

Disrespect World and Family Life World Breakdown During the COVID-19 Pandemic

ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 Pandemic causes not only health crisis but also crisis in household or family. A family is normatively built upon the concept of life world that begins with moral development of individual ethics in the family. However, what happens is the exact opposite. Household or family as a life world is breaking down due to diminishing respect resulting in a disrespect world state. Efforts to break the chain of spread of COVID-19 turn out to give birth to new problems that undermine the moral order of human life. It is just as devastating as the deteriorating body health due to the virus. Injustice occurs as the destruction of a morally good life, resulting in fundamental disturbance in building and maintaining the concept of plural society stemming from moral and ethical collapse of individuals in the family. This review about critical study is not limited to efforts to hurl criticism towards all forms of injustice, more than that critical theory is an attempt to dismantle all forms of pathologies in society that are the root of all forms of injustice. It also encompasses efforts to raise identity awareness which leads to a tendency to emphasize cultural particularity and human identity. Following Axel Honneth's theory, moral actions encompass an understanding that includes three dimensions of morality, namely affective, legal, and social moralities that determine if an individual can be a moral agent. Honneth advocates a formal concept of morally good life as a foundation upon which the concept of plural society is built and maintained.

Keywords: family, social pathology, disrespect, recognition

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought multidimensional crises in global community life, including Indonesia. These include health, economy, social and family crises.

The pandemic has forced the government and stakeholders alike to concoct a regulation that restricts public activities in efforts to prevent and/or break the chain of COVID-19 spread. In turn, this forces people to do almost everything, working, learning, and praying, from home. Home becomes the center of human activities. Encounters and interactions among household members increase. This might seem and sound beautiful and fine. However, at closer examination, elevated regularity of activities at home actually gives rise to a new problem, namely domestic violence.

The Ministry of Women Empowerment and Child Protection [1] has expressed serious concern for the probability of unreported domestic violence cases since the start of the pandemic, the implementation of work from home policies and Large-Scale Social Restrictions. This is attributable to the loss of access for victims of domestic violence to report any perceived violence. Based on the data from Online Information System of Women and Child Protection (*Simfoni PPA*) from February 29 to June 10, 2020, there were 787 cases of violence against women (*KtP*) and 523 cases of domestic violence, recording a considerable decrease from period January 1 – February 28, 20 with 1237 and 769, respectively. Meanwhile, The National Commission for Eradication of Violence against Women (*Komnas Perempuan*)

records 299,911 cases of violence against women throughout 2020. Violence against children during the pandemic has increased by around 15%. Violence can either be physical or verbal and at times it occurs without parents realizing it. Parenting readiness is considered to be one of the causes. The Indonesian Child Protection Commission (*KPAI*) in 2020 released data that during the COVID-19 pandemic children experienced violence more frequently and the prominent perpetrators were mothers, brothers/sisters, fathers and other family members. The forms of violence received by children include pinching (23%), hitting (10%), ear pulling (9%) and so on. 60% of perpetrators are mothers, followed by brothers/sisters with 36%, fathers with 27.4%, other siblings with 9.1%, grandparents with 3.1%, and domestic servants with 0.5%. This data on domestic violence indicates a moral degradation within households and/or families which are supposed to be the primary moral institution in people's lives.

The household or family as a social institution accommodates the subjective order of acceptance and protection of individuals, whether regarding personal identity, socio-cultural position, and even the recovery of "damage" in social relations. It should be the center of activities to awaken, restore, and pave the way for interpersonal (intersubjective) act of communication, which ultimately shape social reality. Unfortunately, reality can be harsh and ugly. The household or family as a life world is breaking due to loss of respect which leads to the formation of a disrespect world state. This condition makes family members no longer respect each other, even outsiders involved in family activities do too. The crumbling life world due to disrespect turns the house into a scary hell for the victims. Efforts to break the chain of COVID-19 spread turn out to give birth to new problems that undermine the moral order of human life. It is just as devastating as the deteriorating body health due to the virus. Injustice occurs as the destruction of a morally good life, resulting in fundamental disturbance in building and maintaining the concept of plural society stemming from moral and ethical collapse of individuals in the family.

Communications within a family should be established properly by every family member, both parents and children. Good family communication between parents and children is characterized by frequent communication activities occurring between family members, openness in interacting with one another, constructive discussions about various things, mutual respect for each other's opinions, and parents refraining from trying to impose their will on the children [2]

All things considered, this paper aims to reveal how the disrespect world and the destruction of the life world in the household or family during the COVID-19 pandemic materialize. Based on Honneth's theory, it seeks to present formal moral arguments that are expected to encourage genuine awareness as a condition for the liberation of modern society from social pathologies caused by unfair life practices in a pluralistic modern society. Domestic violence as a form of social pathology goes beyond unfair economic and political practices, because it signifies an "unequal distribution of needs" (maldistribution) and treatment that discredits weak parties in the socio-cultural hierarchy (misrecognition).

REVIEW METHOD

This paper was descriptive qualitative in nature illustrating a study in the relevant category. In particular, the study involves interdisciplinary, cross-disciplinary, and counter-disciplinary fields. The approach in this study was intended as such to understand the phenomenon of the research subject, holistically and comprehensively regarding behavior, perception, motivation, action, and others expressed in words and language, in a scientific, dedicated context and by leveraging various scientific methods. The paradigmatic space in this study was oriented to the understanding of meaning reformed in an effort to understand power relations in the interaction of various parties [3]. As part of critical paradigm, this paper, first, attempted to understand systems that are considered correct, power structure, and prevailing conviction or ideology in the society, with certain views where interests were presented by the power structures. Second, it attempted to bring to light oppressive social conditions and chain of power to promote emancipation or freer and more adequate society. Third, it attempted to raise awareness to combine theories and actions [4]. Critical theory is not narrowly defined as an effort to criticize all forms of injustice, more than that, it represents an effort to uncover all kinds of social pathology which are the root of all injustice as well as to raise identity awareness that promote the propensity to place emphasis on cultural particularity and human identity [5].

The quality criteria of this article included historical situatedness, erosion of ignorance and misapprehension, action stimulus. Data and information were obtained through written sources, whether

in the form of books, journals, archives, mass media articles, and relevant supporting documentation. This study measured goodness/quality criteria by proposing historical situatedness and observing historicity, social, culture, economy, and politics from texts [6].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Families come in various shapes and sizes with equally varied interaction styles and communication patterns. Consequently, every family has its own challenges in creating good communication and relationships within the family. One example is a family with working parents. Families with working parents face different challenges or communication barriers from other families [7].

Family is a group of people bound by marriage, blood, and commitment that shares life and future expectations together for a long period of time [8]. Life in the family is formed through the interaction between its members. With communication, each member can understand their roles, rules and expectations, how they form and manage relationships with one another, and how they interact. Here the family is also referred to as the first communication class.

Good and effective family communication is characterized by, according to Wood, 1) Equality and justice for each family member; each member gets equal rights and treatment and does not discriminate; 2) Perceived intimacy and closeness between family members; 3) Open communication between parents and children, as well as mutual respect; and 4) Willingness of each member to put aside small problems in order to maintain good relations [9].

Axel Honneth further improves structural changes in public space communication by emphasizing the principle of mutual recognition as a condition for realizing togetherness in a pluralistic modern society. Along with feminist figure Nancy Fraser, in 2003, Honneth wrote the book *Recognition or Redistribution?* which is essentially a critique of social practice in various cultural factors in society. Honneth through his work Reification criticizes Western Marxism by using the priority of recognition and intersubjective relations. According to Honneth, all forms of reification stem from social pathologies caused by the breakdown of intersubjective relations, not the capitalist economic structure per se as proposed by Marx and Lukacs. This is a new focus in Honneth's research, concerning with paradoxes in modernism [10].

Honneth's criticism, as a "derivative" philosophy from Marx's thoughts in the Frankfurt School, uses Ralph Ellison's book, *The Invisible Man*, as an inspiration to depict dichotomous economic and political praxis between the superior and the inferior, that there is a prevalent propensity in that dichotomous culture: what is superior tends overlook what is inferior. In a pluralistic society, a superior culture tends to be dominant, without much awareness about those under its grip just like the discriminative practice in the apartheid politics, where white people reign over black people while failing to see the specificities and needs of black people.

"With the aggressive, angry, abrupt statements of the first-person narrator, the 'Prologue' creates a scenario describing an especially subtle form of racist humiliation against which the black protagonist struggles through the entire novel: a form of being made invisible, of being made to disappear, that evidently involves not a physical non-presence, but rather non-existence in a social sense" [11].

According to Honneth, invisibility is a sign of humiliation and elimination that make what is visible invisible. Therefore, Critical theory must encourage the process of understanding (Erkennen) as an effort to realize (Anerkennen) emancipatory interests, namely returning to freedom which essentially is the experience of existence as a person [12].

Social relations in society occur because individuals have lost respect and injustice. As a solution to various forms of injustice (disrespect) due to this social pathology. Honneth provides relevant solutions by systematizing critical theory based on recognition [13].

Conceptually, morality is closely related with recognition. Etymologically, recognition is derived from the Latin *cognōscere* which means 'to know', and the prefix *re-* which indicates repetition (again); thus, recognition means finding something again or knowing something or someone that opens new possibilities to see someone we meet in daily life in a new light, with "new eyes." In other words,

perception of the proper characteristics, nature or aspects that we might not be aware of or see during the initial encounter. The formal concept of morality also relates to how the relationship between power, recognition, and respect is signified by an enlargement of “social pathology”, which is a shift or distortion in the development of public relations due to the dominance over instrumental ratio. The domination has an effect on the critical function deficit of rationality filled with technology advances in societal development. Honneth addresses the issue by restoring the idea of rationality by developing an intersubjectivity paradigm as a political response to subjective instrumentalization of dimensions of modernity with ‘recognition’ as the keyword [14]. The normative criteria of critical theory are not only based on cognitive rationality, as stated by Habermas, but also should pay attention to and allocate priority to the normativity of recognition related to the recognition of the subject's inner disposition. Habermas' communicative action limits humans to a matter of rationality, whereas according to Honneth, humans harbor a primary and deepest dimension, namely recognition. Habermas focuses on language problems in order to overcome the instrumental ratio by developing the capacity of his communicative ratio, while Honneth directs his attention to the pre-cognitive dimensions and aspects of human affection as important elements. Honneth again raises recognition as an important aspect of spirit of modernity. To Habermas, intersubjectivity is related to linguistical structures in a quasi-transcendental path. There, pragmatic dimensions of speech acts among interlocutors, which are necessary as a norm and implicit in every intersubjective ratio exchange, is made explicit through argumentation.

Morality is associated with an understanding in recognition in three dimensions, namely affective, legal, and social dimensions. Recognition in the affective dimension relates to intersubjective relationships based on emotions that determine the phrase “self-confidence”. Recognition in the legal dimension relates to the principle of respect for oneself as a starting point that allows respect for others. Furthermore, recognition in the dimension of solidarity complements the other two dimensions of understanding. Love is seen as a medium of recognition; law is a form that allows for self-realization, and solidarity carries the potential for the social moral development of society.

Domestic violence occurs in family because individuals have lost sense of respect and fairness. It emerges as unideal solution to many forms of disrespect due to social pathologies. Social pathologies observed in the household or family are in fact the product of misconception of morality with recognition. Etymologically, recognition is derived from the Latin *cognōscere* which means ‘to know’, and the prefix *re-* which indicates repetition (again); thus, recognition means finding something again or knowing something or someone that opens new possibilities to see someone we meet in daily life in a new light, with “new eyes.” In other words, perception of the proper characteristics, nature or aspects that we might not be aware of or see during the initial encounter. The formal concept of morality also relates to how the relationship between power, recognition, and respect is signified by an enlargement of “social pathology”, which is a shift or distortion in the development of public relations due to the dominance over instrumental ratio. Social pathology defined as, Firstly, Honneth claims, plausibly, that a social pathology implies a notion of normality. Secondly, the idea of social pathology is “ordered by ethical criteria,” understood (presumably following Habermas) as differentiated from moral criteria, which also means that this idea is distinguished from mainstream liberal political philosophy, focusing as it does on justice and legitimacy. Thirdly, Honneth suggests that social pathologies are characterized by a dynamic process of development, which is described in terms of an “incessant circle” and as having its own logic. Finally, Honneth argues that any defensible thesis about social pathology requires a perspective “from which the social events could be determined as a deviation from an ideal [15]

The Directorate General of Laws and Regulations of the Ministry of Law and Human Rights in their official page ditjenpp.kemenkumham.go.id states that domestic violence as a social pathology in Indonesia over a long period of time tends to be latent, hindering exposure to the surface. As a result, this is more a trivial incident that is less interesting than a social fact that should receive special attention and serious handling by the community and government. Moreover, domestic violence in Indonesia is an ongoing event with the number of cases and their intensity tending to increase day by day. Indonesia's print and electronic mass media have never lacked the latest news and information on domestic violence, including in celebrity households [16].

The Ministry of Women Empowerment of the Republic of Indonesia, based on the results of studies, analysis and field observations, as well as the results of discussions with stakeholders in several regions from the government, universities and community organizations involved in the program to eliminate domestic violence, concludes that there are at least 5 (five) influential factors, namely: 1) Cultural factors and community customs. Patriarchal culture always places women under the power and control of men. Father or brother before marriage, husband after marriage. 2) Lack of knowledge, understanding and awareness on gender equality and justice. Gender equality is interpreted as synonymous with emancipation in a narrow/radical sense, so that in public perception, gender is considered as western culture which will negatively impact local culture and religious values. 3) Poor implementation of law enforcement in Indonesia. This poorness is not only evident in law enforcement officers but also in the attitudes and culture of less law-abiding people. 4) Inappropriate interpretation/understanding of religious teachings. Religion is often understood through a textual approach, and not contextually according to changing times or partially. By nature, men and women are indeed different but this should not lead to discriminatory attitudes. Men and women are equal before God and the same before humans as His creatures [17].

In addition, at the micro level (families and community groups), a number of factors are identified as being the driving force (triggers and boosters) behind the increase in violence against women, including in the context of domestic violence. These factors include: 1) Poverty, ignorance, unemployment and underdevelopment. 2) The scarcity of role models in family, community, nation and state life. 3) Many shows or programs in the mass media (especially television) featuring news or videos (films and soap operas) about acts of violence. 4) The increasingly bolder attitude and appearance of women. Walking at night in vulnerable places, and wearing short clothes, both in public places and the mass media. 5) Published reports in the mass media on acts of violence are too vulgar (liberal) which can evoke public perception that violence against women is commonplace.

Evidence on domestic violence as a social pathology urges critical authorities to clamp down on all forms of societal pathology which is the root of all injustice and to raise identity awareness that might cultivate the propensity of putting emphasis on cultural particularity and human identity. These efforts represent the desire to cure burgeoning social pathologies amidst multidimensional crises caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since the pandemic forces people stay at home, *parental burn out* is more likely to happen. Parental burn out is a state of physical and mental exhaustion perceived by parents. It is commonly characterized by prolonged fatigue even when resting, bad temper and irritability, lingering sadness, anxiety, and lastly, physical discomforts such as headache, loss of appetite as well as sleep disturbances.

Parental burn out is one example of pandemic realities that might lead to an affective condition causing behavior instability. It will lead to uncontrollable anger that progresses to violence. Therefore, recognition of the affective dimension or love should be a medium for remedying domestic violence. Love is the main medium for recognition perceived by subjects in society as well as the basis for building self-confidence. Hegel reveals that love is the first stage of reciprocal recognition, because through which there is mutual recognition between subjects involved in efforts to meet each other's needs. In this reciprocal experience, both subjects are united by their needs in interdependence. However, Hegel also says that this love is not limited to familial love. On the contrary, it can be expanded to encompass other people beyond the family. In this type, recognition is not only genetic in nature at first, but also logic, insofar as it relates to the larger institution as the primary condition of subjective agency. It contributes to minimal affirmation and practical recognition needed to induce the confidence of the subjective agency at acceptable physical and psychological levels for their involvement in social life.

Honneth in *The Struggle for Recognition* emphasizes the uncertain problem aspect which stems from a subject's surroundings. We can see that in his effort to think up normative structure of 'love' relation, Honneth is not a trans-historic think and does not rely solely on mental anthropological pictures [18]. However, he is specific enough in demonstrating affectivity types occurring among modern society; one of which is evident in strong emotional relationships between a limited number of people. In any historic event, love experience occupies the deepest level of various forms of life that we call the socio-moral order.

The COVID-19 pandemic causes a shift in love historicity in the modern concept. This criticism is a response to the institutionalization process caused by the separation of social, love relations which are then distinguished by affection and attention principles. According to him, this relation ontologically is manifested in the relationship between a mother and her child, which becomes the basis for the capacity to be oneself or to be an autonomous subject. The specific structure of a relation is built by a symbiotic relationship of mutualism and independence. Through symbiotic relationship, occurring is not only the realization of independence, but also the realization of independence in dependencies, and is equally followed by a constant dependence, even though the relationship of independence has existed since the beginning. The capacity to realize oneself is related to a view on a subject that is capable of acting autonomously based on rational insights.

In the affective (love) order, Honneth criticizes Habermas who believes that relations are formed when the subject gradually has full capacity to act through access and control over himself, through internalizing the patterns of ethical action that form the primordial structure of subjective autonomy. To Honneth the constant strain between ego limit and ego-severance: new experience through ego-severance because self-boundaries and boundaries of others are recognized. However, in order for these boundaries to get a proper place, it necessitates total attention towards other people to be an inseparable aspect. Here, the dependence and independence of subjectivity is a necessary since a strain between the two is a constitutive element of human development, especially for the subject's confidence. Therefore, the affective dimension of love emphasizes recognition of one's identity [19].

The affectivity of love emphasizing on the recognition of one's identity will lead to the aspects of harmonious household or family, namely, first, providing sense of physical and mental security. With a sense of security perceived by the husband and wife, shocks, temptations and dangers that occur in the family will be handled properly. Second, a family must feel they belong to each other so that a strong inner bond can be created. With a sense of belonging to each other, the family will feel lost and sad if one of the family members faces hardships or is not around. Third, a family is formed by the combination of a father and a mother originating from two different families. Therefore, differences are common and can occur anytime and in anything. These differences will become a new life experience that ultimately forms a happy family. Fourth, as living beings, family members need love and affection from the people around them. Therefore, whoever he is definitely needs love in the form of praise, attention and other treatments as trivial as a smile. Fifth, placing trust on your husband, wife or children will certainly help a family in becoming a harmonious household. Moreover, trusting children with all their capabilities will help them realize their positive true selves, preventing them from feeling like an outsider and pressured by their own family. In addition, mutual trust will ease the burden in living married life because family members think positively of each other. However, every trust must be interpreted with full responsibility and not be used to take advantage of others.

The above principles lead to the recognition of the legal dimension. Honneth states that the recognition of the legal dimension emphasizes the principle of universal equality for all individuals, so that one subject recognizes other subjects as legal subjects in which their rights and obligations are distributed fairly in the community. Recognition of each other is born from legal obedience, legal subjects recognize each other as persons who have the autonomy to decide rationally based on mutually accepted moral norms. Recognition of the legal dimension concerns the recognition of individual rights in three categories: first, civil rights to private life, ownership and freedom without illegal state intervention. Second, political rights that guarantee the opportunity to participate in the democratic process; third, social rights that guarantee a fair political-economic distribution for all individuals.

The three rights above can simply be understood as follows; the first point is the right of a negative nature that protects the subject. The second is a positive right that protects and provides opportunities to be involved in making public decisions. The latter can also be understood as a positive right that allows the subject to receive impartiality in the distribution of life in the family. This recognition of individual rights contains the principle of universal equality which is the most important element in modernity.

Honneth finds that the majority of the struggles for recognition in modern society are closely related to the claims that base themselves on this principle. As Hegel said, in the state man is recognized and treated as a free rational being, a moral person, and an individual; on the other hand, one makes oneself worthy

of recognition by overcoming natural conditions based on self-awareness and accepting it as universal. That's what we call law. Moreover, according to Honneth, in modern society freedom becomes the principle of predication. This becomes clear when examining Hegel, where when he mentions freedom, he always means it is a legal form of recognition related to modern constitutions regarding legal relations. It is claimed to be something inherent and explicable for everyone as a free and equal subject. Freedom and equality are institutionalized in justice. That is, justice that is derived or born from legal order is the result of organizing individual freedom in a 'moral social order' [20].

The next question is, can the normative expectations of socialized individual feelings be justified in direct relationships with families, when they themselves cannot fulfill them? Of course, we can strive for this through the so-called community of co-legislators, which are united through the incorporation of the normative medium of practical ratios that can be universalized. This means that each subject is recognized as a subject capable of making decisions in his autonomy as an individual based on moral questions. Everything is determined by some kind of "practical self-relation" based on recognition. The subject who has the ability to make moral decisions may see himself in the light of a person who has the capacity to make his own decisions. Hence, he finds himself a full subject, in the sense that he is entrusted with all capacities to act autonomously and in a way of responsibility. This is what Honneth calls self-respect in a community of co-legislators. An individual's legal claim is understood as an advanced stage in the effort to spread the moral idea that all members of society, in this case the family, must be able to agree on the basis of a legal order that is built on rational insights, if they are also expected to obey. So, in someone who is legally recognized, they are respected not only as someone who has an abstract capacity that will direct him to face moral norms, but also as a concrete picture that a person has an absolute right to an adequate standard of social living [21].

After affective and legal recognition, Honneth mentions solidarity recognition as a place where the subject earns a place that encourages the formation of self-confidence as well as develops social trust in society, in this case is the family. The form of recognition in the domain of solidarity requires social medium in the family to be able to show differences in characteristics between subjects universally and specifically through intersubjective relationships. It can only be found in the symbolic building that is built or embedded in the family culture itself. The cultural self-understanding of family members provides the criteria for each person's social-belief orientation, and thus they will succeed in intersubjective relationships according to the degree to which they are helped to realize culturally defined values. Thus, the form of recognition relationship is related to the presuppositions that exist in the existing social context. For family members, both parents and children, this is through orientation driven by shared conceptions concerning their goals as a form of community value. However, if the social trust is limited by the dominant conception of ethical goals in the family, the form is a historical variable that is nothing more than a mere legal recognition that requires more concrete steps in the dimension of solidarity [22].

According to Honneth, Hegel never uses the word solidarity, but he uses a concept that implicitly contains a dimension of solidarity in citizen society, namely *Sittlichkeit*. The conception adopted by Honneth presupposes that the social structure as a normative order that realizes the freedom of each individual is already contained in it. Therefore, the notion that one's culture is crucial in the development of self-confidence can mean that individuals find in their community values that are shared by family members, as ethical standards for their individual efforts to realize themselves. In *Sittlichkeit*'s context, the solidarity that is fostered is one that transcends social status – a solidarity that is not given, but which needs to be earned in order to be recognized as an important element of everyone's self-realization. Honneth solidarity is not a facticity, in Heidegger's parlance. Coexistence in the community is only a precondition, but solidarity must be nurtured. If expressed in Heidegger's sayings on essence and existence, our humanity does not determine solidarity, but it is the struggle to construct solidarity that makes us more human [23].

CONCLUSION

The household and family as a life world amidst the COVID-19 pandemic is breaking down due to diminishing respect, resulting in a state of disrespect world. This condition makes family members no longer respect each other, even outsiders involved in family activities do too. The crumbling life world due to disrespect turns the house into a scary hell for the victims. Efforts to break the chain of COVID-19

spread turn out to give birth to new problems that undermine the moral order of human life. It is just as devastating as the deteriorating body health due to the virus. Injustice occurs as the destruction of a morally good life, resulting in fundamental disturbance in building and maintaining the concept of plural society stemming from moral and ethical collapse of individuals in the family.

The pandemic gives rise to a new pathology in the terminology of Honneth's thoughts, explaining and describing that the aspect of recognition becomes a central theme in overcoming various forms of injustice that befall the subject in his social order. Solutions are not born out of contradictions and rational debates, but through an intersubjective relationship pattern that acknowledges each other's existence. Public order cannot be built solely upon human rational consensus, but also simultaneously should fall into the affective aspect. Recognition determines acceptance and protection of individuals, whether regarding personal identity, socio-cultural position, and even the recovery of "damage" in social relations. Recognition also becomes an act of awakening, restoring, and paving the way for the act of interpersonal communication, which ultimately shapes social reality.

In order to act morally, an understanding that includes the three dimensions of morality described above, namely the affective, legal, and social dimensions, determines whether a person can act as a moral agent. Injustice occurs as a deliberate destruction of the dimensions of the understanding above. Honneth champions the formal concept of a morally good life as the basis for building and maintaining the concept of a plural society. This concept will eventually be built through the concept of the life world which begins with the moral development of individual ethics in the family.

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