ART AS A TOOL FOR SOCIO-CULTURAL TRANSFORMATION: A CASE STUDY IN THE CONTEXT OF CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL CHANGE

A ARTE COMO INSTRUMENTO DE TRANSFORMAÇÃO SOCIOCULTURAL: UM ESTUDO DE CASO NO CONTEXTO DA MUDANÇA SOCIAL CONTEMPORÂNEA

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Abstract: The impact of art development on contemporary society is determined in many ways. Due to the current socio-cultural transformations (in particular, digitalisation), the study of this issue is becoming even more relevant. The purpose of the article is to study art as an instrument of social change through the prism of a case study. To achieve this goal, the scientific methods of analysis, synthesis, induction, and deduction were used. The results of the study highlight the integral and conceptual stage of development of the artistic worldview, which requires generalisation and systematisation to construct a unified worldview. Its role in highlighting social problems and transformational potential is emphasised. Art allows for the articulation and representation of unexplored ideas, concepts, and phenomena, promoting debate and social progress. What is important is its ability to transform physical or bodily modes of perception, providing new opportunities for expression and understanding. The novelty of the study is to prove that contemporary art has a significant impact on socio-cultural transformation in the context of modern social change. The conclusions note that art in all its forms is recognised as a dynamic and influential tool that contributes to the formation of new narratives, empathy, and positive social change. From street art to virtual spaces, the important contribution of artists to catalysing change across borders and inspiring collective action in response to the complex challenges of our time is highlighted.

Keywords: Art. Transformations. Digitalisation. Society. Case Study. Sociocultural Changes. Influence.

Resumo: O impacto do desenvolvimento da arte na sociedade contemporânea é determinado de muitas formas. Devido às actuais transformações socioculturais (em particular, a digitalização), o estudo desta questão está a tornar-se ainda mais relevante. O objetivo do artigo é estudar a arte como um instrumento de mudança social através do prisma de um estudo de caso. Para atingir este objetivo, foram utilizados os métodos científicos de análise, síntese, indução e dedução. Os resultados do estudo evidenciam o

estádio de desenvolvimento integral e concetual da visão artística do mundo, que requer generalização e sistematização para a construção de uma visão unificada do mundo. Constata-se que a arte é uma ferramenta poderosa que reproduz, molda e responde às mudanças socioculturais da sociedade. É sublinhado o seu papel na identificação dos problemas sociais e do seu potencial de transformação. O importante é a sua capacidade de transformar os modos de perceção físicos ou corporais, proporcionando novas oportunidades de expressão e compreensão. A novidade do estudo é provar que a arte contemporânea tem um impacto significativo na transformação sociocultural no contexto da mudança social moderna. As conclusões constatam que a arte, em todas as suas formas, é reconhecida como uma ferramenta dinâmica e influente que contribui para a formação de novas narrativas, empatia e mudança social positiva. Da arte de rua aos espaços virtuais, destaca-se o importante contributo dos artistas para catalisar a mudança além-fronteiras e inspirar a ação colectiva em resposta aos complexos desafios do nosso tempo.

Palavras-chave: Arte. Transformações. Digitalização. A sociedade. Estudo de caso. Mudanças socioculturais. Influência.

1. Introduction

In today's world, at the crossroads of various social, cultural, and technological transformations, art is becoming not only an embodiment of aesthetic perception but also a powerful tool for socio-cultural transformation. Taking on the challenges of our time caused by globalisation, art is turning into a complex phenomenon that illustrates the impact of contemporary social change on creativity and its role in shaping a new cultural landscape. In this context, art acts as a kind of mirror that reflects and analyses key aspects of social life. Expressing the ideas, emotions, and views of creators, art interacts with the transformations of the modern world, making an important contribution to the formation of new values and socio-cultural paradigms.

The study of this case study allows us to consider art as a catalyst for major socio-cultural changes, capable of stimulating reflection and dialogue in society. The analysis of various manifestations of creativity in the contemporary context reveals key trends that shape the current understanding of the world, expand the boundaries of moral and cultural stereotypes, and promote constructive mutual understanding in various groups of society. Thus, in its role as a case study, art becomes not only a reaction to changes in society but also an active agent of its transformation. Studying its influence in the context of contemporary social change allows us to better understand the role of creativity in the formation of new socio-cultural realities and guides us to find answers to questions about the future of modern society through the prism of art.

Accordingly, the purpose of this study is to analyse art as an instrument of socio-cultural transformation through the prism of a case study. At the same time, the range of research questions

includes: the characterisation of the philosophical understanding of contemporary art in society, analysis of specific cases of artistic position, and study of its impact on contemporary society.

2.   Theoretical framework and literature review

A review of the literature on this issue identifies important studies and approaches to understanding the interaction of art with society and the influence of the latter on the creative process. HEWISON (2013) explores how art can act as a tool to support universalism and promote socio-cultural transformation across diverse cultural contexts. MILLER (2001) characterised the relationship between art and innovation in the urban environment, considering it as a tool for the socio-cultural transformation of cities.

Another important study is TIVERS (2009). This work analyses the history of the social impact of art, pointing out how creativity reflects and shapes cultural change in different historical periods. LINDSTRÖM (2014) describes the role of contemporary art in society, its impact on socio-cultural processes, and its potential to serve as a catalyst for social change. In the context of this topic, LINDSTRÖM (2014) considers public art and the processes of artistic creation in the community of practitioners as factors of social transformation. This includes an analysis of the impact of art on public space, interaction with the community, and the creation of new socio-cultural values. According to CARUSO (2005), contemporary artists use their life experience as a basis for their art. The author argues that in minority communities struggling with the search for cultural identity, the process of establishing self-identity becomes crucial. Driven by a variety of psychological and sociological factors, artists are compelled to explore deeper meanings and engage in cultural work on a larger scale. Asian American women artists, for example, are currently using art as a tool to explore issues of self-identity, cultural identity, and gender. Korean/Korean American minority artists, in particular, are responding to their cultural upbringing through their art, addressing issues related to identity, gender, ethnicity, politics, culture, and socioeconomic status.

FERREIRA; FIDALGO; ABREU (2022) note that arts and culture are deeply rooted in both individual and social aspects of life, gaining significant economic importance. Overall, this study focuses on social enterprises (SEs) operating in the arts and culture sector, situated between the economic perspective of these sectors and their socio-political and cultural role and integration. Drawing on five comprehensive case studies of organisations promoting arts and culture, this study focuses on social and community interventions, as well as actors where arts and culture are the

main instruments of social participation. At the same time, GARRIDO CASTELLANO; RAPOSO (2023) described the role of public art in the field of socio-cultural life. The authors based their research on the analysis of social media. AZEVEDO (2016) proved that culture and art can play a strategic role in sustainable community development. For this study, the work of MARAIEVA (2022) is also important, which describes the formation of a new information worldview of the society of the future through the prism of transhumanist and posthumanist concepts. The study SKAKUN (2022) also addresses a similar issue. The work of CEAUȘU (2023) focuses on the interaction of art and creative art criticism in the educational process. The author describes the role of art in curricula and the possibility of using it in creative art therapy. This study is valuable for understanding how art and creativity can influence the learning process and contribute to personal development through artistic activity. It also provides insights into the field of art education and creative art therapy as a means of influencing the educational process and personal development and enriches the understanding of how art can interact with the social environment and contribute to its transformation.

CONGREVE (2020) looks at public art in Britain's new cities. The author analyses in detail the evolution of public art in these cities and explores how it affects the present and the future. This study is important for exploring the role of art in shaping public space and promoting cultural identity in the context of new cities. LAZZERETTI (2020) describes the role of culture in the context of the challenges of globalising digitalisation processes. This study is important for defining the role of the cultural sector in the era of digital transformation and possible solutions to these challenges. DOMINGUES, MAZHAR, BULL (2023) describes how arts and culture organisations are implementing environmentally responsible practices and how this affects their operations.

All of these works are important for understanding the importance of culture in the context of the challenges of globalisation and provide an in-depth understanding of the role of art in contemporary social change, pointing to various aspects of its impact on socio-cultural transformation.

3.   Research design and methods
General background

The topic of the transformation of society and the role of art in this process is extremely relevant and requires detailed consideration from various aspects. Therefore, various scientific methods were used to analyse the impact of the digital revolution on creativity in contemporary

art. It should be noted that the study is of a qualitative type, as it is based on the analysis of contemporary scientific literature.

Methods and research procedure

First, using the method of content analysis, we collected and processed professional literature on cultural transformations in modern society. A sample of relevant works was selected that date back to the early 2000s at the latest, have high citation indices, and are published in journals included in recognised scientometric databases. This guarantees the high quality of the selected sources and their compliance with the modern scientific standard. We also took into account the relevance of the research and its compliance with modern scientific concepts.

The synthesis of individual elements of the research allowed us to create a common narrative that describes existing ideas about the role of digitalisation in the development of contemporary art movements and their social role. This approach also made it possible to combine the different opinions of researchers into a single concept and fully consider the issue of digital evolution and its impact on contemporary art, including both positive and negative aspects. The need to use the method of analysis was recognised as a basic stage of obtaining information in the context of forming a scientific narrative on artistic topics. This included the separation of individual elements for their further consideration, comparison, and contrast with modern scientific views. The views of scholars were analysed, and the method of comparison allowed us to structure their approaches to understanding the trends in the impact of contemporary art on social transformations.

4. Results

At the present stage, researchers believe that the artistic worldview is inherently formed by a triple structure: worldview, art, and artistic worldview. The interaction between these elements establishes a dynamic relationship, where art serves as a conduit through which the content of the worldview is transformed into a separate artistic form. At the same time, the artistic worldview plays a crucial role in crystallising the worldview concepts reflected in art. This dialectical relationship between the categories and concepts of the artistic worldview provides the basis for analysing artistic interpretations, unravelling the concepts and meanings of the representation, and reconstructing the original worldview. The introduction of the concept of artistic worldview into the scientific and philosophical discourse leads to a paradigm shift in the public perception of art.

It positions art as an equal participant in the development of cultural self-identification, the results of which cannot be replaced by reflection in the fields of morality, philosophy, or science. This statement about the importance of art can be seen as an axiomatic statement that echoes sentiments expressed since the time of I. Kant and G. Hegel. In particular, Kant, exploring the contradiction between society (from a rational point of view) and art (with its characteristic altruism), concluded that in fact art and society are autonomous entities, each governed by its own set of laws.

Given the dynamic changes taking place in the field of art, it is important to search for the foundations of the comprehensive development of the artistic worldview. The potential stage of development of the artistic worldview, closely related to art and expressed in literary texts, paintings, etc., has signs of fluidity and a certain inherent message. This state can be described as integral - conceptual, requiring a process of generalisation and systematisation at the level of building a single worldview (DOMINGUES; MAZHAR; BULL, 2023). Essentially, it involves structuring the fundamental elements of thinking embedded in works of art.

At the present stage of development, art has long been recognised as a powerful tool that reflects, shapes, and responds to the socio-cultural dynamics of society. Table 1 presents the main aspects of the impact of art on social transformations.

Table 1. The impact of art on social transformation

Aspects of art	Impact on the individual	Impact on the community	Influencing cultural change	The role of technology	Projects and initiatives	Possible challenges
Painting	Development of creativity, improvement of emotional state, formation of critical thinking	Cultural exchange, strengthening social ties, promoting mutual understanding	Rethinking traditions, supporting innovations in art	Expanding access to art through digital platforms, developing virtual art	Digital art Digital exhibitions, online projects	Financial constraints, instability of the art market
Stage art	Developing creative thinking, increasing empathy, developing communication skills	Uniting communities, forming a collective identity	Modern trends in exhibition art	Using virtual reality for immersive art experiences	Art festivals, theatre projects	Resistance to changes in society, lack of appropriate infrastructure for stage events

Literature	Development of critical thinking, broadening of horizons, improvement of literacy	Support for local identity, exchange of literary traditions	Shaping cultural values through words	The impact of the Internet on literary activity and the development of e-books	Literary forums, book clubs	Low literacy, competition with mass media
Music	Development of cognitive skills, increase of emotional intelligence	Supporting multiculturalism and creating a common musical experience	Adapting music genres to modern trends	The use of technology in music creation and distribution	Music festivals, concerts	Low musical literacy, loss of live interaction
The sculpture	Development of spatial thinking, interaction with space, visual impression	Creating public space, contributing to the architectural landscape	Innovative forms of expression through spatial architecture	Using modern materials and techniques in sculpture	Sculpture exhibitions, public installations	Technical challenges in working with materials

Source: compiled by the authors based on the analysis of POLSKA; KONOVALOVA (2021); SANAKUIEV (2022); SCHNEIDER; ROHMANN (2021); SOH (2019).

Thus, in the context of contemporary social change, the role of art as a transformative tool is becoming increasingly important. Contemporary researchers are delving into thematic studies that demonstrate the ability of art to stimulate socio-cultural transformation in response to contemporary challenges and changes (MOSKVICHOVA, 2020; SHAKUN, 2022).

Nevertheless, art serves as a powerful means of articulating and representing previously unexplored ideas, concepts, and phenomena. This possibility opens the way for discussions on topics that might otherwise be considered too unconventional or daring, leading to the formulation of questions that contribute to social progress and illuminate social transformations. Art tends to expose the "normal" to new associations, provocations, and irritations, thereby not necessarily changing the solutions sought by artists, but enriching the understanding of existing patterns. Researchers have noted that art brings a human quality to proposals, allowing alternative knowledge to surface, redefining problems in human terms, and offering alternatives for a more livable future (MEDINA, 2014). In addition to creating and disseminating alternative cognitive knowledge, art has transformative potential by challenging physical or bodily modes of perception. In particular, dancers' knowledge goes beyond trained bodily skills or knowledge of specific movements. Instead, it involves additional bodily knowledge, a communication that the body addresses to itself as an object. This kind of knowledge, consciously or unconsciously engaged by

everyone, goes beyond the performer and finds expression in everyday actions. If choreography is defined as encompassing all actions and events where movement becomes a meaningful interaction and relationship between different agents, artists and activists can effectively combine choreography with the experience of bodily knowledge. This fusion allows them to create interactions between ordinary people, authorities, animals, urban or natural environments, vehicles, weapons, and online media (MEDINA, 2014). As a transformative tool, art-driven bodily knowledge choreography has facilitated the articulation of formless intuitions that people may have barely been aware of, bringing them to new light in our everyday lives.

At the same time, street art has become a powerful form of expression, providing a platform for marginalised voices. Artists use public spaces as canvases to address pressing social issues, from inequality to environmental concerns. Banksy, the famous anonymous street artist, used his art to critique political systems and advocate for social justice. Through clever, thought-provoking imagery, street art has become a tool for engaging the public in conversations about pressing social issues. One of his most famous recent works is the graffiti in Borodyanka and Irpin, Kyiv region. Created on the ruins of buildings destroyed by Russian troops, they are intended to remind and show the democratic world, especially the democratic world, the destructive impact of war, and the need to protect democracy in the world.

The advent of technology has opened up new frontiers for artistic expression. Virtual reality (VR) is one such tool that artists use to immerse audiences in alternative realities (LAVRENTIEVA, 2023). Projects such as Clouds Over Sidra, a virtual reality documentary produced by the United Nations, take viewers into the life of a young Syrian refugee. By providing an immersive experience, art in the form of virtual reality enhances empathy and understanding, strengthening the connection between individuals and global issues.

Public murals provide a canvas for collective identity and expression. Artists collaborate with local communities to create murals that celebrate diversity, commemorate shared history, and promote a sense of belonging. Philadelphia's Mural Art Programme is a prime example of a city's walls adorning the walls of a city, reflecting the stories and aspirations of its residents. Through participatory art, communities can rethink their narratives and reclaim public spaces. In the Ukrainian context, large murals are dedicated to the dissemination of information about Ukrainian national figures, which, in the context of Russian aggression, aims to remind Ukrainians and the world of the past and its works. Among these murals is an image of the head of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, Andrei Sheptytsky, in Lviv. Other examples commemorate the fallen Ukrainian soldiers in the Russian-Ukrainian war. Such murals are widespread in many Ukrainian

cities, indicating the deep integration of art and socio-political processes in the contemporary consciousness and worldview.

Environmental issues are also at the forefront of contemporary society. Artists are engaged in environmental activism, creating works that draw attention to environmental issues. The Land Art movement, with artists such as Andy Goldsworthy, transforms natural landscapes into temporary installations, emphasising the relationship between art and nature. These ephemeral creations provoke reflections on the relationship between humanity and the environment and the relevance of environmental practices.

Thus, art in its various forms is a dynamic and influential tool for socio-cultural transformation in the context of contemporary social change. From the streets to virtual spaces, artists contribute to shaping narratives, fostering empathy, and promoting positive social change. These case studies highlight the different ways in which the arts can act as a catalyst for change, crossing boundaries and inspiring collective action in response to the complex challenges of our time. Table 2, adapted from ALACOVSKA, BOOTH, FIESELER (2020), presents art in action based on an analysis of the following criteria: therapy, care, imagination, and empowerment.

Table 2: Art in socio-cultural action: analysis of the main transformational changes

Direction	The action of art	Agents of influence	Transformational change
Therapy	Aesthetics that make an impact Communication Transmission of meanings Therapy based purely on art	Artists, product creators Artistic audience Persons: injured or ill Elderly people, prisoners	Cognitive reorganisation Illuminating (quasi) consciousness technique Illustration of recovery possibilities Reducing anxiety, pain, stress.
Care	Pedagogy Relational aesthetics Participation in practical performances, courses Socially-oriented art	Students and anyone interested in art Artistic audience Everyone is interested in art.	Development of artistic skills, organisation of knowledge, Joint projects and research Development of social relations Raising awareness
Imagination	The art of creating and disseminating certain concepts Creativity as a "laboratory of imagination" The producer of knowledge	Artists and wider society	Expressing one's own individuality, rethinking complex problems through art, Generating knowledge, expanding your horizons

	Recreating bodily ways of perception		Harnessing the hidden power of digital technologies
Features	Art requires critical thinking Uniqueness Art as an alternative education Delegated artistic practices	Narrow consumers of culture, artists, All participants of the art industry,	Critical thinking skills, creativity, self-reflection Alternative ways to get involved in science Development of self-expression techniques Awareness of cooperation practices

Source: adapted from ALACOVSKA, BOOTH, FIESELER (2020)

Among the various differences and similarities between artists and designers, there is a common feature: lateral thinking. Some scholars believe that this is an important aspect to understand when distinguishing between their approach, especially in contrast to the methods used by professional social workers and other experts in the social sphere. Artistic thinking, in other words, is not just a passive state; it is an active process that is integral to creativity. Although it is often associated with artists, designers, and creative professionals, it can be cultivated in practice and taught regularly in art and design academies.

Traditionally, lateral thinking has been limited to the arts and rarely associated with everyday life. In the context of design, where the emphasis is on problem-solving, creative thinking is mainly aimed at creating objects. However, in the current global crisis, when some countries are discussing the removal of art education from mainstream curricula, it is important to recognise that artists and designers play a crucial role in introducing different thought processes and innovative solutions. Recognising that they cannot save the world alone, artists and designers make a significant contribution by facilitating diverse creative thinking, effective communication, and the sharing of analytical thought processes. They often collaborate on projects with people who have no training in contemporary art or design, demonstrating how to learn through hands-on experience and encouraging both reflection and action. These practices are not idealistic, but solidly grounded, addressing real-world problems and collaborating with people who are genuinely focused on solving problems. This is not an attempt to promote these practices as the only way forward for designers and artists; rather, it is an observation that such approaches are unfolding in different directions and contexts. The emergence of multidisciplinary creative collectives highlights this as they take on a variety of societal challenges, crossing traditional boundaries to engage with communities.

Whether they are called the power of the commons, social design, participatory design, Arte Útil, artivism, or otherwise, these projects represent a departure from utopian ideals and a genuine commitment to social transformation. Ironically, in today's society, the use of creative thinking for economic gain and the development of commercial products is widely accepted and rational. However, applying the same methodology to address social structures, human relationships, or real-world problems is often met with scepticism. The surprise when artists or designers go beyond the walls of their studios to engage directly with local communities and solve pressing problems raises questions about the public perception of the role and potential impact of creative thinking in non-traditional social contexts.

5.   Discussion

The results show that contemporary art is an important tool in socio-cultural transformation. The social changes caused by civilisation allow us to take a fresh look at the formation of artistic environments, projects, and changes that are dictated by modern challenges in their integration. This view of the role of art has been formed in studies (MEDVEDIEVA; MURAVIN, 2019; MOSKVICHOVA, 2020, SOLDATENKO, 2023). These theses can be supported by additional arguments, in particular, that in times of war, artistic actions become the voice of the nation, which can convey its position to the world and thus object to the aggressor. This is clearly evident in the case of modern Ukraine, which is experiencing a Russian military invasion, and for which the "cultural front" aimed at European and American societies has become an important area of countering the aggressor.

The study proves that contemporary art is an integral part of social processes that can influence socio-cultural transformations, but also suffers from the opposite impact of social development. This is clearly evident in the importance of digitalisation in modern society, which is confirmed in the works of TAURINO (2023); KOZBELT (2023); GRONLUND (2016).

At the same time, one may disagree with some of the researchers' statements. For example, lateral thinking is defined as a common feature of artists and designers, and its importance is pointed out in comparison with the methods used by professional social workers and other experts in the social sphere. It is noted that artistic thinking is an active process that is not limited to artists and designers and can be cultivated and taught in art and design academies (HOOD, 2023; LEE, 2023). However, there are also other views on the evaluation of lateral art. This paper shows that

lateral thinking is not the only trait of artists and designers but can also be inherent in other professions or groups of people.

Similarly, there are doubts about certain elements of contemporary art as a way of actualising contemporary issues. Although researchers mainly highlight the positive aspects of art, there are several other points of view. In particular, there are quite specific ideas that the real impact of street art on solving social problems is quite conditional. In particular, the study revealed the opinion that art is a powerful means of expressing socio-cultural change. Therefore, art plays a significant role in highlighting social issues and becomes an important catalyst for public discussion (MOSKVICHOVA, 2020; TIVERS, 2009). Although the understanding of its individual forms and directions may differ in different studies, the conclusions about the importance of art in contemporary transformations are generally relevant. In fact, the analysis of such concepts and their confirmation have made an important contribution to the perception of this field as an important element of modern social development, its transformations, and the socio-cultural state in general.

The practical value of the results lies in the fact that the study provides a deeper understanding of how contemporary art affects society, what roles it plays in addressing social issues, activating citizenship and interaction in public space. The research can also provide useful insights for artists and activists working in the field of street art. They can use the knowledge gained to improve their creative practices and increase the effectiveness of their projects. Importantly, the findings can become the basis for a dialogue between artists, citizens, activists, and authorities. They can serve as a basis for discussing strategies of interaction and joint development of street art initiatives. At the same time, the importance of art in shaping public consciousness against the backdrop of digitalisation is emphasised, which can be crucial in decision-making at different levels, such as local or national, when considering issues of community engagement and support for artistic initiatives.

The analysed views, however, have certain peculiarities that also constitute research limitations. First of all, it is impossible to take into account all the opinions of researchers, because the criteria for including scientific sources in the sample are quite limited. In addition, the perception of all research concepts may depend on the individual opinions, research, and experience of each person in the field of art, design, and culture. For this reason, the proposed remarks on limitations may also have an impact on further study of the proposed topic, since there is no standard for selecting scientific papers for content analysis.

6.   Conclusion

Therefore, the study focuses on the integral and conceptual stage of the development of the artistic worldview, which requires generalisation and systematisation in order to build a unified worldview. It is noted that art is a powerful tool that reflects, shapes, and responds to the socio-cultural dynamics of society. The role of art in highlighting social issues and its transformational potential is emphasised. Art allows for the articulation and representation of unexplored ideas, concepts, and phenomena, promoting debate and social progress. What is important is its ability to transform physical or bodily modes of perception, providing new possibilities for expression and understanding. In addition, contemporary art has an important impact on socio-cultural transformation in the context of contemporary social change. Environmental issues are proving to be one of the most relevant topics for artists who draw attention to environmental problems through their creations. With their ephemeral installations, some artists emphasise the relationship between art and nature, questioning and offering a reflection on the relationship between humans and the environment. In general, art in all its forms is recognised as a dynamic and influential tool that contributes to new narratives, empathy, and positive social change. From street art to virtual spaces, the important contribution of artists to catalysing change across borders and inspiring collective action in response to the complex challenges of our time is recognised. This characteristic view of the role of art in contemporary society emphasises its powerful potential in shaping consciousness and provoking reflection on important aspects of our existence. Promising areas for further research include the impact of digital technologies on art, including the use of virtual reality, artificial intelligence, interactive media, and other digital platforms. This could include analysing audience response, changes in creative approaches, and new forms of expression.

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