

**Al Amir AbdelKader: Man of State and Science****Dr.FRIMECHEMalika****Faculty of politics -University Salah Boubnider - Constantine****Abstract :**

Generally, El Amir Abdelkader is much more known as one of the most great national heroes, because he was the founder of the Algerian modern State as well as a big fighter of French Colonization. it was specially by these two roles that Abdelkader is famous either here in Algeria , or abroad .However, focusing only these roles seems to be not fair and can be a reductionist perspective, because the contributions of this man were larger to be limited into such view. In addition, Abdelkader was humanist embracing and defending all cultures, religions and human values, as he was scientist, poet and writer promoting and valuating the importance of knowledge and sciences in the evolvment and emancipation of societies.

**Key words:** Emir Abdelkader, Science, Knowledge, social promotion

**ملخص:**

كثيرا ما يعرف الأمير عبد القادر على أنه مؤسس الدولة الجزائرية والمجاهد الأعظم للاستعمار الفرنسي، فهو البطل الوطني الأكبر بدون منازع. حيث اشتهر بهذين الدورين داخليا وخارجيا، غير أن التركيز فقط عليهما يعد نظرة اختزالية وغير منصفة لأن إنجازات هذا الرجل أوسع من أن تتكتمش في هذا الجانب. فزيادة على كونه رجل دولة ذو نزعة الإنسانية ودفاعه الغير مشروط على جميع الثقافات والأديان والقيم الإنسانية، فقد كان عالما وشاعرا وكاتباً يدرك جيدا قيمة وأهمية المعرفة والعلم في تطوير وترقية المجتمعات.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** الأمير عبد القادر، العلم، المعرفة، الترقية

الاجتماعية

## Introduction

Algerian glorious history is full of lot of very important events and great personalities who have guided its destiny, and illuminated its path; however, they still rested remarkable and unforgotten from generation to generation. Though , Emir AbdelKhader was probably one of the most influential and charismatic leader that Algeria has known regarding to his heritage busy of force, courage, commitment, and wisdom that cannot be denied by any one even their enemies. Especially as an intellectual, strategist and state man, AbdelKahder was preparing the Algerian renaissance “Nahda”, because he was conscious about the dependency of society’s prosperity to those who think and have knowledge and wisdom. However, at the same time of his struggle against the French colonialism, he attempted also with great determination to promote knowledge, science, culture and education. More than this, he considered knowledge as the unique and precious tool for the emancipation of the society.

As a political science teacher, I am very concerned with the study of these kind of Algerian political thinkers, especially when we know that al Amir Abdelkader was the most influential political leader and thinker at that time .However, In my paper I strive to emphasize the scientific aspect in Amir’s life focusing on his thought and his consideration to science and books during his life whether when he was in Algeria or outside. In my paper ,also, I would like to show the place of science and scientists in the state of AbdelKahder as the Algerian modern state founder by attempting to answer to the core questions about , What is the place of science in his life as a political leader? And how did he treat scientists? In other world, what is important for me is what this man did for science?

### I. Affiliation , study and contribution

#### a- Who is El Amir?

He is Abdelkader ibn Muhieddine, known as the Emir Abdelkader or Abdelkader El Djezairi, was an Algerian religious and military leader led a struggle against the French colonial invasion in the mid-19th century. He was plebiscited in The first Moubaya in Griss near MASKARA in 27 November 1832 under a tree followed by a second general plebiscite in 4th of February 1833. He was also recognized as an Islamic scholar and mystic (sufi), who unexpectedly found himself leading a military campaign, he built up a collection of Algerian tribesmen that for many years successfully held out against one of the most advanced armies in Europe. His consistent regard for

what would now be called human rights, especially as regards his Christian opponents, drew widespread admiration, and a crucial intervention to save the Christian community of Damascus from a massacre in 1860 brought honours and awards from around the world. Within Algeria, his efforts to unite the country against foreign invaders saw him hailed as the "modern Jugurta and his ability to combine religious and political authority has led to his being acclaimed as the "Saint among the Princes, the Prince among the Saints».

### **b- Early life and study :**

Abdelkader was born near the town of Mascara in around 1808, to a family of religious aristocracy. His father, Muhieddine (or "Muhyi al-Din") al-Hasani, was a muqaddum in a religious institution affiliated with the QadiriyyaZauoya order of Islam .some writers claimed descentance from the prophet . Abdelkader was thus a sharif , and entitled to add the honorary patronymic *al-Hasani* ("descendant of el hasan ") to his name. He grew up in his father's Zawiya, which by the early nineteenth century had become the center of a thriving community on the banks of the Oued al-Hammam river. Like other students, he received a traditional education in theology, jurisprudence and grammar; it was said that he could read and write by the age of five. A gifted student, Abdelkader succeeded in reciting the Quran by heart at the age of 14, thereby receiving the title of hafid; a year later, he went to Oran for further education. He was a good orator and could excite his peers with poetry and religious diatribes.

He started his studies in El KadiriaZaouia in Kitna where he learned the Quran at the age of 14, like he learned some principle principles of linguistics and religious sciences, then he went into Arziou to be a student of its judge El Kadie El Chikh Ahmed Ibn Tahar to went later to Oran where he was he taught by Ahmed Ibn Khoja, like he could benefit from his travel to Mecca to contact other Arab and Muslim scholars from Tunisia, Egypt, Iraq and Syria<sup>1</sup>. However, he studied in his youth many sciences especially philosophy like treaties of إخوان الصفا Aristotle and Pythagoras like he studied fiqh and hadith especially books of sahih el BouKhari and Muslim and he taught them later like he studied Arabic language النحو الألفية في especially grammar and many other books of religions as well as books of logic. Through this kind of religious and scientific education, he became a great personality in politics and in army. Nevertheless, in 1825, he set out on the Haj, the pilgrimage, with his father. On his way back to Algeria, he was impressed by the reforms carried out by Muhammad Aliin Egypt. He returned to his homeland a few months before the arrival of colonizers.

From the beginning of his career, Abdelkader inspired admiration not only from within Algeria, but from Europeans as well, even while fighting against the French forces. "The generous concern, the tender sympathy" he showed to his prisoners of war was "almost without parallel in the annals of war", and he was careful to show respect for the private religion of any captives. In 1843, Marshal Soult declared that Abd-el-Kader was one of the three great men then living; the two others, Imam Shamil and Muhammad Ali of Egypt also being Muslims. Currently he is respected as one of the greatest of his people<sup>2</sup>.

Generally, El Amir's life can be divided into three major periods:

- The first period (1807-1830) it was an era of growth, education and formation
- The second period (1830-1847): El Amir spent it as a leader of a national resistance, and when he became a fighter rather than student
- The third one (1848-1883) he spent it as prisoner in France, then a migrant in Turkey and finally in Syria

### c- El Amir's best contributions:

It is not easy, in deed, to gather his contributions in a just one aspect, because of his multi-disciplinary positions and contributions, I mean regarding his path as a state man; Army leader and fighter, scholar, poet and humanist it is important to say that this great personality has did a lot and what is cited below is just examples. Probably, it is better to classify these contributions according to their fields, like it is important to mention that Emir Abdelkader was the founder, organizer and strategist of an army to defend his country, so he was intellectual and he succeeded to fight his enemy during 17 years, and he won many battles killed a lot of generals, colonels but he respected human beings' lives.

Showing a great degree of modesty, he refused to be crowned as a Sultan, and he accepted just the title of Amir, in addition to this, may be the predominant characteristic in his personality is humanism, by which he was known and recognized: Cherif Sahli an Amir biographer and a writer of a book entitled "Abdelkader Knight of Faith" "Abdelkader chevalier de la foi" wrote in this book that El Amir sought to humanize war by a publication of a law in which urged soldiers to avoid any response to the enemy savages by similar acts: "every Arab who could bring a living French soldier would get an amount of 8 dounous as a recompense" every Arab must well treat a French man in his possession and must conduct as soon as possible directly either the Caliphate, or El Amir

personally *«in the case where the French would complain the bad treatment, the Arab man hasn't the right to be recompensed»*<sup>3</sup>.

While he succeeded in 28th of September 1845 to encircle a whole French colony of 200 soldiers inside Sidi Moussa and disarmed them, but finally, he liberated them as well as their officer chiefs and he did not kill anyone. Like he asked the archbishop of Algiers to send a priest to his camp who will be well treated, honored and well respected to pray with the prisoners and he could get all what he needs from money, food or books but he must not write anything about what happened inside the camp.

After his great contribution in saving 12000 Christians in Syria, Al Amir gained the entire World admiration and respect, that he can be considered as an international personality. For that, he was honored in USA, Mexico, Venezuela, Syria, Iraq, Russia and of course Algeria as well as in France. His enemy General Bugeaud said, "This genius man that history must place him with Jugurtha. So, he was respected either by his allies or his enemy because of his position, courage and education and generally, he was considered as the Arabs' Sultan by his enemy and he was compared to Salah Edin Elaoui. His name is everywhere: at the universities, high schools, towns, great mosques and in books for future generations, so, he rested a personality of his century.

## II. Al Amir a founder of a modern State:

Nationalism as a political action that aimed to unify Algerian people in order to defend their country from French colonization was very active especially in the western part of Algeria led by El Amir Abdelkader. Indeed, since the first years of French occupation El Amir fought to affirm its authority, however, after his election as a war chief in 22th of November 1831 in Eghris, he was very determinant to acquire the international recognition especially those of France thing that he achieved during the signature of Tafna treaty in 30<sup>th</sup> of June 1837 with the Maréchal Bugeaud.<sup>4</sup>

Since that time, Emir was strong by this double internal and external recognition, he concentrated all his efforts to affirm this authority, so he required a very large space from Angad to Moroccan borders, south nomads and penetrated the Titteri, then he succeeded to conquer the north till Hamza. After few months, Amir ruled by his representatives the Kabyle till south of Delles, the Midjana in south of Bougie and a large Zone of the Sahara while he controlled the oasis of Biskra<sup>5</sup>. We can explain this very rapid way of realization of Algerian unity by El Amir over at least 2/3 of the territory by the clarity of his goal and his organized methods of accomplishment of his

work. He was very conscious about the aim of French government, which attempted to colonize the whole country, so he decided to oppose it by removing all its foundations by which it strive to justify its intervention.

AbdelKhader tried to unify Algeria by a construction of a nation State and prepared a war in the same time. His work concerning the construction of the Algerian State can be sum up by his own program based on the submission of lot of tribes whether by acceptance and agreement or by force, so he decided to break the resistance of some religious and military chiefs as well as some villages in Kabily which were against this unity. Nevertheless, he succeeded to put more than 213 of Algerian territory under his command and governed it by an aristocratic government totally different from the previous one in the Turkish period, because the council which was the principle organ in his government was composed by notables who were initially represents of local collectivity and the Oulama, like he succeeded to mobilize paysans to defend their lands, Algerian personality and Islam against foreign occupation.

As far as justice is concerned, he centralized this virtue by the mode of judges appointment based on some requirements as being literate, and men of Coran and traditions. In addition to this, he decided to conform his actions with prophet's teachings, so he wanted a fair civil justice according to the religions' principles<sup>6</sup>, And the big efforts done by El Amir was how to unify tribes which were certainly already linked by a religious ties, but this one remained weak and insufficient to strengthen patriotic belonging feelings, so he worked a lot on that, and in the same time, he did a lot to create a state with all its attributes especially a modern army, administration, diplomacy and economic organization

During 15 years, he was determined to federate Algerian tribes, so he devised the national territory into 8 KHLIFATS: Tlemcen, Mascara, Miliana, Media, Hamza, Medjan, eastern Sahara and western Sahara. And to face the unfavorable international and regional environment and to solve the big problems that faced the army, he based on his own tools and created a kind of embryonic military industry and recruited specialized people to manufacture weapons.

As well as being a great state man, Emir also showed his respected humanists sight, because he participated with great personalities to put the first step of humanitarian international law. Like, he was for instance, convinced that war must be codified, and the well treatment of war prisoners is a fundamental principal in any fair war.

### III. The place of Science and scientists :

### a- Al Amir the writer

Al Amir was not just a military and political leader, he was a scholar, a scientist and a poet, because he wrote a lot of books and poesies illustrated his great innovation,creativity and sensitivity especially toward his wife. Abdel KADER was described as a big mystic of 19<sup>th</sup> century which left a marvelous book with rare depth about his life which is *Book Of Haltes*. كتاب المواقف. RENE GUENON recognized on him more than just simple war leader, but also a person who has principles and great mystic situation<sup>7</sup>.

He wrote many books like” the Halts “المواقف .andWhen he was in Turkey he wrote « **Reminder To the Intelligent, Notice to the indifferent** رسالة "ذكرى العاقل وتنبيه الغافل (which was a letter to French people, which was translate into French language by GostaveDiga the French consul in Syria in 1858 . This book contained 3parts: The first one is about the virtue of science and scientist in which he defined the mind. However, the second part is about the justification of religiousScience في إثبات العلم الشرعي in which he spook about prophecyprove, and the need of all scientist to this prophecy science. And however the third part is about the virtue of writing<sup>8</sup>.

Some of Al Amir’s chroniclcers tried to classify his written books into:

#### -Arabic Ediitions

- *Dhikrâ al-âqil*, Alger, Rahma.
- *Al-miqrâdhal-hâdd*, Alger, Rahma.
- *Al-Sayraal-dhâtiyya* (autobiographie), Alger, Dar-al-Umma.
- *Al-mawâqif* (médiations mystiques), Damas et Alger, ENAG, 1996, 3 volums
- *Shi’r al-Shaykh al-Hâjj ‘Abd al-Qādirwa-al-ḥukm al-shar’ī li-al-‘Askar al-Muḥammadī*, texts published by the capitanoBoissonnet, Paris/Algier, Hashit, 1848 (poems and texts of Abd el-Kader, in Arabic ; introduction in French ).But the correspondanceofAbd el-Kader was not published<sup>9</sup>,

#### -French translation

-The book:**Rappel à l'intelligent, avis à l'indifférent: « Reminder To the Intelligent, Notice to the indifferent “:** it is a philosophical, religious, historical ...etc, considerations. It was translated into French language by Gustave Dugat, Paris, Librairie de l'Institut, 1858. With the permission of the writer

-“Letter to French People”: it is a direct translation of the original manuscripts by René R. Khawam, Paris, ÉditionPhébus, 1977

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-“El Amir Abdelkather :self biography written in the prison in 1849. Translated by HacèneBenmansour (with reproduction in fac-similé of Arabic original, Paris, Dialogues, 1995

-Book of Halts .translated by d'AbdallahPenot, Paris, ÉditionsDervy, coll. « L'être et l'esprit », 2008

### **b- Great consideration towards science.**

All those who studied El Amir’s life and books noticed that this great constructor of Algerian modern national State was also a man of science who placed Knowledge as the unique and precious tool of societies’ promotion and emancipation. He joined the holy struggle against French colonization by weapon with the will of the improvement of knowledge , science, and culture , thus to achieve his goal built schools either in towns or in villages, and recruited teachers according the their scientific merit, each one in his special field .the respect that had El Amir toward men of science and knowledge I,e intellectuals of his own era was great , because he was conscious that any society ‘s prosperity depended on those who think and have knowledge and wisdom. However, this great respect can be shown through such examples of his forgiveness of some literates who even were allies of the enemy if they are not considered as traitors. He decided to save their lives in condition to serve culture and education, so in this kind of situation he said : to become a scientist in our country is hard and it took a long time, for that I could not wipe out or destroy just one day the fruit of such big labor, Ksar inhabitant can cut any palmer that annoyed him, but how much time must him wait to get fruits from the replaced one <sup>10</sup>

Amir Abdel Khader was very worried about the promotion of sciences and culture of his country, he scrupulously acted for the count and the conservation of the existent manuscripts in the different Zaouias which dealt with medicine,history,Astronomy, theology..etc., especially that the country contained a great number of such scientific books. This notion of storage and organization encouraged him to classify them in specialized files. He rewarded each soldier who brought a manuscript,like he punished everyone who destroyed a book or manuscript.

He conserved his book in the same public treasure trunks, because for him books have the same values of gold. However, he said that pen is stronger and more helpful than a saber, and he remained thinking in this way till his death. When he was In Paris visiting a printing hose, he said“I

fought your armed batteries in the battlefield in Algeria, but I appreciate those printers, because they are batteries of thought and knowledge. Meanwhile, he collected before the French invasion, thousand of books and manuscripts from the whole country and even from Middle East, like he stored them in a huge library in Zagdempt near of Tiaret where he was determined to build a big university, but unfortunately this precious library was completely destroyed during Smala attack in 1843<sup>11</sup>. Seeing this scene El Amir was very upset because he saw the energy and time spent in the construction of a such valuable library gone with the wind, however, it was a hard time for a man who believed a lot in knowledge, culture and science.

Like El Amir was a great reader, and Ibn Kaldoun was one of his favorite writers, and we can notice the influence of Ibn Kaldoun through his writing style, and he spent the whole second part of his life in meditating, reading and teaching.

Algerian history would know a great man of state, a big military strategist, but also and especially an intellectual who strived to prepare and mobilize his country's intelligence to realize a cultural and civilized renaissance. Nevertheless, El Amir visited Istanbul, where he saw the shrine and Aya Sophia mosque, but he preferred to live in Bursa town because of its enlightened history and beautiful nature, but later he went to Syria where he devoted his time for reading, mysticism, and the study and teaching of the hadith and the fikh.

He said " *science can be compared to the rain of sky: when a drop fell in an opened hole, it produces a loss, however when it fell in a viper mouth it produces poison* " just to prove how much science can be important and dangerous in the same time.

### **E\_Scientific mysticism and his civilized and cultural project:**

He was very interested in this field, so, he searched for the meaning of mysticism because, for him religion is treatment. However, he took from mysticism a practical way to solve social problems in order to create concord between man and his society.

From this perspective, we can consider El Amir as an alternative to religious fundamentalism and what is called fundamentalist groups that were created previously and which a large part of them failed to communicate with the society

## **IV. Such distinct Thought :**

As it is argued above, El Amir was a scientist, he had his own distinguished thought and ideas in many scientific fields such as logics, ethics, linguistics, and mysticism, he can be considered as

one of the earlier renaissance (El Nahda) thinkers , but more than this he was also politician . In his book « **Reminder To the Intelligent, Notice to the indifferent** ذكرى العاقل the Algerian stated by arguing that the truth as an idea is not a matter of just one individual or group of people, but it is the fruit of the entire humanity labor regardless their believes or ethnicity.

For him the scientist should not care about whether the truth has been from a good or a bad man ,but what is important is that must be recognized trough arguments and not by just imitation , for that he divided people into two classes :

- the first class contains those who got knowledge and attempt to make himself and others happy, because they knew truth through arguments;
- the second class contains who are destroying themselves and others , because they just imitated their parents and grandparents without using his minds and encourage people to the same<sup>12</sup>

### **A- What is mind for him:**

He argued that mind is the basic element of truth and it is its norm. However, in his book ذكرى العاقل he tried to find an answer to the crucial question concerning the persistence of ignorance while people get the only tool of truth perception , by giving 05 reasons of ignorance :

- 1- Heart insufficiency to recognize the truth: like the kind's heart, however, the meaning of heart for him is the appropriate place for knowledge.
- 2- The existence of an obstacle or what he called veil الحجاب: this means that the heart could not recognize the truth because it is already convinced by ancient knowledge especially because it grown up with imitation which stopped mind for thinking.
- 3- Preferences of life's labor and evil that is accumulated on heart.
- 4- Distance of heart from truth recognition.
- 5- The ignorance of places where finding what is required. All these reasons kept indeed the mind from knowing truths.

### **B- The notion of Mind:**

For the Algerian mind has 04 interdependent meaning:

- 1- the description of what differ men from animals and trough which men can accept theoretical sciences
- 2- Science that can be grasped by a kid, who can understand what can be possible or not, as the knowledge that two 2 is bigger than one, and the same person could not be in two places in the same time. this kind of science can be called an emergent mind that it can not be denied
- 3- The empirical or the experienced sciences: for him this kind of science is mind itself

- 4- The last one is the knowledge of consequences. The wise man is who can be free from harmed pleasures

For El Amir mind is a multitude of characteristics of human being, so it is what distinguished men from animals like Aristotle has said, like man had a previous and innate thought which can be before experiences, therefore, it can be the fruit of the experience, as it is the capacity of the distinction between good and evil and finally it is an ethical meaning of mind<sup>13</sup>.

From this perspective people have not the same mind in one hand like it can be common in other hand ,however, the reason of this inequality is god's creation , because prophets' mind is not the same of the ordinary people and the mind of Ibn Sina for instance is better or cleverer than a lot of other minds<sup>14</sup> .Like People are unequal in a matter of their experiences and capacity of perception like they are different also in the supremacy of mind's power over lusts' oppression because of their inequality of their scientific degree. More ever, there is an innate inequality due to movement of sun I,e wheatear and geographic reasons , and for that reason he divided earth population into 3 categories:

- Those who life under the equator خط الاستواء near to Sudan. This kind of people are the weakest in minds and most savage in mater of ethics
- The second who lived in the center of earth, like people of Iraq,Syria and kharasanخرسان.those people are the cleverest and sweetest , and they are followed by French people and spaniards
- The third are those live in Russia and its peripheries: their minds are not completed, they are savages and frigid<sup>15</sup>.

In this point, we can remark the clear influence of Ibn Khaloon on him

The difference between religious sciences العلوم الشرعية and mental sciences العلوم العقلية:

For him sciences can be divided into two kinds: mental or religious sciences : however, mental Sciences can also been divided into two parts : necessity sciences or علوم الضرورة as the knowledge that man can not be in two places in the same time and acquired sciences or العلوم المكتسبة which can be learnt trough education,learning and arguments, however, religious sciences are learnt from prophets teachings and god' books as Torah, Psalms And Quran,and mind can not be completed or being saved from illness without them

For El Amir there is no separation between the two sciences like there is neither contradiction, nor difference between them. Like he argued that there is no difference between all religions from Adam to Muhamed, because all of them called for just one god i.e. monotheism and aim to protect

life, mind and progenitor and wealth <sup>16</sup>. Which named them generalities or totalities الكليات , thus, there is no challenges or differences between them .But prophets differed by the way or how to protect and make laws in order to save them<sup>17</sup>. And this what can be exposed to be copied .however the importance of coping is that religious laws الأحكام الشرعية are either justified by people interests (general interest). but because the interests can be changed, so laws must be in accordance with it, or by the divinity of religious laws that are according to god's will and can be changed without any interests' or considerations. So from that laws can be able to be copied because of the mobility of interests with time , and religion is just one and all prophets are agree together unless in some specific and partial laws احكام جزئية .

from this point of view El Amir did not see any opposition between Muslims and Christians and if both of them have listened to me, he said, they would avoid this struggle <sup>18</sup> like he believed that prophets speeches are based on the general interests , so there is no contradiction between them and those of philosophy or sciences. More than this, prophets did not aim to challenge philosophy or to deny medicine, astronomy or geometry <sup>19</sup> and who believes that religion opposed science would harm it.

## Conclusion:

In this paper I won't criticize El Amir thought , and I find this task very difficult, initially because of the difference between the specificity and the way of thinking in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and 19<sup>th</sup> century when he lived, but what I can noticed from this study is that :

-El Amir thought is still meaningful i.e., he treated some current topics as he lives in this age and participated in scientific discussions and debates that take such topics as the principal subjects thing that gives his thought an ideological function

-It is clear also to remark that El Amir was for the capacity of mind in treating subjects and finding truth, like he opposed imitation of ancient ideas without mind's reflection which can illustrate some aspects of freedom as freedom of speech or thought opposing intolerance. Thus, this way of thinking is very important in our day and it is needed more than ever.

-El Amir embraced a defensive attitude towards mind that believed in its human aspect specially it is a common idea as well as the acceptance of the truth as universal concept because it is the fruit of the labor of all humanity regardless their national or ethnical belonging , and for that reason he

did not ask for its source but for itself, thus as a Muslim he can acquire truth even from those who are different from his culture or religion, and truth is an unified element between all humanity - As what can be concluded from El Amir thought is the strong between ind and religion العقل و النقل to explain the linkage between religious laws and history because laws change with time as well as the relationship between science and religion where it is clear to understand that he is for freedom of scientific research and philosophical meditations. El Amir defended strongly logic and the acquisition of both sciences and faith trough mind.His renovated spirit makes him in a situation very closed to us I mean our time, so his ideas are really Reminder To the Intelligent and Notice to the indifferent.الغافل. ذكرى للعاقل و تنبيه للغافل. Moreover,he is considered as a symbol of anti-colonialism combat and the origin of Algerian modern state, and, in France, he was considered as an honorable opponent much like Jugurta, so he is named the modernJugurta<sup>20</sup> .

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