Ritual Landscape of Iranian Tower and its Effect on Tourism Management

Mahdieh Bod*
1.Science and Culture University, Tehran, Iran.

Abstract | The study of the historical trend of the term "Tower" (equivalent in Persian to Borj) in dictionaries shows that it was seminally used to refer to the fortifications constructed at the corner of cities, castles and palaces. It gradually underwent semantic development and nowadays, minarets have given their position to the towers used for various purposes. Towers have served diverse and numerous applications in Iran. Besides in the perimeter of the castles, they were also constructed on the two sides of the caravansaries' entry gates for such purposes as lookout and surveillance. The dovecotes were also used to be called pigeon towers as some tombs have become to be known as tower or turret. A number of turrets on the top of which fire was set to guide the lost individuals were also called tower. The present study aims to study the Iranian towers from the visitors' point of view. The study has made an attempt to adapt the meaning and root of the term "tower" in the course of history after its etymology. It will be figured out in a subtle look at the meaning of the term that the Persian dictionaries have largely pointed to a defensive, security and military function of tower. Through meticulous examination of the term's meaning and root, it can be found out that in Persian dictionary, the defensive, security, and military functions of it have mostly been focused, while in Arabic language, attentions have been mostly paid to its information provision aspect. A vast spectrum of tower functions, generally classified under four titles, namely symbolic, information provision, functional and military, can be found out in an investigation of the historical towers registered in Iran's Administration of Cultural Heritage and Tourism. Using scrutiny, it is made evident that a large number of the towers were served as the multiple purpose constructions . In addition it seems there is a relationship between the towers' shapes and uses as well as between their geographical scattering and their different applications and this is to be elucidated in further research.

Keywords | Landscape, Tower, Iranian Tower, Tourism.

Introduction| Literally, tower is defined as a tall and thin structure with several sides used mostly for lookout and defense. The term shares the same meaning in Arabic and Persian. It has also been observed in the Middle Persian as Burg. Before 19th century, high-rise buildings existed in the form of mountain-like temples such as pyramids, amphitheaters, castles, city halls, synagogues, mosques, cathedrals, different kinds of fortresses and other types They were predominantly designed with political or religious motivations and they were the manifestations of the power and faith (Navabakhsh & Rahmani, 2010). In the eastern Islamic territories, tower was the main element of the fortifications that were deemed most valuable and most useful in a period of time from conquests to the use of artillery.

✉ *mahdieh_bod@yahoo.com
09122548394

The considerable importance of the defensive towers since the early Islamic period until the 10th century should not cause an ignorance towards the towers that existed in the region since long ago but had no military function. Some of these towers were very simple in their architectural design; the first examples of them are rectangular towers with exterior walls equipped with semi-circular protrusions left in the ruins of Omavis domiciles. Based on the archaeological discoveries, using towers as fortification and defense factors dates back to the period of early urbanization on Iran Plain and it has always been taken into account afterwards when constructing dwelling places. Iran's towers were occasionally built in the form of surrounding cylinders in the vicinity of the city walls or castles and they were also constructed in the form of castle fortifications at some other times. The towers built in the corner of the castles were circular and the ones made on the side walls were semi-circular or sometimes rectangular.

Etymology and Lexicology of Tower:

In Persian, the term "tower" refers to any landmark including castle, palace, battlement, belvedere or any tall and wide building; as commonly used by astronomers, it refers to the residence place of the stars as well as to each of the twelve months in solar calendar. Arab linguists are bewildered in regard of the identification of the terrm roots due to the existence of a lot of synonyms, inconsistent in many cases (Ibn Manzour, 1995: 395) and they have occasionally mentioned two independent principles for it: manifestation and shelter (Labi Al-Hussein, 1982: 238). Some others have pointed to two attributes, tallness and exposedness, in defining tower as well as in finding a relationship between it and its other synonyms like embankment. Some others know the term derived of such a principle as manifestation and they have made efforts in line with generalizing the concept so that it can include all derivatives of the root (Mostafavi, 2005, 284). This is while the etymologists know tower with the intended meaning as an Arabic word hence of a Greek and Syriac history.

The term tower is widely used in Arabic as in Persian and it refers to any outstanding building (Ibn Manzour, 1995: 395). The study of the historical trend of the term in dictionaries is indicative of the idea that tower was preliminarily used to refer only to the fortifications made in the corner of the walls of cities, castles and palaces (Ibn Ahmad, 1993: 74); then, it underwent a gradual development and the whole building was also called

tower disregarding the existence of fortification (Labi Al-Hussein, 1982: 238). The Greek term "Perges" means notches on the city fortifications. With a little change in Syriac, it means minaret, notch and resting place of travelers. In the same vein, it has also been applied to refer to the resting position of the constellations. And it is more likely a military term in Levant and northern Saudi Arabia once dominated by Romans from which it stepped in Aramaic dialects and then Arabic and, accepting the pluralization regulations in Arabic, it was used in the form of "Borooj" in the holy Quran (Jefferi, 1993: 140).

Some believe that Borj (tower) is the Arabized equivalent of the term Burg in Pahlavi language. Another form of the term is Barz which means tall in Laki and Kurdi, in both of which Berg also means tall and elevated (Kazzazi, 2000: 59).

In Mo'ein Persian Dictionary, tower is defined as: 1) an elevated place made for guarding of an edifice or castle; 2) castle, fortress; 3) each of the twelve constellations wherein the sun takes position during each month (months of the year) (Mo'ein, 2003: 150).

In Dehkhoda Dictionary, it has also been used to refer to castle and palace:

"Borj" is the name given to some villages in Iran; such as the village that is one member of a group of villages in Kazzaz Olia'a, Sarband District, Arak County, probably because it is mountainous and cold. A village near the city of Kahneh, suburban region of Quchan County, a village in Ardoughash, Ghadamgah part of Neishaboor County, a village in Maneh in Bojnoord County, a village in Markazi Province, a village in the suburbs of Bojnoord County, a village in Marusk, Sarvelayat part of Neishaboor County, a village in Qurichay, Qarreh Aqaj part of Maraqeh County are all consisted of two neighborhoods called Borj-e-Bala and Borj-e-Pa'ein (meaning the upper and the lower towers). A village in Khandeman, in Rafsanjan and a village in Mian Abad, Esfarayen County in Bojnoord are also called Borj (Dehkhoda, 1991: 80).

It can be discerned in a study and investigation of the term tower that loftiness is an element playing a very important role therein in such a way that the tall places are called tower in the majority of the cases. Moreover, time has also been an important element in this term and it is conjectured that there might be a relationship between time and space in appellation of tower. Generally speaking, it can be asserted that tower is a term featuring both temporal and spatial aspects.

The Difference between Tower and Minaret:

Minaret, defined as the place of light and fire, was constructed in the past as a memorial sign and building. Minarets were enumerated as good signs for finding a path as well as good marks for the identification and enrollment of their builders and kings (Pourjafar & Pourjafar, 2010). Minarets have been made in the deserts and/or in the beginning part of the cities for guiding and leading the travelers from long ago and they were also occasionally used as demarcations for indicating the distance between the two things. It is stated that Abraheh Ibn Al-Harth Al-Ra'esh, a Yemeni king, was the first person who built minarets on the roadsides. He used to build such signs on the roads during his battles so as to find his way in return. This method of pathfinding has been the only recognized way of guiding and leading travelers to their destination up to the recent centuries. It is said that Nader Shah ordered the construction of minarets by the use of stones and bricks and gypsum in dry deserts for guiding the caravans and missions; the remnants of them can be still seen in the sandy lands between Kerman and Baluchestan (Dehkhoda, 1994: 325). The idea of guiding the marine and land travelers to the destination by means of minaret remained amongst the people since the past till the industry era and the minarets remaining on the seaside and roadside from the past up to the present time, such as Eskandariyeh Minaret and Naderi Minaret are all witnesses to this claim.

Essentially, tower and minaret feature two completely different identities in the history. Historically, tower and minaret are two old phenomena dating back to before the advent of Islam. Minarets differ from towers in both shape and use. Several guards and watchmen were set on top of the towers for guarding and protecting the castle and city but fire was set on top of the minaret so that the travelers might not lose their way at night. There was built a small wall on top of the towers along with notches for the guards and watchmen but it was missing from the minarets. Towers were made with no shades but shades were built on top of the minaret for protecting the fire from snow and rain. Because tower construction served lookout, it was usually made in cylindrical shapes with large diameters but minarets were made cylindrical with small diameters and taller. Generally, the shape identity of the tower and minaret can be determined from their crests in such a way that the use identity of minaret can be summarized as route-indicator and that of a tower can be succinctly introduced in watch-out and protection. Therefore, the idea that the Muslims have copied the minarets from the towers constructed in castles and cities does not seem

correct (Najafi, 2002).

It can be finally stated that minaret, as the place of light and fire, was built as a memorial sign and structure. Minarets are good signs for finding a path as well as good marks for their constructors and kings' identification and registration. Some minarets were designed and constructed on mosques at the side of the dome so that the voice of Muezzin could be heard in distant places, as well. However, minarets have currently given their position to towers serving various uses (Pourjafar & Pourjafar, 2010).

Discussion
Landscape and visitors' Perspective

The common theme of the majority of the contemporary writings underlines the point that landscape paves a more effective way for the recognition of the world. It provides a conceptual framework of the living environment wherein we analyze what we have seen and perceive based thereon. It also lays the foundation of a basic systematic viewpoint for understanding the spatial patterns and the processes we see in our periphery as well as the way people use to align the environment with their wants and needs. Therefore, comprehension of the perspective provides for thinking about the environment in various ways (Mansouri, 2010).

Visitor's Viewpoints of Iranian Tower

Out of about 27000 works registered in Cultural Heritage and Tourism Organization, over 300 have been recorded with the use of the term tower in their names (http://iranshahrpedia.ir). The following functions have been extracted for Iranian tower in an investigation of these works. These functions have been illustrated in the diagram in Figure 1. The notable point is that many of the towers have served multiple purposes that can incorporate a collection of the following cases (Fig. 1).

symbolic nature of the towers: many of the towers were recognized as symbols. Three groups of towers can be pointed out with such a function: the first group incorporates the towers in religious places belonging to some religions such as the fire-temples and synagogues situated on the towers that can be exemplified by "Seh Gonbad Tower" in Azerbaijan-e-Sharghi Province (Heritage Organization, 1935: 242); furthermore, the bells of some churches were constructed in tower-like places such as the "Church Bell Tower" in Qazvin Province (Heritage Organization, 1998 b), (Fig. 2). The second group encompasses the towers made to the memory of a thing and signifying the place wherein an important incident has occurred or they were built on
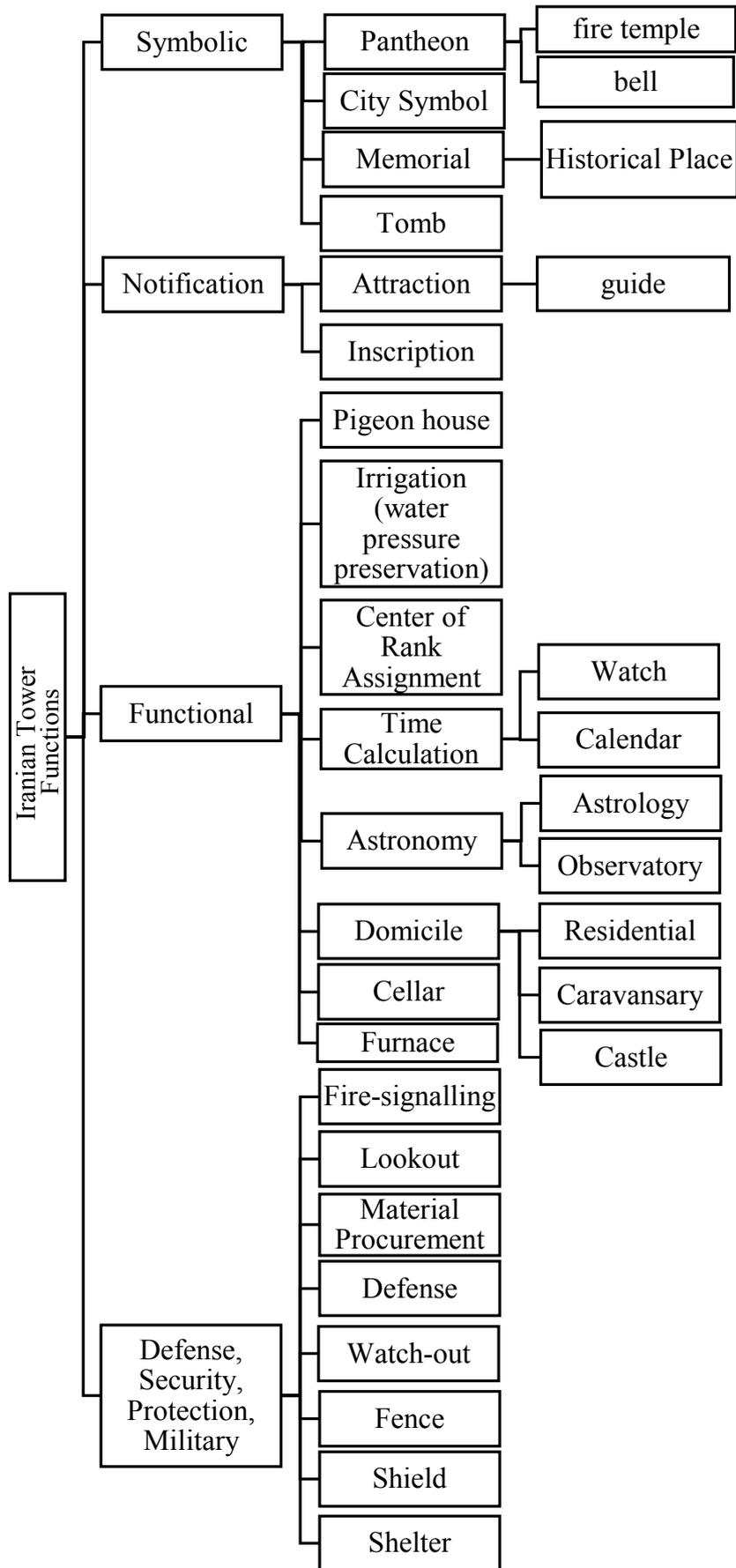
Symbolic	Pantheon	fire temple
		bell
	City Symbol	
	Memorial	Historical Place
	Tomb	
Notification	Attraction	guide
	Inscription	
Functional	Pigeon house	
	Irrigation (water pressure preservation)	
	Center of Rank Assignment	
	Time Calculation	Watch
		Calendar
	Astronomy	Astrology
		Observatory
	Domicile	Residential
	Cellar	Caravansary
	Furnace	Castle
Defense, Security, Protection, Military	Fire-signalling	
	Lookout	
	Material Procurement	
	Defense	
	Watch-out	
	Fence	
	Shield	
	Shelter	

(Iranian Tower Functions)

Fig. 1: Multifunctionality of Iranian towers. Source: Author.

a sacred tomb and/or grave of a prominent person such as "Shahzadeh Hussein's Tomb Tower" in Savejbolagh (Heritage Organization, 2001 b). The third group embraces the towers built as a symbol of a city such as "Azadi Tower" or "Shahyad Tower" (Heritage Organization, 1974).

Provision of information is the second function of towers: there are inscriptions and/or reliefs on top of many of the towers that notify the visitors of a certain message such as the "Ashton Baba's Brick Tower" in Kurdistan (Heritage Organization, 1983). Some towers were constructed for gaining attraction and guiding the travelers such as "Chah Khoor Tower" in Yazd (Heritage Organization, 2006 b).

Providing for different use cases is the third function of towers: such uses as pigeon-houses, like "Borj-e-Agha" in Isfahan Province (Heritage Organization, 2006 a); irrigation (preservation of water pressure) like "Melli Bank Borj-e-Aab" (Heritage organization, 1996), cellar, "Shahzadeh Hussein Tomb Tower" wherein there was a cellar (Heritage organization, 2001 a) and towers that were constructed for a special purpose such as assignment of a position or rank to certain individuals like "Khal'at-Poushan tower" in Azerbaijan-e-Sharghi (Heritage Organization, 1998 c) can be pointed out in this set. The other group of towers served such goals as time assessment by showing hour, day, month and year, like "Watch Tower" in Gilan

Province (Heritage Organization, 1977). The other group of the functional towers was utilized for astronomical purposes such as in astrology and/or as observatory such as Toqrol Tower in Shahr-e-Ray (Heritage Organization, 1931) and another group of these towers was used as domicile, either in caravansaries, like Borj-e-Chah Khoor (Heritage Organization, 2006 b), or in castles, like Borj-e-Amanollah" in Kerman Province (Heritage Organization, 2005 a) or they were solely residential, like Borj-e-Bemuni Agha, in Khuzestan (Heritage Organization, 2005 e) and the last group of these towers were served as furnaces, like Borj-e-Shushtari in Fars Province (Heritage Organization, 2007).

The last set of towers have had defensive, protective and securing functions, including the fire extinction towers such as "Borj-e-Atashneshan"(Fig. 3) in Tabriz (Heritage Organization, 1998 a), lookout towers, such as Borj-e-Bagherabad in Yazd (Heritage Organization, 2005 b), defensive towers, like Borj-e-Cheshmeh Mavalid in Khorasan (Heritage Organization, 2001 b), shelter such as Borj-e-Arjanan in Yazd (Heritage Organization, 2005 c); guarding towers like "Borj-e-Baba Najm" in Fars Province (heritage organization, 2003), provisioning towers and shielding towers such as Borj-e-Azabkouh that served both of the functions (Heritage organization, 2005 d).

Fig. 3: The Fire Fighting Tower of Tabriz.
Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tabriz_Fire_Fighting_Tower
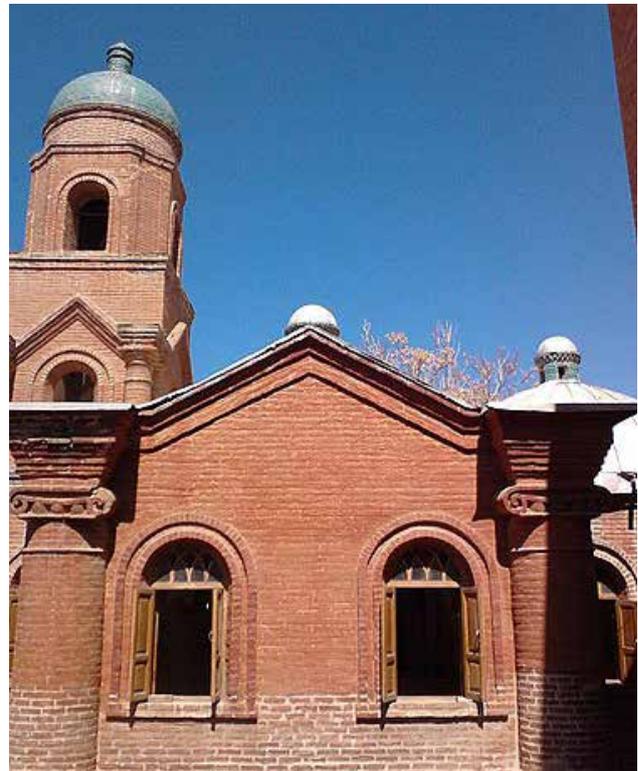
Fig. 2: The Tower of kantur church, Qazvin.
Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russian_Church,_Qazvin

The role of Tower in Tourism

Towers are recounted as attractive places drawing the attention of a great number of tourists. Of course, the vast array of towers' uses is less attended to due to the low knowledge of the tour leaders and they only suffice to the explanation of superficial points such as the age and height and, perhaps, one or two of the distinct functions of the towers. In this section, two Iranian examples are presented of distinct touristic towers in which the abovementioned use cases are more accentuated:

Qaboos Ibn Voshmgir Tower

The tower is amongst the best historical edifices from the fourth hegira century and it is considered as the tallest brick building worldwide. As explicitly stated in an inscription on Qaboos Tower, Amir Shams Al-Ma'ali constructed the tower in 976. There are different notions about what has been the preliminary goal of making the structure. The most likely motive behind it, is building a tomb for its founder, Qaboos Ibn Voshmgir. Of course, the idea that the aforementioned structure has also been used as a sign and mark in the city of Jorjan (today's Gorgan) for guiding the travelers in the moors near the city is also strengthened considering the long height thereof. Even if it is considered that the structure has not been built with such a purpose, the long height of the tower (70m) in Jorjan's moors has been a sign and mark for the travelers (Pourjafar & Pourjafar, 2010), (Fig. 4).

Toghrol Tower

Toghrol's tower tomb is located in the east of Ibn Babooyeh's grave in Shahr-e-Ray and it is a relic from Seleucids' era. Disregarding the cone-shaped dome no trace of which can be seen today, the tower is about 20-meter high. The story of the tower's formation and appellation is interesting; Toghrol Baik, the first, becomes sick on his way back from Baghdad to his capital city in 1034 and dies at 70 and his body is buried in the tomb prepared beforehand for him. The architectural style used in this tower is a branch of Raazi Architecture Style that was founded during the third hegira century and reached its peak of development during fifth hegira century. It is a combination of Parthian and Persian architectural style. The inscriptions existent on the building were destroyed during repair works in Naser Al-Din Shah's period. This tower-tomb that has had a dome like the other Seleucid era's graves was destroyed during an earthquake. There are interesting ideas about the other uses of tower such as its being used as a direction indicator; fire was set on top of it at nights and the travelers and caravans could find their way into the city, (Fig. 5).

Fig. 4: Gonband-e-Qabous.
Source: www.gardeshnama.com/attraction/318
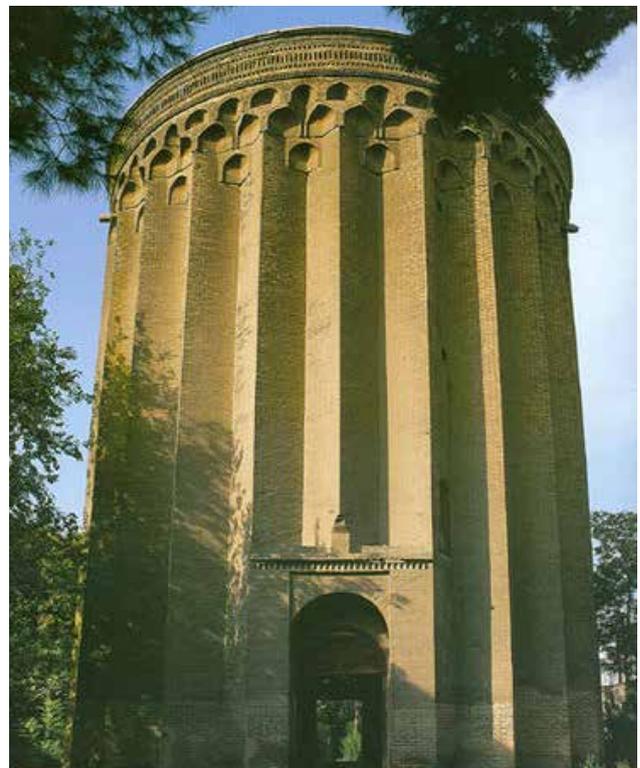
Fig. 5: Tughrul Tower.
Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tughrul_Tower

Conclusion

Scrutinizing the meaning and root of the term "tower, it can be found out that the Persian dictionaries have paid a greater deal of attention to the defensive, security and military functions of the towers while an investigation of the term in Arabic makes it clear that the notification function of the tower has been more highlighted. A vast spectrum of functions under four symbolic groups, namely symbolic, notification, functional and military, can be achieved in the investigation of the historical tower works registered in Iran's Organization of Cultural Heritage and Tourism and it is made clear in a further examination that many of these towers used to serve several purposes. The last point is that there is a relationship between the shape of the towers and their different applications as well as the towers' geographical scattering and their different applications and this is required to be clarified in further research in this regard.

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