

**Between Women Space in the Fish Port
Tambler Complex and the Value-Chain
Nodes of the Fishing Industry in
General Santos City, Philippines:
An Ethnographic Study**

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Research Interest

Cognizant of the presence of physical and social spaces in the Fish Port Complex, and the value-chain nodes in the tuna fishing industry in General Santos City, this study intends to qualify these assumptions:

- (1) That women are assigned to economically marginal spaces in the Fish Port Complex;
- (2) That the spaces that women fill-in in the port largely do not interface with the value-chain nodes of the tuna fishing industry in General Santos City; and
- (3) That women, despite the marginal spaces that they occupy, may cultivate locales of productivity as they subsist in the disciplinal structures and forces in the fish port as a livelihood space.

Research Questions

- (1) What spaces do women workers in the Fish Port Complex of General Santos City occupy?;
- (2) How do women workers figure in the value chain nodes of the tuna industry in General Santos City?,
- (3) What initiatives do women workers in the tuna industry articulate as expressions of their gainful productivity? and
- (4) What are the lived, perceived, and conceived spaces that permeate and regulate the spaces of women in the fish port complex?

Research Methodology

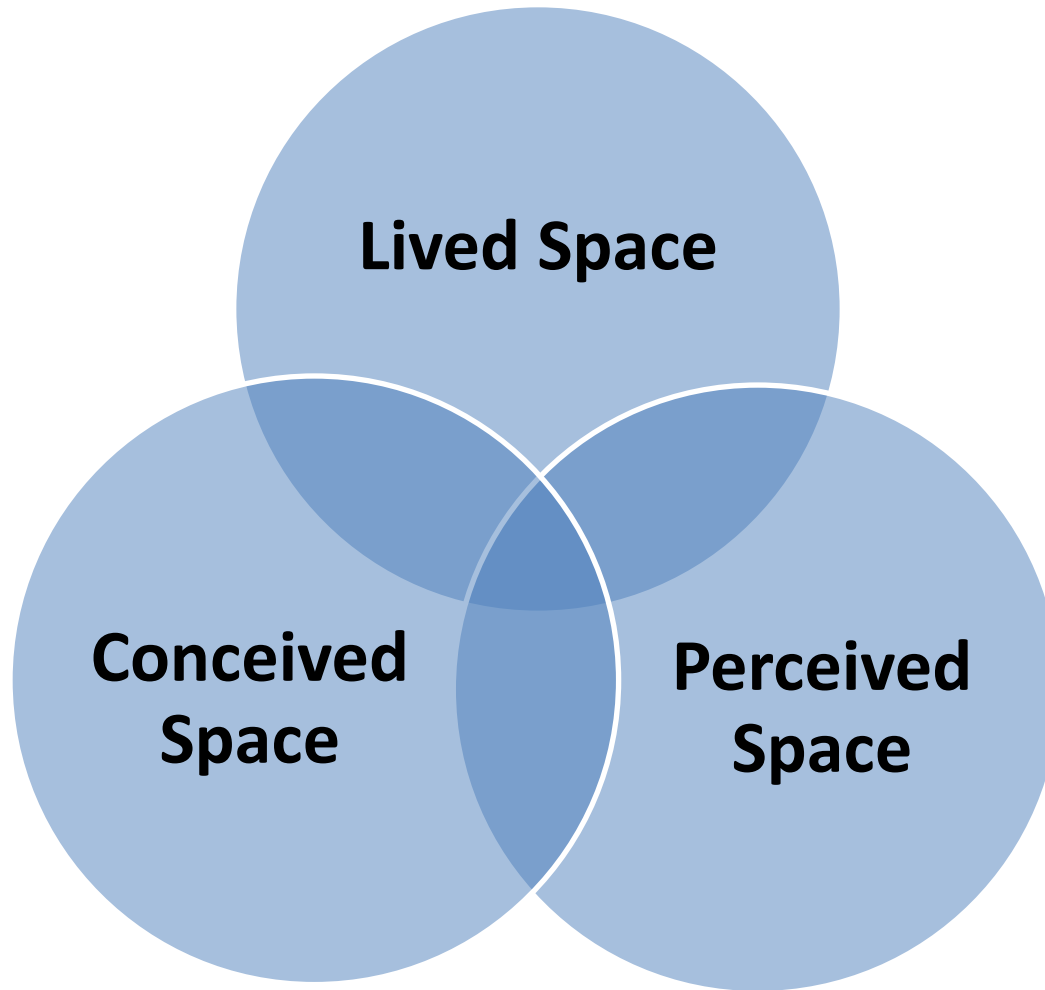
The study shall employ the basics of ethnography, namely, field work, field site mapping, key informant interviews, and semi-formal focus group discussions.

The combination of such tools shall help provide a qualitative description of the situation and experiences of women as they subsist in the Fish Port Complex and interface with the value chain nodes in the tuna industry in General Santos City

Theoretical Framework

- Henri Lefebvre's *Production of Space* (1991)
- Lived Space: from the vantage point of personal meanings and symbols
- Conceived Space: from the lens of planners, designers, architects, owners, etc.
- Perceived Space: from the perspective of actors as they interact with rules, processes, and ideas that habituate a space
- Core Interface: ***Women Space***

Conceptual Framework

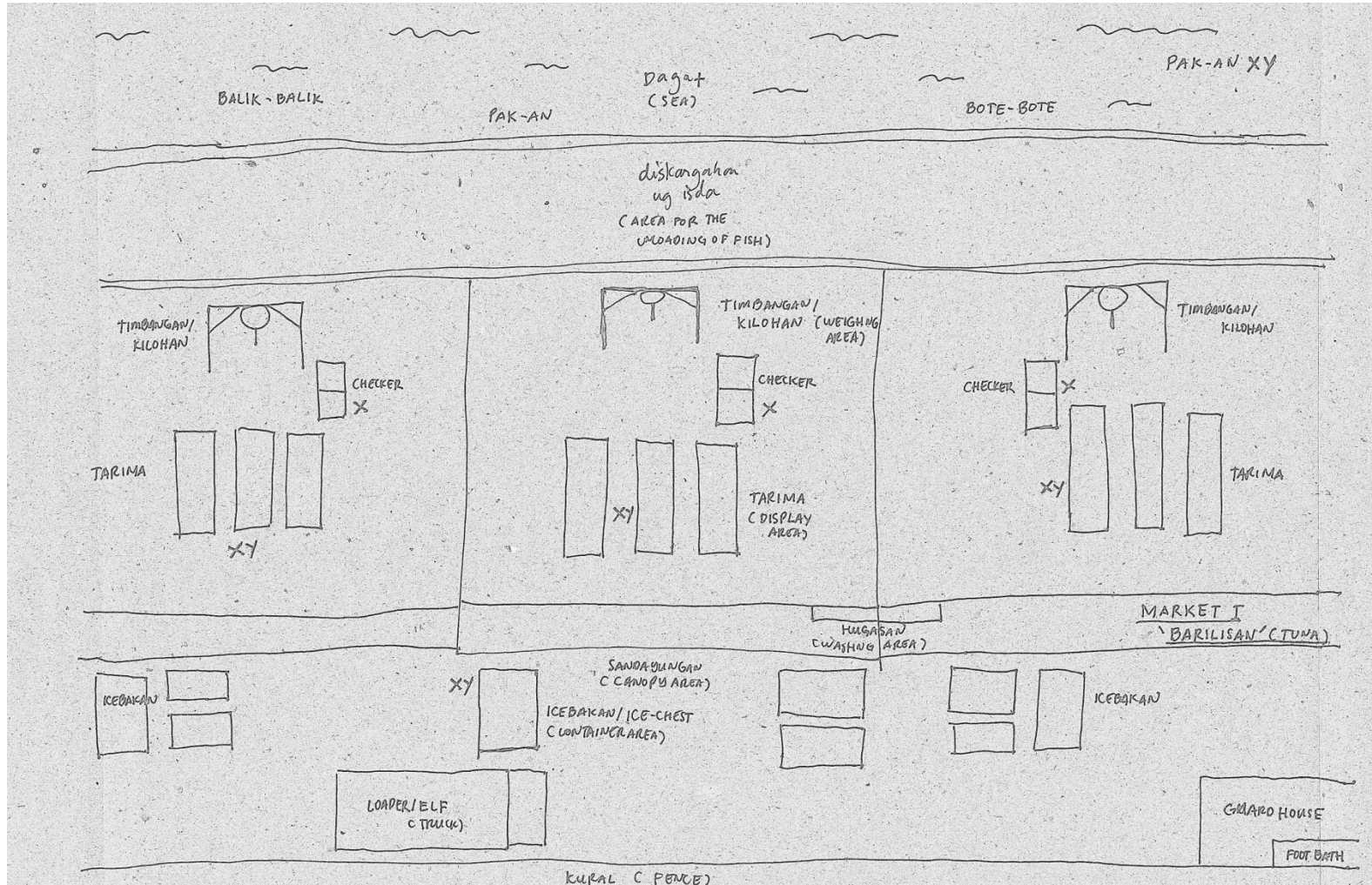


Value-Chain Nodes in the Fish Port Complex, General Santos City

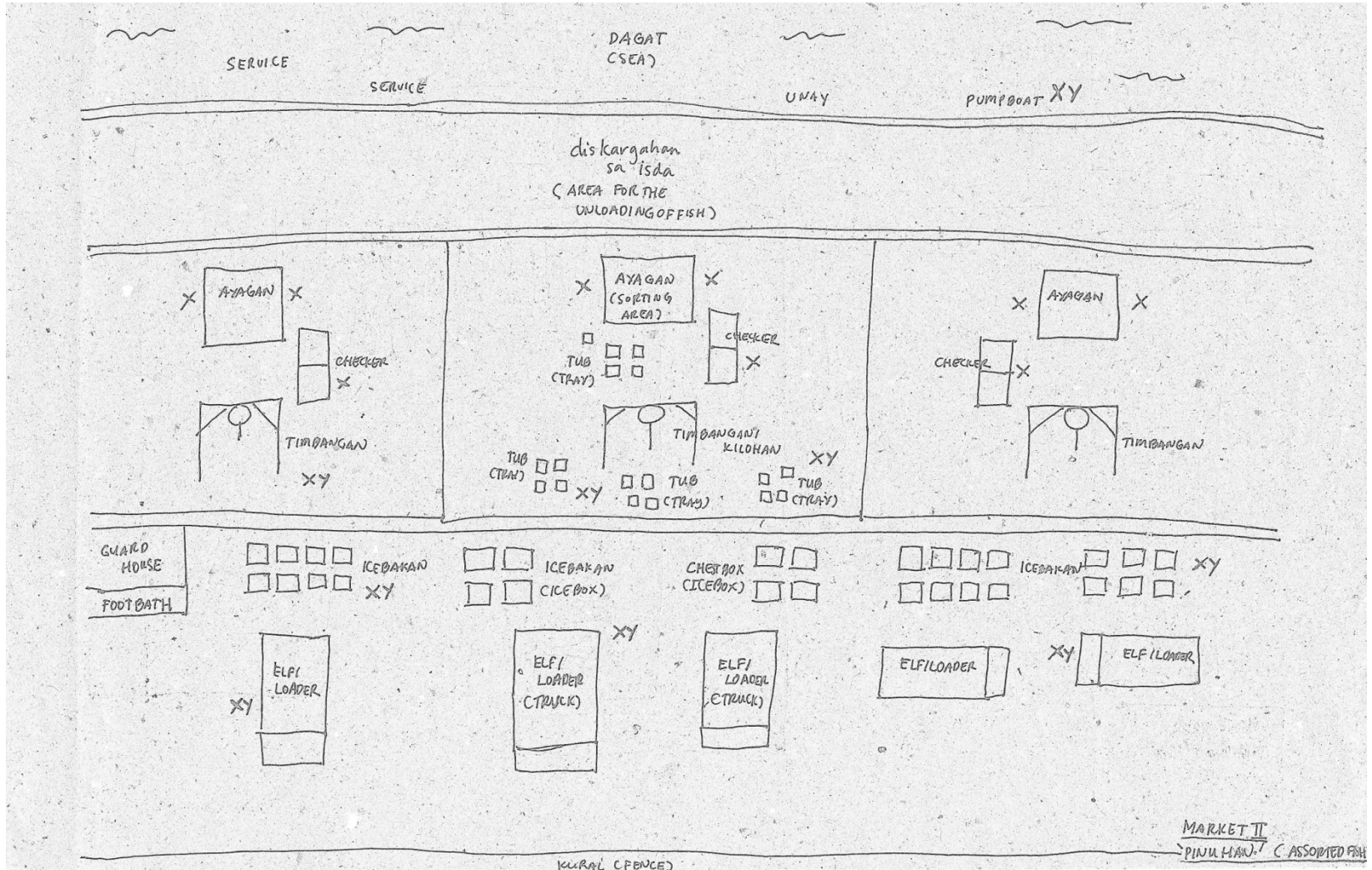
In the Fish Port Complex, the value chain nodes that are physically or tangibly worked out within the premises of the port include: (a) inputs, (b) production, (c) marketing, (d) traders/wholesalers, and (f) canneries/processors.

The (e) exporters, (g) retailers, and (h) consumers are usually located outside the port, since these actors and processes only build-on the activities and sets of information that unfold within the spaces of the Fish Port Complex

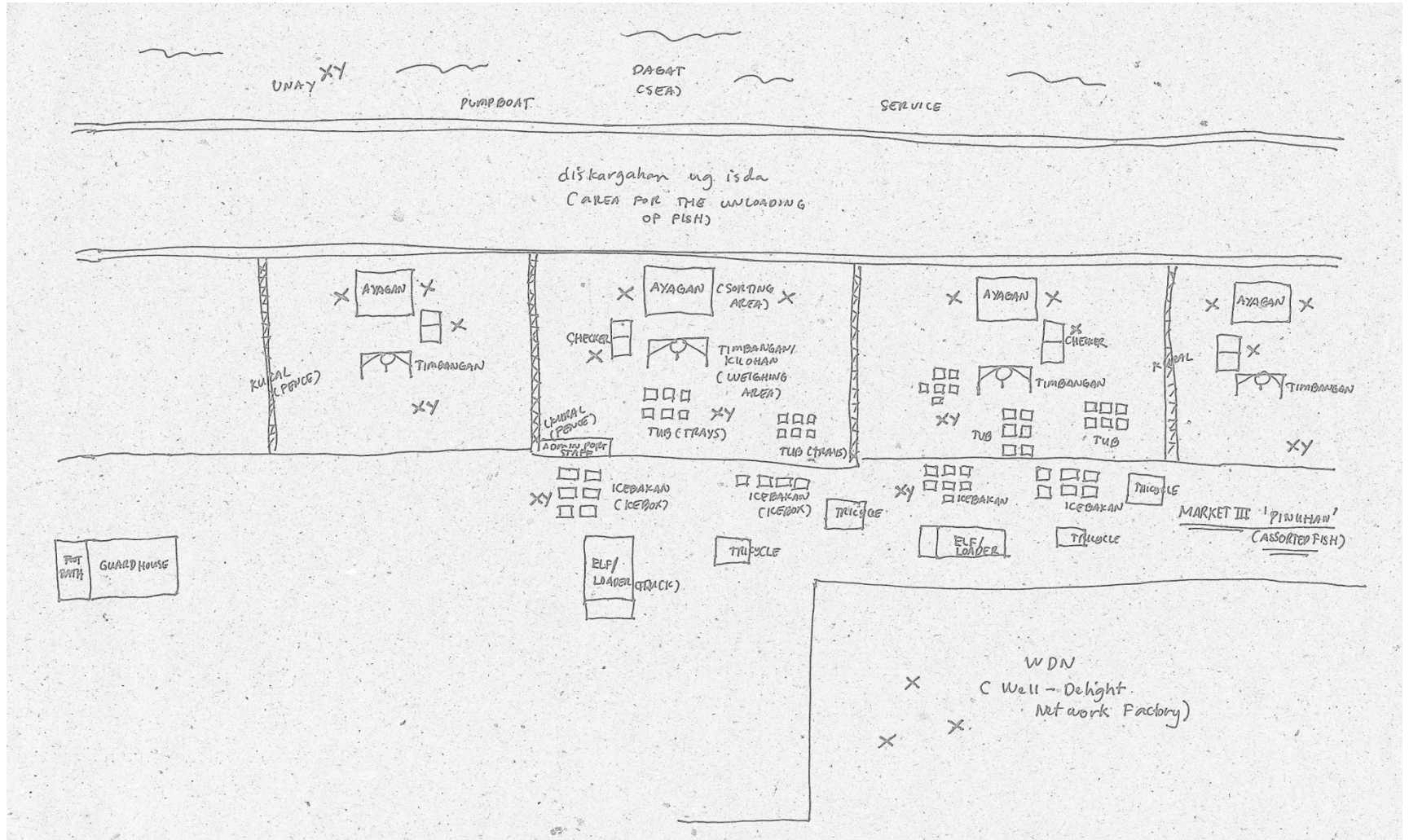
Maps of the Fish Port Complex



Maps in the Fish Port Complex



Maps in the Fish Port Complex



Women Space and Value-Chain Nodes Intersect

Women's spaces/functions intersecting with the Value-Chain Node	Market One	Market Two	Market Three
	Company Operator	Individual Operator	Individual Operator
	Jam bolero	Jam bolero	Jam bolero
Women's spaces/functions that do not intersect with the Value-Chain Nodes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Checker 1 (as port's administrative staff) 2. Checker 2 (as enlister of the Jambolero) 3. Collector of Fish Entrails (magdadayuk) 4. Sun/Globe/Smart Cellphone loader 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tub Holder/Checker 2. Checker 2 (as enlister of the Jambolero) 3. Cashier 4. Fish Vendor 5. Sorter 6. In-charge of bread vending 7. Port Staff 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tub Holder/Checker 2. Checker 2(as enlister of the Jambolero) 3. Cashier 4. Sorter 5. Port Staff
Potential Unrecognized Value-Chain Node	Collector of Fish Entrails which is transformed into <i>Dayuk</i>		

Some Conclusions

- (1) Women occupy spaces in the Fish Port Complex. As women work, stay, and form relations in such spaces, formal rules, opportunities for work, cultural expectations, and personal values influence the way women subsist and maintain relations with the other spaces and actors in the port.
- (2) Some women spaces in the fish port complex interface with the value chain nodes of the tuna industry. When the interface is gleaned from the narrative of Jan Cadiz Bibo, a jambolero since 2007, the fish port is where one can have a good and enabling livelihood. She specified that in the port, if one will only work hard and be fair in transactions, money will eventually just flow.

Some Conclusions

- (3) With the stories and perspectives of a female jambolero and a small boat owner, the interface between women space and two value chain nodes may stand for empowering and fulfilling locations. While such points of overlap require financial capacities, the jambolero informant can be an example for women to go up in the ladder of economic opportunities in the fish port complex.
- (4) Since the literature on women in the production area, particularly the fishing industry, speaks of the marginalization of women in fish port areas, the study of women spaces in the port in General Santos City reflect a different picture of women's experiences. The interviews and narratives of the informants suggest that women do not couple marginalization with their spaces.

Some Conclusions

- (5) Using Lefebvre's notion of space, women space may be regarded as intersect of his notions of space as lived and conceived. Built according to the conceived plan of the port's engineers and architects, the port is transformed into a perceived space as gendered spaces emerge.

- (6) The notion of the value-chain nodes may also be regarded as part of the conceived space. This means that the value-chain process is a category which is not organic to the cognitive map of the women informants. As a category, it may belong to the planners of the port who imagined and constructed the port to facilitate the processes in the value-chain spectrum.

Some Conclusions

(6) The dayuk is a product – which uses fish entrails, may be included in the list of value-chain nodes of the tuna industry. A study on the social life of a dayuk, how it moves from the port and is transformed into a value-added product needs to ethnographic documentation.

Photo



Photo



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References

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