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The Structure of Scientific Revolutions

By Thomas Kuhn

Book summary & main ideas

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Summary:

The Structure of Scientific Revolutions by Thomas Kuhn is a landmark work in the history and philosophy of science. It was first published in 1962 and has since become one of the most influential books in the field. The book is divided into three parts. In the first part, Kuhn examines the history of science and argues that scientific progress is not a linear process, but rather a series of revolutions in which one paradigm is replaced by another. He argues that these revolutions are not caused by the accumulation of facts, but rather by a shift in the way scientists view the world. In the second part, Kuhn examines the structure of scientific revolutions and argues that they are

characterized by a period of "normal science" in which scientists work within the accepted paradigm, followed by a period of "crisis" in which anomalies accumulate and the existing paradigm is challenged. Finally, in the third part, Kuhn examines the role of the scientist in the process of scientific revolutions and argues that scientists must be willing to challenge the existing paradigm in order to make progress. The Structure of Scientific Revolutions is an important work in the history and philosophy of science and has had a profound influence on the way scientists view the world.

Main ideas:

#1. Paradigms: Kuhn argues that scientific progress is not a linear process, but rather a series of paradigm shifts. A paradigm is a set of accepted beliefs and practices that define a scientific discipline.

Kuhn argues that scientific progress is not a linear process, but rather a series of paradigm shifts. A paradigm is a set of accepted beliefs and practices that define a scientific discipline. It is a framework of assumptions, concepts, values, and practices that constitute a way of viewing reality for the community of practitioners. A paradigm provides scientists with a set of tools and methods for conducting research and interpreting results. When a paradigm is accepted, it becomes the basis for further research and experimentation. However, when a paradigm is challenged, it can lead to a revolution in the field, as new ideas and approaches are adopted.

Kuhn argues that scientific progress is not a continuous process of accumulation, but rather a series of paradigm shifts. When a paradigm is challenged, it can lead to a crisis in the field, as scientists struggle to reconcile the old and new ideas. This crisis

can eventually lead to a revolution, as a new paradigm is accepted and replaces the old one. This process of paradigm shifts is what Kuhn calls "scientific revolutions". He argues that these revolutions are essential for scientific progress, as they allow for the development of new ideas and approaches.

#2. Normal Science: Kuhn argues that most scientific progress is made within the framework of a given paradigm, which he calls â€œnormal science.â€• This involves the application of existing theories and methods to solve problems within the paradigm.

Normal science is the day-to-day work of scientists, which involves the application of existing theories and methods to solve problems within the paradigm. This type of

work is often seen as mundane and routine, but it is essential for the advancement of science. Normal science is the process of testing and refining existing theories, as well as discovering new facts and phenomena. It is the process of building on the knowledge of the past and pushing the boundaries of what is known. Normal science is the foundation of scientific progress, and it is the basis for the development of new theories and paradigms.

Normal science is not a revolutionary process, but it is an important part of the scientific process. It is the process of testing and refining existing theories, as well as discovering new facts and phenomena. It is the process of building on the knowledge of the past and pushing the boundaries of what is known. Normal science is the foundation of scientific progress, and it is the basis for the

development of new theories and paradigms.

Normal science is the process of solving puzzles within the existing paradigm. It is the process of testing and refining existing theories, as well as discovering new facts and phenomena. It is the process of building on the knowledge of the past and pushing the boundaries of what is known. Normal science is the foundation of scientific progress, and it is the basis for the development of new theories and paradigms.

#3. Crisis: Kuhn argues that when a paradigm is unable to solve certain problems, a crisis arises. This crisis can lead to a paradigm shift, in which a new paradigm is adopted.

Kuhn argues that when a paradigm is unable to solve certain problems, a crisis

arises. This crisis is a period of confusion and uncertainty, in which the existing paradigm is no longer able to explain the phenomena that it was designed to explain. During this period, scientists may begin to question the validity of the existing paradigm and search for a new one. This process of questioning and searching can lead to a paradigm shift, in which a new paradigm is adopted. This new paradigm is able to explain the phenomena that the old paradigm could not, and it provides a new framework for understanding the world. This shift in thinking can lead to new discoveries and advances in science.

Kuhns idea of a paradigm shift is an important concept in the history of science. It suggests that scientific progress is not a linear process, but rather a process of trial and error. By questioning existing paradigms and searching for new ones,

scientists can make new discoveries and push the boundaries of knowledge. This process of questioning and searching is essential for scientific progress, and it is the driving force behind the advancement of science.

#4. Revolution: Kuhn argues that paradigm shifts are revolutionary, rather than evolutionary, in nature. This means that the new paradigm is fundamentally different from the old one, and is not simply an extension or refinement of it.

Kuhns argument is that scientific revolutions are not gradual, evolutionary changes, but rather abrupt, revolutionary changes. He argues that when a new paradigm is introduced, it is fundamentally different from the old one, and is not simply an extension or refinement of it. This means that the new paradigm is not

just a minor adjustment to the existing one, but rather a complete overhaul of the way scientists think about a particular subject. This is why Kuhn calls it a paradigm shift - because it is a radical change in the way scientists view the world.

Kuhn argues that these paradigm shifts are not just a matter of scientists discovering new facts or theories, but rather a matter of them changing their entire worldview. He argues that when a new paradigm is introduced, it is not just a matter of scientists learning new facts, but rather a matter of them changing their entire way of thinking about the world. This is why Kuhn calls it a paradigm shift - because it is a radical change in the way scientists view the world.

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#5. Incommensurability: Kuhn argues that different paradigms are incommensurable, meaning that they cannot be compared or evaluated in terms of a single set of criteria. This means that a paradigm shift is not simply a matter of choosing the â€œbetterâ€• paradigm.

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a paradigm shift is not simply a matter of choosing the "better" paradigm. Instead, it is a matter of recognizing that the two paradigms are fundamentally different and that they cannot be compared in terms of a single set of criteria. This is because each paradigm has its own set of assumptions, values, and methods, which are not necessarily compatible with those of the other paradigm. As a result, it is impossible to evaluate the two paradigms in terms of a single set of criteria.

Incommensurability also means that it is impossible to fully understand a paradigm without understanding the assumptions, values, and methods of the other paradigm. This is because the two paradigms are fundamentally different and cannot be compared in terms of a single set of criteria. As a result, it is impossible to fully understand one paradigm without understanding the other. This is why Kuhn

argues that a paradigm shift is not simply a matter of choosing the "better" paradigm, but rather a matter of recognizing that the two paradigms are fundamentally different and that they cannot be compared in terms of a single set of criteria.

#6. Progress: Kuhn argues that scientific progress is not necessarily a matter of accumulating knowledge, but rather of changing the way we think about the world. This means that progress is not necessarily a matter of â€œprogressingâ€• from one paradigm to another.

Kuhn argues that scientific progress is not a linear accumulation of knowledge, but rather a process of paradigm shifts. He suggests that progress is not necessarily a matter of "progressing" from one paradigm to another, but rather of changing the way we think about the world. This means that

progress is not necessarily a matter of accumulating more and more knowledge, but rather of changing the way we interpret and understand the world.

Kuhn suggests that scientific progress is not a matter of simply adding more facts to our existing knowledge, but rather of changing the way we interpret and understand the world. He argues that progress is not necessarily a matter of "progressing" from one paradigm to another, but rather of changing the way we think about the world. This means that progress is not necessarily a matter of accumulating more and more knowledge, but rather of changing the way we interpret and understand the world.

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#7. Objectivity: Kuhn argues that scientific progress is not necessarily an objective process, but rather is shaped by the subjective beliefs and values of the scientists involved. This means that scientific progress is not necessarily a matter of â€œprogressingâ€• towards the truth.

Kuhn argues that scientific progress is not necessarily an objective process, but rather is shaped by the subjective beliefs and values of the scientists involved. This

means that scientific progress is not necessarily a matter of "progressing" towards the truth, but rather is a process of constructing and reconstructing theories and ideas based on the values and beliefs of the scientists involved. Kuhn argues that scientific progress is not a linear process, but rather is a cyclical process of "paradigm shifts", where one paradigm is replaced by another. This means that scientific progress is not necessarily a matter of "progressing" towards the truth, but rather is a process of constructing and reconstructing theories and ideas based on the values and beliefs of the scientists involved.

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Kuhns argument that scientific progress is not necessarily an objective process, but rather is shaped by the subjective beliefs and values of the scientists involved, has been highly influential in the field of science and has been used to explain the progress of science over time. This means that scientific progress is not necessarily a matter of "progressing" towards the truth, but rather is a process of constructing and reconstructing theories and ideas based on the values and beliefs of the scientists

involved.

#8. Authority: Kuhn argues that scientific progress is not necessarily a matter of following the authority of a single individual or group, but rather is a collective process in which different scientists contribute to the development of a new paradigm.

Kuhns argument is that scientific progress is not a linear process, but rather a cyclical one. He argues that scientific progress is not necessarily a matter of following the authority of a single individual or group, but rather is a collective process in which different scientists contribute to the development of a new paradigm. This process involves the emergence of a new paradigm, which is then accepted by the scientific community and becomes the new standard for scientific research. This new paradigm then serves as the basis for

further research and development, leading to further progress. Kuhn argues that this process of scientific progress is not necessarily a smooth one, but rather is characterized by periods of rapid change and periods of relative stability.

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necessarily a smooth one, but rather is characterized by periods of rapid change and periods of relative stability.

Kuhn also argues that scientific progress is not necessarily a matter of simply accumulating knowledge, but rather is a process of creative problem-solving. He argues that scientific progress is not necessarily a matter of simply following the authority of a single individual or group, but rather is a collective process in which different scientists contribute to the development of a new paradigm. This process involves the emergence of a new paradigm, which is then accepted by the scientific community and becomes the new standard for scientific research. This new paradigm then serves as the basis for further research and development, leading to further progress.

#9. Anomaly: Kuhn argues that

scientific progress is often driven by anomalies, which are observations that cannot be explained by the existing paradigm. This means that progress is not necessarily a matter of â€œprogressingâ€• from one paradigm to another.

Kuhn argues that scientific progress is often driven by anomalies, which are observations that cannot be explained by the existing paradigm. This means that progress is not necessarily a matter of "progressing" from one paradigm to another, but rather of recognizing and addressing anomalies that cannot be explained by the current paradigm. Anomalies can be seen as the "seeds" of scientific progress, as they can lead to the development of new theories and paradigms that can explain the observations. For example, the discovery of the planet Neptune was an anomaly that

could not be explained by the existing paradigm of the solar system. This led to the development of a new paradigm, which included the existence of the planet Neptune.

Anomalies can also lead to the refinement of existing theories and paradigms. For example, the discovery of the planet Uranus led to the refinement of the existing paradigm of the solar system, as it could not be explained by the existing model. This led to the development of a new model that included the existence of the planet Uranus. In this way, anomalies can lead to the refinement of existing theories and paradigms, as well as the development of new ones.

Kuhns argument that scientific progress is often driven by anomalies is an important one, as it highlights the importance of recognizing and addressing anomalies in

order to make progress. Anomalies can be seen as the "seeds" of scientific progress, as they can lead to the development of new theories and paradigms that can explain the observations. By recognizing and addressing anomalies, scientists can make progress in their fields and advance our understanding of the world.

#10. Discovery: Kuhn argues that scientific progress is often driven by the discovery of new facts or theories, which can lead to a paradigm shift. This means that progress is not necessarily a matter of â€œprogressingâ€• from one paradigm to another.

Kuhn argues that scientific progress is often driven by the discovery of new facts or theories, which can lead to a paradigm shift. This shift occurs when a new idea or concept is introduced that challenges the existing paradigm, and is accepted by the

scientific community as a better explanation of the natural world. This new paradigm then becomes the accepted way of thinking about the subject, and the old paradigm is discarded. This process of discovery and paradigm shift is what drives scientific progress, as it allows for new ideas and theories to be explored and tested.

Kuhn also argues that this process of discovery and paradigm shift is not necessarily linear. Instead, it is often a cyclical process, with periods of stability and periods of rapid change. During periods of stability, the existing paradigm is accepted and progress is slow. During periods of rapid change, new ideas and theories are explored and accepted, leading to a paradigm shift. This cycle of discovery and paradigm shift is what allows for scientific progress to occur.

Kuhns idea of discovery and paradigm shift is an important concept in the history of science. It helps to explain why scientific progress is often not linear, but instead is a cyclical process of discovery and paradigm shift. This concept has been used to explain the development of many scientific fields, and is an important part of understanding the history of science.

#11. Paradigm Shift: Kuhn argues that a paradigm shift is not simply a matter of replacing one set of beliefs with another, but rather is a process of rethinking the way we think about the world. This means that progress is not necessarily a matter of â€œprogressingâ€• from one paradigm to another.

A paradigm shift is a fundamental change in the way we think about a particular subject or field. It is not simply a matter of

replacing one set of beliefs with another, but rather is a process of rethinking the way we think about the world. This means that progress is not necessarily a matter of "progressing" from one paradigm to another. Instead, it is a process of rethinking the way we think about the world, and how we can use that knowledge to make progress.

Kuhn argues that a paradigm shift is not a linear process, but rather is a process of creative destruction. This means that the old paradigm must be destroyed in order for the new one to take its place. This destruction is necessary in order for the new paradigm to be accepted and for progress to be made. This process of creative destruction is essential for progress to be made, as it allows for new ideas to be explored and tested.

Kuhn also argues that a paradigm shift is

not a one-time event, but rather is an ongoing process. This means that progress is not necessarily a matter of "progressing" from one paradigm to another, but rather is a process of continual rethinking and reevaluation. This process of continual rethinking and reevaluation is essential for progress to be made, as it allows for new ideas to be explored and tested.

#12. Social Factors: Kuhn argues that scientific progress is not necessarily a matter of individual scientists, but rather is shaped by the social and cultural context in which the scientists operate. This means that progress is not necessarily a matter of â€œprogressingâ€• from one paradigm to another.

Kuhn argues that scientific progress is not simply a matter of individual scientists

making discoveries, but is instead shaped by the social and cultural context in which the scientists operate. He suggests that progress is not necessarily a linear progression from one paradigm to another, but rather is a complex process of negotiation between different scientific communities. This means that the progress of science is not necessarily a matter of "progressing" from one paradigm to another, but rather is a matter of different scientific communities coming to terms with each other's ideas and theories.

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in which the scientists operate, and that this context can influence the way in which scientific progress is made. This means that progress is not necessarily a linear progression from one paradigm to another, but rather is a complex process of negotiation between different scientific communities.

#13. Inertia: Kuhn argues that scientific progress is often hindered by the inertia of existing paradigms, which can make it difficult for new paradigms to gain acceptance. This means that progress is not necessarily a matter of â€œprogressingâ€• from one paradigm to another.

Kuhn argues that scientific progress is often hindered by the inertia of existing paradigms. This inertia is caused by the fact that scientists are often deeply invested in the existing paradigm, and thus

resistant to change. This resistance to change can be seen in the way that scientists often cling to the existing paradigm, even when it is no longer useful or valid. This means that progress is not necessarily a matter of "progressing" from one paradigm to another, but rather of overcoming the inertia of the existing paradigm and allowing new paradigms to gain acceptance.

Kuhn argues that this inertia is a major obstacle to scientific progress, as it can prevent new ideas from gaining acceptance. He suggests that scientists must be willing to challenge existing paradigms and be open to new ideas in order for progress to be made. He also suggests that scientists must be willing to accept the possibility of failure, as this is an essential part of the process of scientific progress.

#14. Criticism: Kuhn argues that scientific progress is often driven by criticism of existing paradigms, which can lead to a paradigm shift. This means that progress is not necessarily a matter of â€œprogressingâ€• from one paradigm to another.

Kuhn argues that scientific progress is not a linear process of building on existing knowledge, but rather a process of challenging and critiquing existing paradigms. He suggests that scientific progress is often driven by criticism of existing paradigms, which can lead to a paradigm shift. This means that progress is not necessarily a matter of "progressing" from one paradigm to another, but rather a process of questioning and challenging existing paradigms in order to create new ones. Kuhn suggests that this process of criticism and questioning is essential for scientific progress, as it allows for the

development of new ideas and theories that can lead to revolutionary changes in the way we understand the world.

Kuhn also argues that this process of criticism and questioning is not always easy, as it requires scientists to challenge their own beliefs and assumptions. He suggests that this process can be difficult and uncomfortable, as it requires scientists to confront their own biases and preconceived notions. However, Kuhn argues that this process is essential for scientific progress, as it allows for the development of new ideas and theories that can lead to revolutionary changes in the way we understand the world.

#15. Change: Kuhn argues that scientific progress is not necessarily a matter of accumulating knowledge, but rather is a process of changing the way we think about the world. This means

that progress is not necessarily a matter of â€œprogressingâ€• from one paradigm to another.

Kuhn argues that scientific progress is not simply a matter of accumulating knowledge, but rather is a process of changing the way we think about the world. He suggests that progress is not necessarily a linear process of "progressing" from one paradigm to another. Instead, he argues that progress is a process of "paradigm shifts", where a new paradigm replaces an old one. This means that progress is not necessarily a matter of simply adding new knowledge to the existing body of knowledge, but rather is a process of rethinking and re-evaluating the existing body of knowledge. In other words, progress is a matter of changing the way we think about the world, rather than simply accumulating more knowledge.

Kuhn also suggests that scientific progress is not necessarily a matter of simply replacing one paradigm with another. Instead, he argues that progress is a process of "paradigm synthesis", where two or more paradigms are combined to create a new, more comprehensive paradigm. This means that progress is not necessarily a matter of simply replacing one paradigm with another, but rather is a process of combining different paradigms to create a new, more comprehensive understanding of the world. In other words, progress is a matter of synthesizing different ways of thinking about the world, rather than simply replacing one paradigm with another.

#16. Paradigm Loss: Kuhn argues that when a paradigm shift occurs, the old paradigm is not necessarily discarded, but rather is incorporated

into the new paradigm. This means that progress is not necessarily a matter of â€œprogressingâ€• from one paradigm to another.

Kuhn argues that when a paradigm shift occurs, the old paradigm is not necessarily discarded, but rather is incorporated into the new paradigm. This means that progress is not necessarily a matter of "progressing" from one paradigm to another. Instead, Kuhn suggests that progress is a matter of "paradigm loss", where the old paradigm is not discarded, but rather is incorporated into the new paradigm. This means that the new paradigm is not necessarily a "better" paradigm, but rather a different one.

Kuhn argues that this paradigm loss is an essential part of scientific progress. He suggests that the old paradigm is not discarded, but rather is incorporated into

the new paradigm. This means that the new paradigm is not necessarily a "better" paradigm, but rather a different one. This allows for the possibility of progress, as the new paradigm can incorporate elements of the old paradigm, while also introducing new elements.

Kuhn also argues that this paradigm loss is essential for scientific progress. He suggests that the old paradigm is not discarded, but rather is incorporated into the new paradigm. This means that the new paradigm is not necessarily a "better" paradigm, but rather a different one. This allows for the possibility of progress, as the new paradigm can incorporate elements of the old paradigm, while also introducing new elements. This allows for the possibility of progress, as the new paradigm can incorporate elements of the old paradigm, while also introducing new elements.

#17. Incommensurability: Kuhn argues that different paradigms are incommensurable, meaning that they cannot be compared or evaluated in terms of a single set of criteria. This means that a paradigm shift is not simply a matter of choosing the â€œbetterâ€• paradigm.

Kuhn argues that different paradigms are incommensurable, meaning that they cannot be compared or evaluated in terms of a single set of criteria. This means that a paradigm shift is not simply a matter of choosing the "better" paradigm. Instead, it is a matter of recognizing that the two paradigms are fundamentally different and that they cannot be compared in terms of a single set of criteria. This is because each paradigm has its own set of assumptions, values, and methods, which are not necessarily compatible with those of the other paradigm. As a result, it is

impossible to evaluate the two paradigms in terms of a single set of criteria.

Incommensurability also means that it is impossible to fully understand a paradigm without understanding the assumptions, values, and methods of the other paradigm. This is because the two paradigms are fundamentally different and cannot be compared in terms of a single set of criteria. As a result, it is impossible to fully understand one paradigm without understanding the other. This is why Kuhn argues that a paradigm shift is not simply a matter of choosing the "better" paradigm, but rather a matter of recognizing that the two paradigms are fundamentally different and that they cannot be compared in terms of a single set of criteria.

#18. Social Structure: Kuhn argues that scientific progress is shaped by the social structure of the scientific

community, which can influence the acceptance of new paradigms. This means that progress is not necessarily a matter of â€œprogressingâ€• from one paradigm to another.

Kuhn argues that the social structure of the scientific community plays a major role in the acceptance of new paradigms. He suggests that the scientific community is composed of a variety of different groups, each with their own interests and motivations. These groups can influence the acceptance of new paradigms by either supporting or rejecting them. For example, a group of scientists may reject a new paradigm because it does not fit with their existing beliefs or because it challenges their authority. On the other hand, a group of scientists may accept a new paradigm because it is seen as a way to advance their own interests or because it is seen as a way to gain recognition and

prestige.

Kuhn also argues that the social structure of the scientific community can influence the progress of science. He suggests that progress is not necessarily a matter of "progressing" from one paradigm to another, but rather a matter of the acceptance of new paradigms by the scientific community. This means that progress is not necessarily linear, but rather is shaped by the social structure of the scientific community.

Kuhns argument has important implications for the way we think about scientific progress. It suggests that progress is not necessarily a matter of "progressing" from one paradigm to another, but rather a matter of the acceptance of new paradigms by the scientific community. This means that progress is not necessarily linear, but

rather is shaped by the social structure of the scientific community.

#19. Ideology: Kuhn argues that scientific progress is often driven by ideological factors, which can lead to a paradigm shift. This means that progress is not necessarily a matter of â€œprogressingâ€• from one paradigm to another.

Kuhn argues that scientific progress is often driven by ideological factors, which can lead to a paradigm shift. This means that progress is not necessarily a matter of "progressing" from one paradigm to another, but rather of replacing one paradigm with another. This shift is often driven by a new set of beliefs or values that challenge the existing paradigm. For example, the Copernican Revolution was driven by a new set of beliefs about the nature of the universe, which challenged

the existing Aristotelian paradigm. Similarly, the development of quantum mechanics was driven by a new set of beliefs about the nature of matter and energy, which challenged the existing Newtonian paradigm.

Kuhn argues that these paradigm shifts are not necessarily driven by the accumulation of new evidence or the development of new theories. Instead, they are often driven by a new set of values or beliefs that challenge the existing paradigm. This means that scientific progress is not necessarily a linear process of accumulating knowledge, but rather a process of replacing one set of beliefs with another. This process of replacing one set of beliefs with another is what Kuhn calls a "paradigm shift".

#20. Kuhn's Legacy: Kuhn's work has had a lasting impact on the

philosophy of science, and has been influential in the development of postmodernism. His work has also been influential in the development of the scientific method, and has been used to explain the process of scientific progress.

Kuhns legacy is far-reaching and has had a lasting impact on the philosophy of science. His work has been influential in the development of postmodernism, as well as the scientific method. His book, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, has been used to explain the process of scientific progress, and has been cited as a major influence in the development of the modern scientific method. Kuhns work has also been influential in the development of the philosophy of science, and has been used to explain the process of scientific progress and the nature of scientific revolutions. His work has been

cited as a major influence in the development of the modern scientific method, and has been used to explain the process of scientific progress and the nature of scientific revolutions.

Kuhns work has also been influential in the development of the philosophy of science, and has been used to explain the process of scientific progress and the nature of scientific revolutions. His work has been cited as a major influence in the development of the modern scientific method, and has been used to explain the process of scientific progress and the nature of scientific revolutions. His work has also been influential in the development of the philosophy of science, and has been used to explain the process of scientific progress and the nature of scientific revolutions.

Kuhns legacy is also evident in the way

that his work has been used to explain the process of scientific progress and the nature of scientific revolutions. His work has been cited as a major influence in the development of the modern scientific method, and has been used to explain the process of scientific progress and the nature of scientific revolutions. His work has also been influential in the development of the philosophy of science, and has been used to explain the process of scientific progress and the nature of scientific revolutions.

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