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**TRANSFORMATION OF THE SITUATION OF THE UKRAINIAN PEASANTRY  
AT THE END OF THE 16TH – THE FIRST HALF OF THE 17TH CENTURY:  
ON THE EXAMPLE OF KYIV VOIVODESHIP**

**Abstract.** *The purpose of the study is to find out the specifics of land relations and forms of dependency of the peasants of Kyiv Voivodeship at the end of 16th – the first half of the 17th century. The research methodology is based on the use of general scientific (analysis, synthesis, generalization) and special and historical (problem-chronological, historical and systemic, retrospective) methods. The Scientific Novelty. For the first time in domestic historiography, this study has examined the transformation of the peasants' situation of the Naddniprovyanshchyna which was conditioned by the official measures of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth government in order to “develop the Eastern Borderlands” of the state, which was accompanied by changes in land relations and mass colonization of the region by magnates and gentry of both Ukrainian and Polish origin. The Conclusions. Introduction of the folwark economy within Kyiv Voivodeship at the end of 16th century, where the labour of subordinated peasants used, led to a significant increase in social exploitation, including through labour rents. However, the nobility and royal officials were forced to take into account the existing realities: the threat from the Moscow Empire, the danger of the Tatar attacks and the increase of the Cossack stratum among the population, and to regulate tax rules depending on the situation in each region. The transformation of the legal status of the peasants was evidenced by the active development of serfdom, the legal basis of which was enshrined in the Statute of Lithuania of 1588. Peasants of Kyiv Voivodeship still had the opportunity to move to another place of residence, but were obliged to pay a number of taxes in favor of owner. This led to their mass participation in the armed Cossack uprisings.*

**Key words:** *peasantry, transformation, Kyiv Voivodeship, folwark economy, serfdom.*

**ТРАНСФОРМАЦІЯ СТАНОВИЩА УКРАЇНСЬКОГО СЕЛЯНСТВА  
НАПРИКІНЦІ XVI – У ПЕРШІЙ ПОЛОВИНІ XVII ст.:  
НА ПРИКЛАДІ КИЇВСЬКОГО ВОЄВОДСТВА**

**Анотація.** *Мета дослідження – з'ясувати специфіку поземельних відносин та форм залежності селян Київського воєводства наприкінці XVI – у першій половині XVII ст.*

*Методологія дослідження* спирається на використання загальнонаукових (аналіз, синтез, узагальнення) та спеціально-історичних (проблемно-хронологічний, історико-системний, ретроспективний) методів. **Наукова новизна.** Вперше у вітчизняній історіографії досліджено трансформацію становища селян Наддніпрянської України, зумовленою офіційними заходами уряду Речі Посполитої з «освоєння східних кресів» держави, які супроводжувалися зміною земельних відносин та масовою колонізацією краю магнатами і шляхтою як українського так і польського походження. **Висновки.** Запровадження у межах Київського воєводства на схилі XVI ст. фільваркового господарства, в якому використовувалася праця підданих селян, стало причиною суттєвого зростання соціального визиску, зокрема, й через відробіткову ренту. Проте шляхта та королівські урядовці змушені були враховувати реальності: загрозу з боку Московського царства, небезпеку татарських нападів, збільшення козацького прошарку серед населення та регулювати податкові норми залежно від ситуації у кожному регіоні. Про трансформацію правового становища селян свідчив активний розвиток кріпацьких відносин, юридична основа якого була закріплена у нормах Литовського Статуту 1588 р. Селяни Київського воєводства ще мали можливість переселитися на інші місця проживання, але при цьому зобов'язані були сплачувати цілу низку податків на користь власника. Це призвело до їх масової участі у збройних козацьких повстаннях.

**Ключові слова:** селянство, трансформація, Київське воєводство, фільваркове господарство, кріпацтво.

**The Problem Statement.** The beginning of the modern period for the European peasantry was characterized by the destruction of the working form of feudal rent due to the growth of commodity-money relations. However, in the east of the continent, medieval traditions were practiced for a long time and in some cases were developed successfully. A striking example of this phenomenon is the situation of the peasantry of Kyiv Voivodeship at the end of the XVIth – the first half of the XVIIth century. Measures of the government of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth to “develop the Eastern Borderlands” of the state were accompanied by a change in land relations and the introduction of folwark economy, which used the labour of the peasants. However, the threat from the Moscow kingdom, the danger of attacks by the Tatar nomads and the presence of the Cossacks there forced landowners to regulate tax rules in each of their regions. Therefore, it is important to clarify the role of the state and the executors of its policy, representatives of the nobility of both Ukrainian and Polish origin in the colonization of the Naddniprianshchyna.

**The Analysis of Recent Research Works and Publications.** The first mention of the taxation of the peasants of the Naddniprianshchyna at the end of the XVIth – the first half of the XVIIth century is contained in Volume V of Mykhailo Hrushevsky's “History of Ukraine-Rus'” (Grushevs'ky`j, 1994, pp. 218–221). A more thorough study of the issues dates back to the Soviet era, which left its mark on the choice of the corresponding interpretation of the ruthless exploitation of peasants. Oleksiy Baranovich made successful attempts to describe the changes in the structure of land tenure, while studying the colonization of Cossack Ukraine on the eve of the Liberation War of the mid-XVIIth century (Baranovich, 1959). A similar aspect was partially outlined by Ivan Krypiakievych (Kry`p`yakevy`ch, 1990), who emphasized the significant deterioration of the situation of peasants, including in the Naddniprianshchyna. The population of Ukraine in the XVIIth century, in particular, migration processes, which significantly affected the economic situation of its inhabitants, is covered in the article by Olena Kompan (Kompan, 1960). The Ukrainian peasantry of the second half of the XVIth – first half of the XVIIth century became the subject of Ivan Boyko's study. Focusing on the development of the peasant households, he did not set aside the issue of land relations and duties of peasants (Bojko, 1963). During the period of the Ukrainian independence, the peasant theme of the early modern period ceased to appear among the

priority areas of domestic research. At the same time, generalized material on this topic is contained in Volume 1 of the collective monograph on the history of the Ukrainian peasantry (Smolii, 2006). The social status of the peasantry in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was also the subject of investigations by foreign historians A. Vynchans'kyi, P. Korys' and M. Malinovs'kyi (Wyczański, 1978, Korys, 2016, Malinowski, 2016).

**The purpose** of the article is to clarify the specifics of land relations and forms of dependence of the peasants of the Kyiv Voivodeship at the end of the XVIth – the first half of the XVIIth century.

**The Main Material Statement.** Kyiv Voivodeship was the largest territorial unit among the Ukrainian Voivodeships of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. It was located on both banks of the Dnieper from the border with the Belarusian lands in the north and the Moscow Empire in the east. The southern borders reached the steppes of the Upper Dnieper to the nomad's camps of the Tatars. Despite the fertile black soil and favorable climatic conditions for agriculture, the southern part was sparsely populated due to constant invasions by nomads. In the north, with an extensive system of small rivers, preference was given to animal husbandry, forestry, beekeeping, hunting, fishing, and others. The left-bank Kyiv region covered mainly the Pereyaslav land, around which there was the so-called "wild field", where only summer hunting of hunters and fishermen took place (Arhiv, 1886, pp. 84–85, 101).

During the Lithuanian era, the vast majority of lands in the Kyiv Voivodeship belonged to the state. Accordingly, the provision of them for the use by the peasants obliged the latter to pay rent in certain amounts and forms, which depended on the evolution of aristocratic land tenure. However, in the second half of the XVIth century, the situation changed dramatically. This happened due to the socio-economic development of European countries and the involvement of landowners of the Commonwealth in both domestic and foreign markets. Commodity-money relations led to the active development of the folwark economy, which resulted in the introduction of labor rents. In Volyn' and Bratslavshchyna, which became part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth after the Union of Lublin, panshchyna in private ownership quickly reached a few days a week. A slightly different structure of land rent forms was observed in Kyiv Voivodeship, where folwarks were practically non-existent and peasants were considered free. They strongly opposed the introduction of new taxes on their land. Only in some villages of the northern Kyiv region, there were cases of labour rent for several days a year, usually seasonally (Grushevs'kyj, 1994, pp. 218–221).

To a large extent, the transformation of the situation of the peasantry in the Kyiv Voivodeship was conditioned by the Constitution of the Warsaw Sejm of April 19, 1590. The Resolution referred to the distribution of "deserts beyond Bila Tserkva, from which there were no profits, neither public nor private". The granting of lands was provided for people of nobility honored by the Commonwealth. This territory stretched from the Right-bank Ukraine, in particular Volodarka, Velyka Sloboda, Rokytne to the border with the Moscow on the left bank of the Dnieper (Volumina legume, 1859, p. 318).

Since then, the Naddniprianshchyna had become an arena of the so-called "land development" primarily by Russian / Ukrainian princes Vyshnevetsky, Ostrogski, Chetvertynsky, Zbarazhsky, who concentrated in their hands about 2/3 of the land, created huge latifundia, which led to redistribution of land relations (Kry'p'yakevy'ch, 1990, 16). Later, the Polish rulers Zolkiewski, Koniecpolski, Zamoyski, Zbarazki, and Potocki joined them (Litvin, 2016, pp. 492–527). Numerous noble families of the Polish and Ukrainian origin from Galicia and Volyn' arrived, while receiving land which was promised by the

state. At the same time, they also engaged in settlement activities by founding new farms and villages. Some of them were representatives of the Cossack families. Thus, Mykhailo Sulyma, the Volyn nobleman of Kremenets volost founded the village of Rohoshcha in Lyubetsky starostvo, where the future Cossack hetman was born. Ivan Sulyma continued his father's work in the Pereyaslav region, for which as a reward he received the villages of Lebedyn, Kuchakiv and Ravine, which later became known as the sloboda Sulimovka (Sulimovskiy arhiv, 1884, p. IV). Mykhailo Khmelnytsky, originated from a noble Galician family, having joined the service of Korsun-Chyhyryn starosta Jan Daniłowicz, founded the Subotiv village (Kry`p`yakevy`ch, 1990, pp. 41–42), and his son became the leader of the National Liberation War in Ukraine. Peasants from the western Ukrainian lands also joined the resettlement movement, unwilling to pay burdensome labor rents and rising taxes.

Thus, Kyiv Voivodeship changed its social face gradually. Along with new hamlets, slobodas and villages, towns and cities were founded, primarily in magnate latifundia. The volume of both domestic and foreign trade grew accordingly. However, the most significant phenomenon was the development of folwark economy, which was based on the principle of forced labor in favour of the owner. As a result, the peasants were gradually restricted from the right to move to a new place of residence, which they used in the previous period, although this process took place gradually and lasted for several decades. For a guaranteed income, the landowner did not apply the immediate introduction of panshchyna, because the peasants had the opportunity to move to the southern regions, despite the threat of the Tatar invasions. As a rule, in the newly established settlements, the peasants were given a kind of privilege – postponement of labour rent and payment of natural taxes from 3 to 20 years, which was of great importance for the development of their economic activities. Such settlement was in the status of “sloboda”. The term of such “slobodas” was often extended several times at the peasants' demand, which landowners had to put up with.

In order to clarify land relations in the region, it is possible to use mainly audits of royal estates, as documents of private property have hardly been preserved. However, there was no great difference in the forms and norms of rent in state and noble estates. The common desire of their owners was to use natural resources for their enrichment in the shortest possible time.

Agriculture provided the basis for the development of such industries as distillation, weaving, animal husbandry. In the territory of the Northern Kyiv region, fishing and animal husbandry even had advantages over agriculture. They required less labour in the presence of suitable pastures and long seasonal grazing. At the same time, it should be noted that the demand for livestock products was growing steadily. Large groups of cattle – horses, oxen, sheep – were driven from the Dnieper to Lviv, Kazimierz, Toruń and Gdańsk.

The evolution of relations between peasants and landowners should be considered in direct connection with the development of all sectors of the economy and the specific features of the regions. At the same time, due to the actual lack of inventories of estates in the Kyiv Voivodeship, in contrast to Bratslavshchyna and Volyn', lustrations of state property are of the greatest importance. Quite detailed evidence of them is provided by lustration materials. However, lustrations did not cover all taxable economic objects and therefore could not contain comprehensive material on land relations between the direct producer and the local government official. At the same time, the latter often hid entire villages and hamlets from the royal inspectors in order to reduce the tax on the property they owned.

According to the audit of Kaniv starostvo of 1615 – 1616, there were no villages, only the Cossack hamlets, on its territory (Źródła dziejowe, 1877, p. 104). Thereafter, the Cossack

population prevailed, and a small number of peasants did not perform any duties, except to protect the castle from the Tatar raids. However, seven years later (1622) the situation changed significantly. Lustrators noted the presence of 11 villages on the right bank of the Dnieper and 4 on the left bank, the residents of which served in favour of the castle. At the same time, they competed fiercely with the Cossacks, who “make all their goods in the fields as well as in the rivers, taking away almost all land not only in the city but also in the villages” (*Źródła dziejowe*, 1877, p. 131). That is, even in the face of the danger of the Tatar attacks, the peasants were forced to defend their rights to use the land.

It should be noted that in this steppe zone, there was no significant difference between the Cossacks, the bourgeoisie and the peasantry, as the latter considered themselves free, possessed weapons and skillfully used them. Therefore the ruler could not impose a forced rent, but instead tried to obtain a food or monetary tax from the direct producer. Only in exceptional cases the inspectors recorded small folwark farms. Thus, in the village of Kyrylivka, which was in the possession of Teodor Tyshkevych, the peasants performed *zazhynky*, *obzhynky*, *obkosity* and *toloky* on lords’ food, but did not pay any taxes (*Arhiv*, 1886, p. 285). However, this phenomenon was not typical for the region. At the same time, the farms of rural free producers and burghers, who had their farms, homesteads, apiaries, fishery and animal capture in the steppes, had many common features. Along with them, there were farms of runaway peasants who defended their freedom and the right to free labor with weapons in their hands. They independently managed the produced necessary and additional products.

The value of inventories is that they represent the real levels of taxes. Thus, in 1622, the peasants of Kaniv starostvo had to pay 20 Lithuanian groshy from the court, and the neighbours – 12 groshy (Central Archives of Historical Records in Warsaw. Crown treasury archive (CAHR.CThA), f. LVI, d. 13, p. 7). At this time, the latter made up half of the rural population. They helped the wealthy Cossacks, burghers and peasants to run households, and also served the state crafts. If necessary, statesmen were often forced to use hired labour. The Tatar raids and the Cossack uprisings remained a restraining factor in the introduction of folwark economy until the middle of the XVIIth century.

Similar circumstances were peculiar to Cherkasy starostvo, the territory of which was also on both sides of the Dnieper. In particular, it included such slobodas as Irkliiv, Govtva, Krapivna, Borovytsia. An important source of income of the Cherkasy starostwo were steppe fisheries on the rivers Vorskla, Tiasmyn, Poluzor. In 1615 – 1616 the auditors did not note the permanent duties of the peasantry, except for military service. This region also became the scene of mass migration of peasants in the 1720s – 1730s, which was accompanied by the emergence of dozens of new settlements. Naturally, the royal officials did not record the existence of labour rent, but only the payment of monetary tax by local residents (*Źródła dziejowe*, 1877, 107).

Korsun and Bohuslav starostvos were in somewhat more favourable conditions, as they suffered less losses from the Tatar raids and were located closer to commercial centres. This is clearly evidenced by the audits of the starostvo of 1615 – 1616 on income, although most of them were collected from crafts and livestock. Mass popular colonization also took place here, which was accompanied by the emergence of villages, slobodas and towns. Their inhabitants were mostly peasants and the Cossacks. Until the 1940s, there was no information about the presence of folwarks in Korsun and Boguslav starostvo. Instead, the subordinate population performed their duties in various industries – construction, mills, fishing, apiaries, etc. (*Źródła dziejowe*, 1877, pp. 108, 136). As for labor rent, it was just emerging in private ownership.

The highest level of development of the productive forces of Kyiv Voivodeship was observed in Bila Tserkva starostvo. In the first half of the XVIIth century, many private and processional estates appeared on its territory. In fact, the possessors moved forward to creating grain folwarks, although the peasantry was in a state of constant migration. At the end of the sloboda, the peasant had the opportunity to move to another place of residence and organize his own new farm.

Simultaneously with the creation of folwarks, panshchyna was introduced. According to the audit of 1616, in the village of Romanivka of Bila Tserkva starostvo, peasants worked 1 day a week in winter and 2 days a week in summer, and also paid chetvertyna tax. In the village of Strokov, the related peasants cultivated the folwark with the means of the landowner's labour (*Źródła dziejowe*, 1877, pp. 113, 114). The inhabitants of the village of Pivni worked 2 weeks a year mainly on haymaking and paid 17 zloty and gave a quarter of oats and one capon. And the neighboring villages of Zubari, Kozynky, Polovetske, Stav were on "slobodas", i.e., did not perform their duties, because those settlements "were burned by the Tatars" (Arhiv, 1886, 290). However, due to the high level of peasant migration, the noble folwark economy in Bila Tserkva did not have great prospects for development. The implementation of the principles of noble land policy by the government of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was in deep conflict with the economic interests of the region's inhabitants. Therefore, landowners often had to hire labour, as evidenced by the lustration of Kyiv Voivodeship.

The economic face of Kyiv and Zhytomyr starostvos had many differences compared to the neighboring southern districts. First of all, they were more densely populated and economically developed (Arhiv, 1876, pp. 224–225). The centers of large magnate land tenure appeared here along with small and medium nobility. At the same time, the authorities tried to lure peasants from other regions without the permission of their owners and settle on their lands, not introducing labour rents at first, but limiting to small duties. Thus, in the newly settled village of Pulyn, Kyiv starostvo, in the 1690s, peasants served settling servitude once a year, gave chynsh in cash – 10 kip of money and 14 buckets of fresh Zhytomyr honey. And the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages of Raika and Zbrylivka did not perform their duties because the villages were "free" (Arhiv, 1876, pp. 226–230). The peasants of Bystryk and Zhydivtsi near Berdychiv performed a number of duties: taxes on korchma, vodka, honey, beer, mill, pond etc., paid natural taxes: half of barley and oats, two chickens, one goose (Arhiv, 1876, p. 373). The lack of clear regulation of servitude and taxes often opened wide opportunities for arbitrariness of the landowner against the peasant.

However, since the beginning of the 1620s, there was a labour rent. Thus, the peasants of Baranivka, Pnyshchevo, Stanislavtsy and Gazyntsy of the Zhytomyr starostvo worked for the landowner 2 days a week in summer and 1 day in winter. Similar working rent was observed in Belgorod, which belonged to Princess Anna Chodkievich (Arhiv, 1876, p. 377). According to the data of 1622, private folwarks existed in the villages of Goyshyntsi, Stanishivka, Pnyshcheve, Veresy, Vaskov near Zhytomyr (Institute of Manuscripts of the National Library of Ukraine named after V.I. Vernadsky (IMNLU), f. 2, d. 27704, p. 49). In fact, the folwark economy gave the starostvo half of all profits, which indicates the growth of its marketability.

The rate of labor rent in the Kyiv starostvo was also not high and applied only to individual villages. Thus, in the village of Ostrivok, Ovruch County, as noted in the lustration of 1615 – 1616, the community "works two days a week" and gave a natural tax of "one measure of oats two of capons" in the absence of monetary rent. The norm of working was also clearly defined in the village of Pryschi, five owners of which had "to work one day a week in a

year” (Źródła dziejowe, 1877, p. 80). As a rule, this was done in a certain season, but later the summer-winter panshchyna was complemented with threshing and spring plowing of the lord’s field and a one-two-day norm was established.

Since the beginning of the XVIIth century, as the folwark economy expanded and the villages passed into private hands, the peasants were freed from working for the benefit of local government officials and had to serve the landowner all year round. This can be illustrated by the materials of the community of the village of Yolche, Lubetsky County, the peasants of which, along with chetvertyna tax and “zhitni dyakla”, had to “work for Lyubych three weeks a year”. And with the transfer of the village to Prince Semyon Lisko, according to the lustrator, they had “the weight of the house will be sent to the folwark, then they were not opposed to working 2 days a week in the spring” (Źródła dziejowe, 1877, p. 127).

Thus, all three forms of land rent coexisted on the territory of Kyiv Voivodeship: natural, monetary and labor rent. In the northern part of Kyiv region there was a predominance of natural rent in combination with two others. In the southern region, the peasants were still little involved in the nobility’s economy, so there were few or no rules because of the constant Tatar attacks. In the central starostvos, due to the introduction of folwarks, panshchyna was gradually established with the corresponding duties.

At the end of the XVIth century, significant changes had taken place in the socio-economic and legal situation of the Ukrainian peasantry. They were primarily conditioned by the development of folwark economy, which was based on the principle of forced labor and the need to provide it with labour forces. This led to the gradual restriction of the peasants in the so-called right of exit, which they exercised in the previous period. At the same time, the legislative base of panshchyna was formed.

The provisions of the Statute of Lithuania of 1588, which extended to the territory of Kyiv Voivodeship, provided that a peasant who lived for a certain period in the possession of a prince, lord or landowner and expressed a desire to leave had first serve his master or pay money for every week of established labor rent. The Statute also provided for the return of the escapees and the imposition of a fine in the amount of the damage he had done to the owner (Statuty, 2004, p. 573).

The situation of the so-called “pokhozhi” peasants, i.e., those who formally had the right to move, was not the best. After living on the land of a prince or nobleman for 10 years and deciding to leave the place of residence, the man had to pay 10 kips of money for the “zapomozhenie” (money or stock) provided by the owner even if it is not being used. In other words, landowners tried to legitimate the prohibition of peasants’ leaving and to provide supplies for abandoned households to make it easier to rebuild by settling new people. The Statute of 1588 explicitly stated: “If the children, being free, wished to go away, then these two parts of the property could take with them and they could go away, but only the land should be left to their master with rye sown, with houses and everything what they used while in the economic service” (Statuty, 2004, p. 630). Thus, it was inefficient for peasants to move to other places except in emergency situations. However, the growing social exploitation pushed the peasants to risky actions.

The issue of jurisdiction of his peasant was also resolved in favour of the landowner. The nobles were given the power to judge their own people and to impose fines on them. Public officials had the right to deliver justice to private subjects only in cases of robbery, rape, arson and infliction of bodily harm on a nobleman. In addition, peasants were forbidden to testify in court against their landowners (Statuty, 2004, p. 493).

The state peasants were in a slightly different position, as they were allowed to appeal to the referendum court against the statesmen of the royal estates. The reason for the lawsuit could be their abuse of the position, such as an increase in government duties or customary peasant duties. However, the declared right was violated in every possible way in everyday life. The court nobles sided with the accused, and the plaintiffs-peasants were fined and demanded the termination of the claims. In case of disobedience, the peasants were subjected to physical torture, accused of robbery (Loziński, 1903, p. 593).

The unequal status of the peasant in comparison with the nobleman is fixed by norms of the legislation. This, in particular, concerned the responsibility for the crime. For example, for the murder of a nobleman by a peasant, the latter had to be killed, and the nobleman only lost his hand. According to sources, the peasant deserved to die even when he used or bought stolen things, knowing their origin (Arhiv, 1876, pp. 212–214). The peasant was also deprived of the right to hold any government positions, both lower and higher state authorities.

At the same time, the medieval law was often more effective than the existing legal norms of the early modern period. Noble arbitrariness due to the introduction of panshchyna and armed robberies had a negative impact on the situation of the peasantry. Therefore, it is natural that peasants became more and more involved in the Cossack uprisings, which later grew into the National Liberation War of the Ukrainian people in 1648 – 1657.

**The Conclusions.** As a result of the government policy of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth to “develop the Eastern Borderlands” of the state at the end of the XVIth – the first half of the XVIIth century, there was a radical change in land relations in Kyiv Voivodeship. It was accompanied by mass colonization of the region by magnates and nobility of both Ukrainian and Polish origin. Along with this, a large number of peasants from the western Ukrainian regions moved to the Naddniprianshchyna in search of a better life. The introduction of folwark economy led to increased social exploitation, including through labour rents. However, the nobility and royal officials were forced to take into account the existing realities: the threat from the Moscow Empire, the danger of the Tatar raids and the growth of the Cossack stratum; and to regulate tax rules depending on the situation in each region. The transformation of the legal status of the peasants was evidenced by the active development of panshchyna, the legal basis of which was fixed in the Statute of Lithuania of 1588. Peasants of Kyiv Voivodeship still had the opportunity to move to another place, but were obliged to pay a number of taxes. This led to their mass participation in the armed Cossack uprisings.

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