of negative behaviors carried out by a person is rooted in his own thoughts because humans are creatures who can reason and judge good and evil, make action plans, and make decisions about any behavior based on the information they remember and the
ideal goals they want to achieve. Thus, because humans can think and act to make them change, humans are not passive victims of past conditioning (Corey, 2003).

In the case of the social problem in the form of gambling and drinking, the importance of cognition or knowledge of the matter is clearly in society. Knowledge of the good and bad of them is what controls the behavior of the citizens. Therefore, if the reasoning and decisions taken by the citizens turn out to produce negative behaviors in the problem, it is due to the occurrence of a thinking error (cognitive distortion) of the citizens, or there has been a loss of cognitive control in their behavior.

In contrast to the behaviorism assumption which views a person's overall behavior are caused by external factors, and also the cognitivism assumption which views it from individual internal processes point of view, Humanists believe that the development of a person's behavior, whether positive or negative behavior, all comes from human free will who has the power to do so. Therefore, according to the adherents of Humanism, a person may have been in certain situations that they are not able to control, whether the situation is favorable or hindered, but how that situation will be assessed, interpreted, responded to, all of that is a solely personal choice that will have certain consequences (Hergenhahn, 2020).

In the perspective of personality theory in Islamic psychology, the disease of society carried out by a person who has been *aqil-baliqh* is part of a sinful act (al-itsm), whether it is a sin against God, himself, or fellow human beings. The sin committed by a person is caused by several factors, both internal and external factors. Internally, humans commit sins because they reflect a personality that is not in accordance with their nature (*fitrah*). Fitrah itself, according to some Muslim scholars, is something that is inherent in humans (*innate*) which is similar to awareness and relates to things that are human (Muthahari, 1999), and is the basic nature to know and believe in Allah SWT, tends to the truth which has no deviations (Najati, 2000).

Thus, citizens, like humans in general, naturally tend to be good according to their nature. However, in reality, if there are residents who implement behavior that is not in accordance with their nature, the reflection of the personality that is not in accordance with the nature is due to the malfunctioning of the powers possessed by their personality structure that are in accordance with the demands of human perfection (Masharudin, 2014).

One of the causes of these powers do not function is due to the influence of parents and their environment because the nature of fitrah brought by every newborn will not change unless the parents and the environment make it change as the words of the Prophet Muhammad: "No child is born except on fitrah and then his parents make him a Jewish, Christian or Magian" (Narrated by al-Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawud, and at-Turmuodzi) (Zaki ad-Din, 2000).
When a person or society member has violated their nature, including behaving that can be classified as a societal disease, the behavior needs to be corrected. One component of society that has a significant role in improving society's behavior is the Mudin. Mudin, known to society, especially to rural society in Java, is a summary of the Arabic terminology of Imamuddin, which means religious leader. Meanwhile, in terms of roles and functions, a Mudin is generally a person who is trusted in terms of helping with marriage affairs, taking care of corpses; bathing, shrouding, mentalqin, leading funeral ceremonies, and sending prayers or tahlil rituals. In a broader sense, Mudin is a village kyai whose existence is attached to the traditional life of Javanese society.

In the context of Javanese society, the village kyai has a unique role, function, and position. In general, a kyai in a rural community has a strategic role because of his function and leadership. However, even more profound, actually in Islam itself, there is a theory about leadership. The concept of leadership in Islam refers to the Prophet Muhammad. The leadership characters in Islam reflected in the Prophet Muhammad are siddiq, amanah, tabligh, and fathanah.

Rasulullah is Siddiq which means right and honest. A leader must put forward a right and honest attitude, right in making decisions based on honesty. Leaders must also be trustworthy, which means being responsible and trustworthy. Being responsible and trustworthy is an important part of the character of Islam and an important part of the character of a leader in Islam. Next is tabligh which means communicative or argumentative. With the nature of tabligh, a leader will convey correctly and precisely (bi al-hikmah) and communication will be easily understood and accepted by common sense. The last of the characteristics of leadership in Islam is fathanah which means ingenuity or wisdom. Fathanah fosters creativity in the leadership style and skills in making valuable breakthroughs.

In a broader context, the characteristics of leadership in Islam taken from the leadership traits of the Prophet Muhammad become the main foundation for anyone who leads in order to bring success to a mission based on the uprightness of the Prophet’s personality. If it is connected to the dynamics of Mudin as a religious leader in the community, it will be a task that must be carried out. A religious leader in society surely must be someone who has more knowledge in science and solid mental endurance.

In relation to the existence of Mudin and the leadership of the kyai in general, according to Tholhah Hasan, it can be mapped in four dimensions (Arifin, 2010): First, a kyai as a community leader because of his ability to influence the community. In this dimension, a kyai appears as a leader of religious community organizations or political organizations. As a community leader,
the kyai becomes the main consideration for the community to determine a common attitude in society. A kyai has a significant role in making decisions for problems faced by the community.

Second, a kyai is a scientific leader or intellectual leader because of his capacity as a religious teacher; a kyai gives fatwas or legal references. Kyai is not an academic title, but the kyai title is a gift given by the community to a figure because the depth of knowledge, primarily Islamic religious sciences, is above average. With his knowledge, a kyai devotes himself to his society. With his knowledge, a kyai becomes a place where the community references religious views or attitudes towards a problem that is being faced.

The third dimension is a kyai as a spiritual leader that is reflected in the kyai’s activities as the leader of ritual worship activities. In Javanese-Islamic culture, it is commonly known that rituals or worship practices involve many members of the society. Rituals of worship that involve many people are tahlilan, yasinan, syukuran, funerals, weddings, etc. In these activities, Mudin plays the role of a leader. The fourth dimension is a kyai as an administrative leader who acts as the person in charge of educational institutions, Islamic boarding schools, and other community bodies.

The above description of the kyai, their fundamental role, and their contribution in developing people's lives is also the embodiment of the Qur'anic verse, which discusses the importance of deepening religious knowledge (tafaqquh fi ad-din), which in this case is equated with jihad. It is, as explained in the 122nd verse of the surah at-Taubah. The verse emphasizes on deepening knowledge (tafaqquh) first for some groups while others go jihad. This verse does not say that: when they return, they should do tafaqquh. It explains "to warn their people when they return to them so that they are careful". The warning is the result of tafaqquh. They do not get that tafaqquh when they are in the field of jihad because some people who are involved in jihad must be so busy devising strategies, warding off attacks, and defending themselves so that it becomes impossible for them to deepen their knowledge.

Shihab states a narration that when the Prophet Muhammad SAW arrived back in Medina, he sent an army consisting of several people to several areas. There were many Muslims who were willing to be part of the small army. Hence, if their wish was granted, only a few remained in Medina with the Prophet Muhammad SAW. This verse gives guidance for Muslims to divide the tasks by affirming that it is not appropriate for the Muslims who have been advised to get involved in the battlefield to all go to the battlefield so that no one is left to carry out other tasks (Shihab, 2002).
Conclusion

The social problem at the Melekan Manten event carried out by the residents of Delik and Kedungmaling Hamlets, Mojokerto Regency are playing cards or dominoes and drinking alcoholic beverages until they are drunk. The factors behind the emergence of these social problems are in accordance with Ivan P. Pavlov's Classical Conditioning Theory, B.F. Skinner, Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory and Jean Piaget's Cognitive Theory, and Carl R. Rogers and Abraham Maslow's Transpersonal-Humanistic Psychology Theory. In addition, it is also in accordance with the theory of fitrah within the framework of personality according to Islamic Psychology.

As for the role of Mudin in reducing social problem behavior by implementing da'wah management through a cultural approach, namely Khataman al-Qur'an at the Melekan Manten event in Delik and Kedungmaling hamlets, Mojokerto Regency is in accordance with the dimensions of the kyai's role as a community leader and spiritual leaders. It fits Tholhah Hasan (Arifin, 2010)’s mapping. In this case, art is needed to improve the younger generation’s spirituality (Rohmad, 2020).

Based on the conclusions above, suggestions that can be given as recommendations are the need for Mudin to strengthen its role in reducing the social problem by using a cultural society approach and complementing it with other approaches such as a political approach. In this context, Mudin can expand his role into the political system mapped by Almond et al., (1999) into two types, namely autonomous (autonomous participation) and mobilized (mobilized participation), which are implemented conventionally such as political discussions, forming and joining in groups interests, and individual communication with political officials.

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