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I'jāz in the Qur'ān through the Use of the Word *Bayt* to Designate the Ka'aba Before its Rebuilt by Quraysh: Lessons for the Revivification of the *Awqāf* Knowledge

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Abstract

The aim of the research is to highlight the inimitability of the Qur'ān through the use of the word Bayt, over a long period, to designate what has become known as Ka'aba. Initially, the building had a rectangular shape, with a semi-circular shape on the north side, since Ibrāhīm had rebuilt it with the help of his son Ismā'īl. The cubic shape dates back to five years before the advent of Islam when Quraysh had rebuilt it after it was partly destroyed by a torrential rain. Hence the name Ka'aba which means cube in Arabic. This explains why the use of the word bayt in the Qur'ān, under different forms, is more than five times greater than that of Ka'aba. This i'jāz of the Qur'ān in the judicious choice of words that accord with proven historical facts is paramount in the Revivification of the Awqāf Knowledge. The word Bayt refers to the House of Allah as a Ḥabs, that is, something that remains under the Mulk (Sovereignty) of Allah. This is the case by extension for any place of worship as al-Bukhārī mentions through one of his titles in his Collection of Authentic Aḥādīth. In this regard, the word Bayt is deeper than that of Ka'aba, because it contains strata of meaning that are not found through the word Ka'aba, and allows, consequently, to link things that the word Ka'aba does not allow, by immersing us in the deep history of humanity in its innate state which pushes to sincerity of worship for Allah. Thus, in terms of the organization of life, in the beginning was the Rizq of Allah, which generated the building of the Bayt as a Ḥabs, then came the Ma'ash to provide for those who visit it to worship Allah, and the 'Umrān following the grouping of people to dwell around the House of Allah.

Keywords: I'jāz; Bayt; Ka'aba; Waqf; Rizq; Ma'ash; 'Umrān

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Introduction

The word *Bayt* is mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān to designate what is known today as the Ka'aba, by the names of *al-Bayt*, *Baytī*, *al-Bayt al-Haram*, *al-Bayt al-Muḥaram*, *al-Bayt al-'Atīq*, and by symmetry *al-Bayt al-Ma'mūr*, fifteen times. The word Ka'aba is mentioned twice. What matters fundamentally is not the words and numbers themselves, but the underlying meanings. Indeed, if the meanings are left in their original state, they will choose the words and numbers that suit them. Hence the importance of reading by meaning beyond reading by word and number. In this respect, the move away from generative artificial intelligence based on deep learning algorithms capable of performing various tasks related to natural language processing is welcome, although these models are attracting increasing interest. Trends, this is prevailing tendencies or inclinations, spoil what is most authentic in knowledge and detract from the deeper research. There is a significant difference between speaking with words, through algorithms based on statistical computations [1][2][3], and knowing by meanings which allows connections to be made under stratified configurations [4].

In this spirit, the present research is to lay the first *labinah* (a unit of building, a brick) to explain the *ḥabs*, as a common living heritage [5], starting from its essence, starting with the following question: What can we learn from the use of the word *Bayt* in the Qur'ān to designate the Ka'aba in terms of theorizing long-term *ḥabs* starting from Ādam? In this regard, it aims to go beyond existing theories which consider the *waqf* as a gift contract, a voluntary giving of property for public use, an institution of the social and solidarity economy, a socio-economic institution, a non-profit organization, a third sector organization, an instrument of Islamic social finance, a component of Islamic non-banking financial institutions. Despite their interest, these theories confine *waqf* to modern academic disciplines and niches as very specialized areas [6]. Common sense dictates that the later should be affected by the earlier, not the opposite [7].

After clarifying the research method, the inquiry will present the meanings of the root *b,y,t* in pre-Islamic Arabia, the meanings of the Word *Bayt* in Arabic language, the different names of the Ka'aba mentioned in the Qur'ān, and the primordial interest of the word *Bayt* encompasses deeper meanings than that of Ka'aba, before concluding to mention the main results and recommendations.

Method

The research data was obtained through a qualitative process of reading over a long period, through a reading by meaning on a long period, which was sourced from a wide range of different data resources. The word data designates what serves as a basis for reasoning, examination, or research.

Primary sources are the Qur'ān and Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī [8] to collect data on the word *Bayt* to designate the Ka'aba. Secondary sources concerns the books of Al-Jurjānī [9] *Dalā'il al-I'jāz* (The Evidences of the Inimitability of the Holy Qur'ān), the book of al-Azraqī [10] *Akḥbār Makkah*, the paper of Belabes [11] 'The forgotten history of the waqf: The Ka'aba', as well as *Al-Mu'jam al-Tarikhī li-al-Lughā al-'Arabiyyah* (Historical Dictionary of the Arabic Language) published by the Arabic Language Academy in Sharjah [12].

The research begins with a descriptive reading of the data to collect information that corresponds exactly to the research problem. Then, it proceeds to the analysis of the materials used through a qualitative approach that explores the underlying meanings of the words *Bayt* and Ka'aba, considering that in the texts of the Qur'ān and the Sunnah the meaning is master and the word servant.

The results of this study should provide a thorough grounding of the scientific presuppositions underlying the words *Bayt* and Ka'aba starting from the following question: How do we know what we think we know? We construct the world, while we think we perceive it. What we call 'reality' is an interpretation, constructed by and through the words we use.

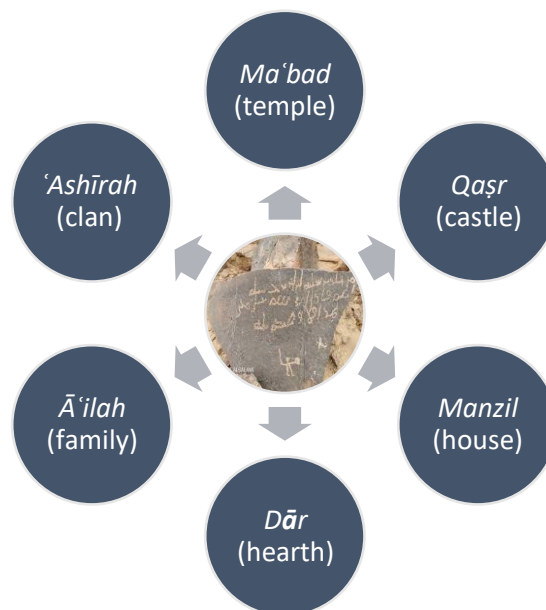
This research will contribute to the fields of Qur'anic studies relating to the *ta'ṣīl* (foundations) of *awqāf* on extensive scientific evidence, the deep interpretation of the words *Bayt* and Ka'aba, as well as their underlying meanings, and may constitute a reference for future researchers interested in the revivification of the *awqāf* knowledge, over a long period, beyond the beaten path based on the financialisation of daily life [13], which is based on the belief that there is no life without economy and no economy without finance, ignoring Allah's *Rizq*, that is, the provisions that Allah provides to all creation.

Result and Discussion

Meanings of the root b,y,t in pre-Islamic Arabia

Epigraphic research, which focuses on the study of ancient inscriptions, engraved or sometimes painted on durable supports, reveals the *Jadhr* (root) (ب) (ي) (ت), appears in a South Arabian inscription dating from the first half of the year 1000 before the Christ Jesus -peace be upon him-, this is before the advent of Islam. In this epigraphy, the root (ب) (ي) (ت) which could mean *Ma'bad* (temple), *Qaṣr* (castle), *Manzil* (house, building serving as a home, dwelling, residence), *Dār* (hearth, home of a family), *Ā'ilah* (family), an *'Ashīrah* (clan), refers to a temple. Furthermore, the same root (ب) (ي) (ت) appears in a North Arabian Safaitic inscription referring to a house in a group of people united by a common characteristics [12].

Figure 1. Meanings of the root b,y,t in pre-Islamic Arabia



Source: Author's Design

Meanings of the Word *Bayt* in Arabic language

After the advent of Islam, the word *Bayt* refers to the *Maskan* (dwelling) and the *Ma'wah* (refuge); *Hay* (quarter) and *Qabīlah* (tribe); *Imra'at al-Rajul* (woman of the man); *Kalam Mawzūn min Shi'r* (minimum metric unit of a poem); *Qabr* (grave); *Sharīf* (noble, honorable); *Farsh* (bedding or set of pieces

that cover the bed) and *Matā'* (personal effects); *'Iyāl al-Rajul* (the children of the man); *al-Ka'aba al-Musharafa* (The Holy Ka'aba, may Allah increase its honor); *al-Bayt al-Haram* (the honorable house); *al-Bayt al-'Atiq* (the ancient house, Ka'aba); *al-Bayt al-Ma'mūr* (frequented house, exact replica of the Ka'aba located directly above it in the seventh heaven); *Bayt al-Maqdis* (the holy house); *Ahl al-Bayt* (people, neighbors, of the House of Allah); *Bayt al-Māl* (house for money, used as an equivalent for the treasury house where public fund is kept); *Bayt al-Qaṣid* (which is aimed at) [12].

Figure 2. Meanings of the word *bayt* in Arabic Language



Source: Author's Design

These meanings give an idea of the richness of the Arabic language which, much more than a simple means of communication, embodies an inestimable spiritual, moral, principal, cultural, historical, and scientific heritage which is not appropriately valued. This is why Allah Has done through the Qur'ān the Arabic language the vehicle for the expression of His meanings of inestimable value. But we still need to be aware of the invaluable importance of this meanings by deepening our knowledge of Arabic. Hence the

importance of exploring expressions based on the word *Bayt* referring to the Ka'aba.

The different names of the Ka'aba mentioned in the Qur'an

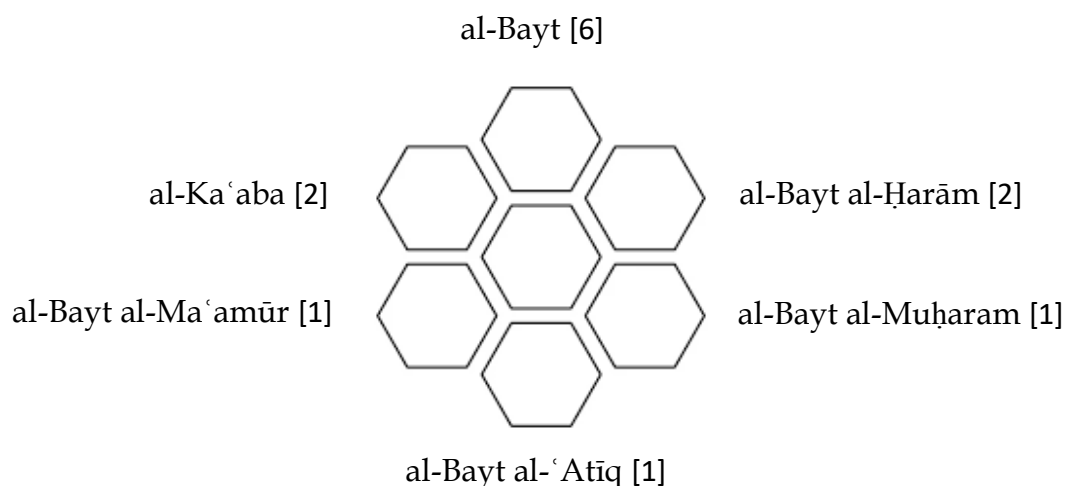
In the Qur'an, six words have been mentioned to refer to the Ka'aba, as compiled in the table 1. The question then is: What is the secret of the existence of several names for the same thing? The multiplicity of names indicates the honor of the one who is named. Due to the greatness, status, and sanctity of the House of Allah, it has been called by many names. If we refer to the order of the surah listed in the Qur'an, we get the following: *al-Bayt* (the House), *al-Bayt al-Ḥarām* (the Sacred House), *al-Ka'aba* (Cube-Shaped Building), *al-Bayt al-Muḥaram* (the Forbidden House), *al-Bayt al-'Atīq* (the Earliest House), *al-Bayt al-Ma'mūr* (the Much-Frequented House).

Table 1. The different names of the Ka'aba mentioned in the Qur'an

Words	Surah and Verse	The concerned
al-Ka'aba	(5: 95; 97)	Human and Jinn in Earth
al-Bayt	(2: 125; 127; 158; 3: 96; 97; 8: 35)	Human and Jinn in Earth
Baytī	(2: 125; 22: 26)	Human and Jinn in Earth
Baytika	(14: 37)	Human and Jinn in Earth
al-Bayt al-Ḥarām	(5: 2; 97)	Human and Jinn in Earth
al-Bayt al-Muḥaram	(14: 37)	Human and Jinn in Earth
al-Bayt al-'Atīq	(22: 29)	Human and Jinn in Earth
al-Bayt al-Ma'mūr	(52: 4)	Angels in Heaven

Source: Author's Compilation

In terms of frequency, the word *Bayt* appears five times, the words Ka'aba, *Baytī*, and *al-Bayt al-Ḥarām* twice, and the words *Baytika*, *al-Bayt al-Muḥaram*, *al-Bayt al-'Atīq*, *al-Bayt al-Ma'mūr* once, as illustrated in Figure 3. This shows the importance of the word *Bayt* given that it implicitly refers to Allah the Eternal and the Majestic.



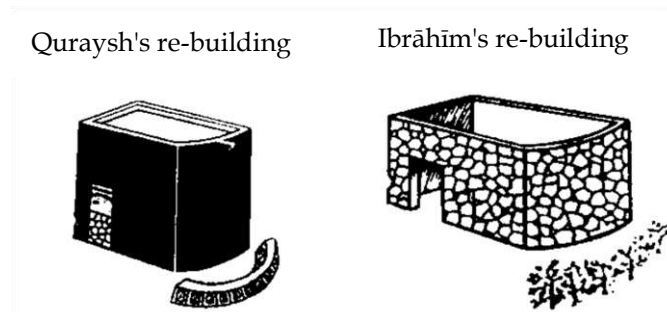
Source: Author's Design

In terms of the subjects concerned, five categories appear: Human, Jinn, Believers, Ibrāhīm –peace be upon him–, his descendants, and Angels. This explains why the House of Allah has existed since Ādam –peace be upon him– and shows that Tawḥīd, which states that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah alone, is intended for the entire humanity.

There is a reason why the word *Bayt* is used more frequently than the word *Ka'aba* in the Qur'ān and Sunnah. In his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, al-Bukhārī [8] relates that the Prophet –peace and blessings of Allah be upon him– said to 'Ā'ishah –may Allah be pleased with her–: "*Do not you see that when your folk built the Ka'aba, they did not build it on all the foundations built by Abraham?*".

The Quraysh rebuilt the *Bayt*, partly destroyed by a torrential rain, five years before the coming of Islam [15], by making the building smaller with regard to its original foundations. This gave it a parallelepiped shape similar to a cube. Hence the name *Ka'aba*, which literally means cube in Arabic, as illustrated in figure 4. The Prophet –peace and blessings of Allah be upon him– wished to rebuild the *Bayt* on the foundations of Ibrāhīm –peace be upon him– by integrating the part that the Quraysh had left outside, and adding two doors attached to the ground.

Figure 4. The re-building of the Bayt by Ibrāhīm then Quraysh



Source: Author's Own

This historical exploration over a long period reveals that the name *Bayt* is the original name dating from the time of Ādam –peace be upon him–, the name Ka‘aba came much later at the time of Quraysh, but the question is more far-reaching than that if we continue to deepen it through reading by meaning.

The word *Bayt* encompasses deeper meanings than that of Ka‘aba

The word *Bayt* encompasses meanings not found, at first sight at least, in the word Ka‘aba:

- The word *Bayt* refers to a place where believers celebrate the worship of Allah as the One and Only God. This fundamental link between the original House of God and Monotheism bears witness to the universal value of the Ka‘aba and its place in the common heritage of humanity [16].
- The word *Bayt* refers to a building that was built by order of Allah. This speaks to something fundamental in the lives of creatures, this is Angels, Jinns, Humans, as well as all creatures on earth and in heaven. Allah says: *«The seven heavens, the earth, and whosoever in them, exalt Him. There is nothing that does not exalt with His praise, but you do not understand their exaltation»* (Qur‘ān 17, 44).
- The word *Bayt* refers to the fact that Ka‘aba is the first place of worship built on earth for the Prophets. This means that the Ka‘aba in particular and the mosques in general are *awqāf* in essence. As Ibn Taymiyah [17] wrote: *"It known that the Ka‘aba is the best waqf that exists on earth"*.

The word *"it known"* explains why the primary sources on the *Ahkām al-Awqāf* (Shari‘ah injunctions regarding *awqāf*) did not explicitly mention the

Ka'aba and the mosques as *awqāf* because this is what is known to scholars who are firmly grounded in knowledge [18] [19] [20]. But the one who reads by the meaning in a serious manner can deduce from their writings what indicates this [21]. Contrary to what is occurring today where the works on the *Aḥkām al-Awqāf* explicitly refer to the Ka'aba and the mosques as *awqāf*, first and foremost the Qubā' mosque and the Prophet's mosque [22] [23] [24].

This means that in human history over a long period dating back to Ādam -peace be upon him-, *waqf* arose before the emergence of private property, and public property. In other words, before the emergence of the market and the nation-state. It should not be forgotten that the word market became a notion of political economy founding a general conception of society in the 18th century under the influence of the writings of Etienne de Condillac and Adam Smith [25]. The theory of the nation-state emerged in the 15th century in Europe and was consecrated by the French Revolution in 1789 [26].

- The word *Bayt* refers to a building that was established by order of Allah for mankind, as the following verse of the Qur'ān (3, 96) indicates: *«Surely the first House [of worship] established for mankind is the one at Bakkah [now known as Makkah as the place where believers rush to fulfill the worship]—a blessed sanctuary and a guide for [all] people»*.

The *Bayt*, as the first house of God on earth, reminds us that the right of collective enjoyment preceded the right of private property, often presented as obvious, this is as something natural. But, as the historian Fabien Locher [27] reminds us, "*private property has absolutely nothing natural*". It is a social construct that arose following the enclosure movement in England in the 13th century [28]. The French Revolution established private property as an inviolable and sacred right, as attested by article 544 of the civil code of 1804 [29].

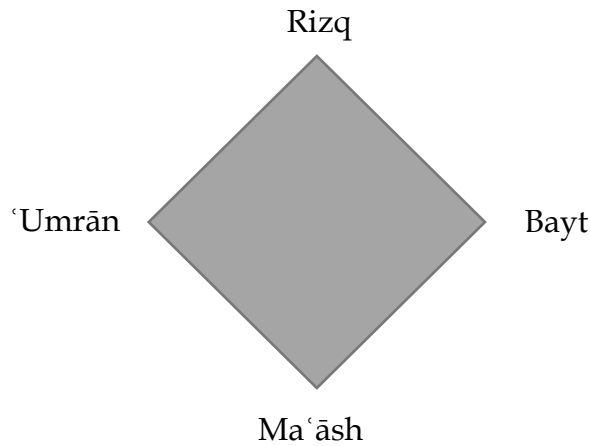
The word "*established*", used in the style of the *majhūl* (unknown), implies that the House of Allah existed before the advent of mankind on earth, first of all, Ādam and Ḥawā' -peace be upon them-. Moreover, the word "*established*" confirms the hypothesis that the *Bayt* was built not by a specific Angel, like Jibrīl -peace be upon him-, but by Angels. This hypothesis deserves to be confronted with more facts, although that would not be an easy task, with regard to the data compiled to date.

- The word *Bayt* refers to the importance for humans to organize their lives around the houses of Allah in order to enjoy the *rizq* and *barakah* in what Allah provides them resources, whether tangible and intangible, material and immaterial, visible and invisible, to fulfill the rights of Allah and the rights of

creatures. Allah said in a *qudsī ḥadīth*: "We have brought down *al-māl* [what it is beneficial] for establishing *ṣalāt* and acquitting *zakāt*" [30].

This is evidenced by the invocation of *Ibrāhīm* –peace be upon him–: *«And when Ibrāhīm supplicated: "O my Lord, make this town a place of security, and provide its people with fruits who believe in God and the Last Day»* (Qur’ān 2, 126), as well as his invocation in favor of his son *Ismā‘īl* –peace be upon him– and his wife reported in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* [13]: "Our Lord! Bless their meat and their water". Thus, in the beginning was the *Rizq*, which generated the building of the *Bayt*, then came the *Ma‘āsh* to provide for those who visit it to worship Allah, and the *‘Umrān* following the human grouping to dwell around the *Bayt*, as illustrated in figure 5.

Figure 5. Organization of life on the quadriptic *Rizq*, *Bayt*, *Ma‘āsh*, *‘Umrān*



Source: Author's Design

In this regard, from the point of view of *ta'sīl al-ma'arifah* (foundation of knowledge), the word *rizq* is more convenient than those of *māl*, *kasb*, *ma'āsh*, *tadbīr al-manzil* (household management), *iqtiṣād* (economy) [31] [32], because it allows to link things that other words do not allow. With the word *Rizq* there is no need to add the 'Islamic' adjective because *Rizq* comes from God, and *«Allah gives abundant or limited Rizq to whoever He wills»* (Qur’ān 13, 26).

Conclusion

At the end of this exciting adventure of research to discover the unknown, it appears that the word *Bayt* is deeper than that of *Ka'aba*, because it contains strata of meaning that are not found through the word *Ka'aba*, and allows, consequently, to link things that the word *Ka'aba* does not allow, by immersing us in the deep history of humanity in its innate state which pushes to worship Allah.

This result is vital, from the point of view of *ta'sīl al-ma'arifah* (foundation of knowledge), because it testifies to one of the mysteries of the eloquence in the Qur'ān insofar as two words contain a common meaning, but one of them contains additional strata of meaning, which had an impact on the way we perceive the words that structure our life. In this regard, the word *Bayt*, which refers to the House of Allah, implicitly contains the meaning of *ḥabs*, since Allah is first and foremost the owner of the heavens and the earth, and the ownership of creatures is inscribed in this order. This becomes the House of God and is a common good that humans only have the right to enjoy. It cannot be the object of private ownership, nor of sale, nor of mortgage, nor of gift, nor of inheritance. This applies to mosques which are *aḥbās* in essence, that is, they remain under the *Mulk* (Sovereignty, Supreme Power) of Allah.

We can therefore understand the limits of contemporary conceptualizations of *awqāf*, which are all based on the idea that there could be no *waqf* without private property. It is nevertheless crucial to contextualize the facts to conduct a research that deserved attention. However, these theories do not grasp the difference between the possession and the sanctification of the right to private property, which stipulates that individual property is the essence that structures the organization of life in society. Hence the importance of the literature which criticizes proprietarianism, that is, the ideology that reduces all questions of life to the right to private property [36]. Compared to classical literature which states that *waqf* can be formed through a *qawl* (talking) or a *fi'l* (deed) that indicates it according to custom [37], this research shows that talking differs in the words it uses in terms of deep additional meanings. Such a result confirms al-Jurjānī's statement that meanings if left in their natural state, they choose the words that suit them. This close connection between the meaning as master and the word as servant explains why in the Qur'ān the frequency of the word *Bayt* is more than five times greater than the word *Ka'aba*, although at first sight the two words appear synonymous. Who thinks he sees well does not know how to see. We must heal the illusion of seeing well.

This is one of the reasons for which Allah said: ﴿Travel through the land and observe﴾ (Qur'ān 29, 20)

As a recommendation for future research, the hypothesis that the House of Allah was built by angels deserves further exploration. Knowing how to put yourself to the test, getting out of your comfort zone, and pushing back your limits –in short, moving towards the unknown–, that is, what makes research so enjoyable. This will be the subject of my next research, despite data scarcity. It should be noted that it is not size of the data that matters, but how you make it speak through reading by meaning.

This shows the limits of generative artificial intelligence which feeds on an ever-increasing volume of data and ever-faster computing power. By its very nature, a speculative bubble cannot last. It is in humanity's interest to focus on reading through meaning whose every nuance in the choice of word reveals an unsuspected depth defies the most sophisticated quantitative algorithms. Allah says: ﴿O you who believe! Do not say [to the Prophet –blessings and peace of Allah be upon him–]: *Rā'ina* [Lend ear to us], but say *Unzurna* [Favour us with your attention]﴾ (Qur'ān 2, 104).

Author Contributions

Abderrazak Said Belabes: Investigation in Makkah, Idea of the subject, Conceptualization, Methodology, Writing – review & editing, Supervision, Project administration. Methodology, Writing – review & editing.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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