

## Development Strategy of Islamic Civil Society Organization (Cso) in Indonesia: A Case of Al Jamiyatul Al Wasliyah

Nursapia Harahap<sup>1</sup>, Warjio<sup>2</sup>, Junita Setiana Ginting<sup>3</sup>, Zaharul Abdullah<sup>4</sup>, Haykal M. Raihan<sup>5</sup>

### Abstract

*One of the largest Islamic organizations in Indonesia, Jamiyatul Alwasliyah, has a large identity and role in the development of Indonesia, even before Indonesia's independence. In fact there are not many researchers who pay attention to the political role of this organizational development. In reality, Jamiyatul Alwasliyah was formed with the spirit of advancing the nation and they succeeded with their development identity. This article, with a historical approach, will explain the background and political role of their development in Indonesia. This article examines some of the main political themes addressed in the NGO literature, as well as related themes in other political studies. This article analyses its development based on Islamic spirit and development strategy. It begins by examining competing theories regarding the political impact of the NGO sector. The article argues, make significant contributions of Jamiyatul Al Wasliyah as Civil Society Organization (CSO) to political life and to political change in developing countries, revealing a fertile, and hitherto neglected, research agenda.*

**Keywords:** *Development Identity, Jamiyatul Alwasliyah, Development Strategy.*

### Introduction

Many people say that political participation is considered as the core of democracy (Gerard Clarke, 1998; Susan H. Whiting, 1991). Meanwhile, in state life, the political participation of citizens is the heart of democracy. Based on the above statement, it can be understood that democracy in a country is not possible to run well without the participation of citizens in it. Participation itself is a process of growing awareness of the relationships between different stakeholders in society, namely between social groups and communities with policy makers and other institutions. Other experts reveal that participation is the mental and emotional involvement of everyone in a group to encourage them to contribute to the goals of the group and the division of responsibilities towards the group. Along with changes in the authorization of interpretation of the meaning of democracy, community involvement in politics is also increasingly believed to be an important indicator of a democratic state. Therefore, the state is obliged to stimulate its citizens to always be actively involved in the political process. Since the late 1970s, NGOs have played an increasingly prominent role in the development sector, widely praised for their strengths as innovative and grassroots-driven organisations with the desire and capacity to pursue participatory and people-centred forms of development and to fill gaps left by the failure of states across the developing world in meeting the needs of their poorest citizens. While levels of funding for NGO programmes in service delivery and advocacy work have increased alongside the rising prevalence and prominence of NGOs, concerns regarding their legitimacy have also increased. There are ongoing questions of these comparative advantages, given their growing distance away from low-income people and communities and towards their donors.

In Indonesian cases, community involvement in the political process also correlates with overall development success. This is because, Indonesia's national development policy is also determined through the political process itself. Observing that national development is inseparable from the world of politics, the political development of society also becomes important to do. Political development covers many

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<sup>1</sup> Faculty of Social Sciences, Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara (UINSU), Medan-Indonesia.

<sup>2</sup> Faculty of Social Sciences, Universitas Sumatera Utara (USU), Medan-Indonesia, Email:warjio@usu.ac.id, (Corresponding Author)

<sup>3</sup> Department of History, faculty of Humanity, Universitas Sumatera Utara (USU), Medan-Indonesia

<sup>4</sup> Pusat Pengajian Pendidikan Jarak Jauh (PPPJJ), Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), Penang, Malaysia.

<sup>5</sup> Department of History, faculty of Humanity, Universitas Sumatera Utara (USU), Medan-Indonesia

things but its nuance is to support the birth of a condition that is able to improve community education in a sustainable manner (Dedi Iskandar Batubara, 2013).

Mass organizations of Islam is one of the organizations that exist in Indonesia which has a role in development. Their presence became an important part not only establish an identity but also play a role in the development process run. Islamic Organizations advantages compared with other Civil Society Organization (CSO)s in development is that they not only bertumpuh on physical development but also the mental and spiritual formation (character) community. As has been alluded to by Khudori (2009) the movement of Islamic organizations in the construction of identity and its own role in the struggle ideology of development. However, the reality of their position in this Islamic Development Politics duly received less attention either in thought or in their role in development. In this regard, the researcher (Warjio, 2012, 2013) has conducted related studies Politics Islam but rather on Islamic political parties.

One of the Islamic organizations that have a greater role in development but lack focus is Jamiyatul Al-Wasliyah. Few studies conducted by researchers both foreign and Indonesian researchers themselves by focusing research on Jamiyatul Al Wasliyah. They are more focused on Islamic organizations already established such as Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), which focuses on Jamiyatul AlWasliyah and speak the truth about the existence and role in development (Zada & Sadjili 2010, Jurdi 2010, Hidayatullah, 2010). Likewise many researchers in understanding the development of Islam in Indonesia is only focused on the role of institutions or certain ethnic (Warjio, 2016a, 2016b, 2016c)

It is rather ironic. Jamiyatul Al Wasliyah so large with millions of members that are spread throughout the area, thousands of schools and boarding schools and other institutions that are in it should be recognized as having contributed to the community, state and nation. In the political field Jamiyatul Al Wasliyah also participated in solving the problems facing the nation and the state. Many cadres Jamiyatul Al Wasliyah who have occupied political positions in both the legislative and executive. In the field of religion, Jamiyatul Al Wasliyah also has strengthened the development of Islamic culture in the community. (Noor et al., 2022). All that is not to attract the researchers to conduct a study on Jamiyatul AlWasliyah especially in terms of political development on which they run. However, oversize Jamiyatul Al Wasliyah as covered by CSOs or other Islamic Muhammadiyah, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU). Orientation research in Indonesia linked to Islamic organizations usually always focused on both the Islamic Organizations (Haidar, 1994, Feillard, 1999, Aminuddin, 1999, Warjio, 2005).

As Islamic organizations, politic of development of Al-Wasliyah has developed construction. As Islamic organizations are born, grow and flourish in North Sumatra, Jamiyatul Al-Wasliyah be "genuine Islamic organizations" that comes from North Sumatra. In the book commemorating the Al Wasliyah Half Century (1956), published by the Central Board of Jamiyatul Al-Wasliyah Medan mentioned that Al-Wasliyah Jamiyatul is an organization that enables him to get involved in the process of formation of the Indonesian people physically and mentally. In Statutes Household Jamiyatul Al Wasliyah have mentioned that Al Wasliyah function is Islamic organizations for the benefit of national development in order to foster integral human development and the whole Indonesian society. Jamiyatul Al-Wasliyah not only struggling in the context of the narrow political but also plays a role in the spiritual and physical development of Indonesian society. According Azizy (2006) Organizations Jamiyatul Al Wasliyah is Islam's third largest organization after Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah.

Its position is as it was, put Jamiyatul Al Wasliyah Islamic organization "middle" who are not inclined to traditional (Nahdlatul Ulama) or modren (Muhammadiyah) (Azizy, 2006). Although the initial idea of establishing Al Washliyah focused more on the religious issues of the ummah, in its journey, many of the figures of this organization were involved in politics. This is a logical consequence, because there is an understanding that the political world is an area that can also be a means to fight for the interests of the Islamic Ummah. Put simply, the general motive that can be seen from the involvement of the elite of mass religious religious citizenship involved in politics is because:1. Expand the container or network to fight for the interests of the Ummah.2. Adaptation or adaptive strategies to avoid conflicts of interest with ruler.3. Economy, that by being involved in the political world, individual and institutional economic resources will be helped, and other reasons.Based on the motives expressed above, the indirect involvement of the Al

Washliyah elite in the political world also had an influence on the survival and development of the organization. During the New Order, there was an assumption that religious organizations that are able to make a close relationship with the government more or less will get various facilities and facilities. Compensation for perceived facilities and facilities will reduce the organization's critical power in the government's policy. In such conditions, Al Washliyah tends to only be a loyal supporter (loyalist) of the government who cannot carry out constructive criticism other than just accepting what is decided by the government (Dedi Iskandar Batubara, 2015).

Based on this background, this paper will analyze how history formed Jamiatul Al Wasliyah and what development strategies it implemented.

## Literature Review

There are some previous research that are relevant to this study and related to Islamic thought and the role of Islamic organizations Political relation to construction. As Gerard Clarke (1998) mention the proliferation of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the developing, as well as the developed, world, has triggered an 'associational revolution'. Political scientists, however, have made a relatively minor contribution to the contemporary NGO literature which has evolved since the mid-1980s. Freedman research results (2009) tells us, some question of the role of Islamic mass organizations: what is the role of moderate Muslim organizations in promoting democratization in Indonesia and Malaysia? What a huge difference, grassroots organizations and more urban-based non-governmental organization that is newer? Is one of the types of organizations that are more effective than others? Research Freedman (2009) look at the dynamics of organizational change or progressive moderate Islam in Malaysia and Indonesia. He examines organizations like the Liberal Islam Network in Indonesia and Sisters in Islam in Malaysia, as well as others, to try and understand the conflict between moderate Islamists or progressive and more the power of conservative Islam and evaluate the organization's role as moderate as they play in advocating for greater protection of rights and freedoms. An important finding Freedman (2009) that the condition is quite open (as in Indonesia after 1998), the Islamic NGOs that play important and constructive role in promoting democracy. An important finding Freedman (2009) is also similar to the findings of Lynch (2011). In the study Lynch (2011) in Kenya and Islam & Morgan in Bangladesh (2011) indicates that Islamic NGOs was instrumental in formulating, run and help development. Their role actually very effective in solving the poverty and politics also play a role in their identity.

In the context of the role of the Political Thought and Development, Islamic organizations have become a form of their identity in the construction (Warjio 2012, Ja'far, 2011 Khudori, 2009). Thought and the role of institutions / organizations Islam into something that must be done when the institution / organization of the Islamic so-called Political Development. For Ahmad (2013) Development of Political Islam that run Islamic Organization refers to the principle structure and rules of administration and implement development policies towards the Islamic berrteraskan. In this regard, a study conducted by Ahmad (2013) has defined three categories in the implementation of the Islamic Development Politics, the first, Ijtima'iy, which every organization with Massa Islam should be oriented virtues in development is a form of social responsibility. Second, siyasi. Siyasi here means islamic organizations must fulfill its objectives or strategies or economic and political interests with increasing image and morals of Islam. Third, tijari. In this context tijari understood that the development of Political Islam run by Islamic organizations also have to give a commercial advantage. Activities undertaken by the benefit should be made in the establishment and then the profits should also be excluded for social purposes such as through zakat

Results of research conducted by Hadiz (2011) showed that the model Politics carried out by Islamic organizations in Indonesia is a populist form and response activities undertaken to participate in the development process. The waiter-service performed as a form of Islamic movement is strengthened identity of those who have the responsibility not only in the political but also social. They entered the political field is a form of their representation as a social movement. Likewise in other fields. Sometimes they also have to connect themselves with the ruling bureaucracy so that the process of political development can run well.

Related to that delivered by Hadiz (2011), the research Fogg (2012) has explained that the political processes of the construction of Al-Wasliyah heavily influenced by the thoughts of the elite and so did his roles in the Islamic movement in Indonesia. As a native of North Sumatra Islamic organizations, Jamiyatul Al Wasliyah has built himself and the nation with their own identity and approach. Thinking and the Role of the elite Al Wasliyah Jamiyatul it places them in a strategic position in the political and development models in Indonesia. They should not be considered to be small because they are large and have a lot of potentials in formulating development.

## Methodology

This research is a descriptive study describing a social phenomenon. Methodology used in this study is a qualitative approach. Location this research was conducted in Indonesia. When the study started from June to December 2016, August 2023. Methods of data collection in this study is Study Library by analyzing the document, books related to the history and in-depth interviews. This study uses descriptive analysis, a method of analysis in which the data have been obtained, compiled, categorized, analyzed to obtain a description of the problems encountered to explain the results obtained.

## Result and Discussion

### *History and Background The Establishment of Al-Washliyah*

From the research we've done, Al Wasliyah as Islamic organizations have their own role in the construction of his accomplishments. A distinctive feature of development carried out by Al Wasliyah as any part of the history of their establishments. In the first part we will explain the history of Al Wasliyah in the formation of political construction. The word Al jam'iyatul Washliyah comes from Arabic Which means Association or association that connects, both that connects Man with Allah (hablun minAllah) and that connects Man with Man (hablun minannas). Al Jam'iyatul washliyah is now better known as Al Washliyah. Al wasliyah was specifically active in defending the benefit of Muslims and Indonesia in general. Since the beginning of the History of Al-Washliyah, they have placed their position independently and not affiliated with any political party. Even so, this organization does not limit its members personally who actually want to develop their career in the context of good deeds to existing political parties and legitimate organizations. There are several motivations that drive the establishment of the Al Washliyah organization: First, The end of the first world war in 1918 has aroused the enthusiasm of the people for independence, especially in the Muslim world including Indonesia which has a population of mostly Muslim.

Second, The birth of the nationalist movement which Budi Utomo pioneered in 1908 had influenced young people and students, including Medan Maktab Islamiyah students, to unite and foster unity and unity to fight the invaders. Then, there is the emergence of differing views in understanding and interpreting the law of furuk (branches) of the Shari'a among Muslims who are separated into groups of old people and young people or traditional people and reformers. Efforts to divide the hemisphere that permeated the joints of Islam. Muslims at that time were divided because of differences in views in terms of worship and branches of religion. His condition continued to deteriorate until Muslims split into two camps, namely the elderly and the young. With this dispute, the Muslim community in Medan, students studying at Maktab Islamiyah Tapanuli Medan, are trying to reunite divided Muslims.

Since the first time it was founded, Al Washliyah has an important role in building the civilization of the Indonesian people. Al Washliyah joined the struggle to free the Indonesian people from the shackles of the invaders. In addition to participating in the fight against the invaders, Al Washliyah always maintained the independence of the Indonesian people, this was conveyed in every mission of Al Washliyah at that time. Every Washliyah citizen is obliged to always maintain the independence that has been achieved by the Indonesian people. Then more than that, when Indonesian Muslims were divided by different views and schools of Islam, Al Washliyah stood in the position of mediator to reunite divided divisions. From the beginning until now, Al Washliyah is still steadfast in his struggle for the interests of the people. In accordance with his devotion, Al Washliyah continues to strive to educate the nation's life (education),

conduct guidance and clarify thinking through discussion and tabligh (da'wah), as well as calling for a spirit of solidarity and care for the poor and orphans.

In many sources (Warjio & Heri Kusmanto, 2019; Ja'far, 2011; Azizy Ahmad Hanim, 2006) mentioned that Al-Jam'iyatul Washliyah born in the past suppressed by the Dutch colonialists who are still in power made the people poor and backward. Besides the Dutch colonizers also spread Christianity that becomes the challenge for the Islamic Ummah. In addition there is a push to setting up an organization to unite the ummah are differing views. Differences community was rooted in the problems (deviation) of opinion on Islamic law concerning matters furu'iyah, which led to the emergence of mutual blame, even mutually mengkafirkan. That fact makes the ummah broken to each other apart and hinder the unification of the nation in the fight against colonialism.

At first the students of Maktab Islamiyah Tapanuli (Islamic Boarding School) in the field, led by Abdurrahman Shihab only form a student union called "Debating Club" whose purpose was originally only to discuss the lessons, but because the appearance of a conflict of Islamic law in society and also the emergence of ideology deemed radical carried by Muhammadiyah and stood in Medan in 1928, so the conflict arises because in general, people in Sumatra and traditional Shafi'i (H. Ahmad Hamim Azizy, 2006: 65-66), while Muhammadiyah seeks perform ijtihad itself.

Debating Club wants to play a role to address these issues and trying to be a mediator. In early October 1930, at M. Yusuf Ahmad Lubis house's held a meeting led by Abdurrahman Shihab and attended by the student's. The meeting followed a week later in the Abdurrahman Shihab in Petisah, Medan. This meeting also led by Abdurrahman Shihab and was attended by several leaders such as Ismail Banda, M. Yusuf Ahmad Lubis, Adnan Nur, A. Wahab, M. Isa, and others, obtained an agreement to build a larger meeting with bringing master teachers and students of Islamic (H. Ahmad Hamim Azizy, 2006: 66).

Housed in Islamiyah Tapanuli Medan, made a large meeting attended by the scholars, the master teachers, students, and the other Islamic leaders from Medan and surrounding areas, led by Ismail Banda, an expert of the oldest in the meeting, Ismail Banda, Arsyad Thalib Lubis and Syamsuddin give an idea of the form of organization to be established. The approval of the present, the Sheikh H.M. Yunus was asked to give the name of the association which was later renamed the Al-Jam'iyatul Washliyah the association that mean that connect or unite. The name was widely known as Al-Washliyah (H. Ahmad Hamim Azizy, 2006: 67-68).

Al-Jam'iyatul Washliyah founded by the students who were aged around 20-25 years old, have a high charisma in their environment. When they determined to setting up the organization as a bridge between the schools of the elderly (the Shafi'i) with youth (in a collection of Muhammadiyah considered radical wing and are not tied to one of the schools) (H. Ahmad Hamim Azizy, 2006: 67-68).

Since then Al-Washliyah grown rapidly with his trademark set up many branches in North Sumatra and has established various institutional supporting society. This rapid development as Muhammadiyah also occurred during the New Order, when they pay more attention developing community effort rather than engage in political life.

#### *Develop Education Islam with Modernity Systems: Al Washliyah's Strategy*

Like Hadiz (2011) showed that the model Politics carried out by Islamic organizations in Indonesia is a populist form and response activities undertaken to participate in the development process, Al Washliyah has identity in development strategy. Al Washliyah has made its vision especially as the name implies; "Build washilah". namely: as a group of Islamic Communities that are always Striving to build and strengthen human relations with God (hablum minallah) and human-human relations (hablum minannas). Al Washliyah has three main missions like other Islamic community organizations namely; . First through educational activities, second through Islamic propaganda activities and third through social charity activities. Other activities are complementary and supporting activities which are also important for Al Washliyah such as political, economic, legal, foreign relations, etc. The seven Al Washliyah part organizations that joined the



struggle with Al Washliyah can adjust to what was the vision and mission of Al Washliyah as their parent organization. The mission of the organization is described in the form of work programs of each program, namely the Al Washliyah program as the parent organization and its part organizational program that is adjusted to their respective interests to be carried out technically carried out by way of cooperation and division of work.

Al Washliyah seen as a socio-religious organizations are traditional in religious understanding (characteristic Syafi'iyah), but modernist in Islamic education (educational institutions established forms such as madrassas and schools as well as the system and the curriculum being used). This can be seen from the assemblies founded by Al Washliyah, such as: Assembly Hazanatul Islamiyah was originally set up to carry out the maintenance of orphans, helping broadcasting Islam, and those who are new to Islam, especially in the area of Toba, North Tapanuli and Tanah Karo. Financial constraints seem to make the program judges do not produce adequate results. Al Washliyah financial system that is too centralized lacking enable innovations in the field of fund-raising efforts.

Al Washliyah strategy in broadcasting Islam in the region Batak Toba by sermons and founded schools and madrasah is one aspect that is typical about this organization. Land Batak Toba is the starting point for the spread of Christianity in East Sumatra, which has been running relatively successful since the 19th century. In the early 20th century, the majority of area residents are Christians, others embrace traditional religion (Parbegu), and only a fraction have embraced Islam Al Washliyah activity in this area is coaching those who had converted to Islam.

In the association between the Islamic organization Al Washliyah is upholding harmony and have a sense of mutual caring and tolerance towards other organizations. This is clearly illustrated in the programs and priorities, as well as in his attitude towards other tiem. Though formally bind themselves to the Shafi'i madhhab as a stream of religious, characteristic openness is also very prominent organization, do not hesitate to learn and cooperate with Muhammadiyah and at other times are also not too awkward taking a position contrary to the congregation Naqsabandiyah.

Al Washliyah in the development of Islamic education is enormous its role at the time, especially in the area of North Sumatra. It can be seen from the contribution-that ideas of this organization sembagai efforts to promote and develop education Islam with modernity systems but also still adhere tradisonalitas, by combining the religious education and general education in a comprehensive manner with the aim that the Muslims will be able to face the times.

In its efforts to promote education, Al Washliyah seems to be open and pick up from where it considers to be more experienced and successful in the management of education. In 1934, Al Washliyah sent three managers M. Arsyad Thalib Lubis, Udin and Nukman Shamsuddin Sulaiman to conduct a comparative study to the School Adabiyah, Noormal School and Sumatera Diniyah in the West in order to reform the management of Al Washilyah own education. Despite the negative reaction of some members, the visit is considered very important, and the results then be discussed in the conference of teachers Madrasah Al Washliyah itself is still in the same year. Among the steps taken after the conference are: the establishment of public schools based on religion, teaching Dutch, structuring calendar teaching, institution building inspectors and inspectors of education Viewing the progress of the publication of books of Islam in Sumatera West, a messenger was sent to London on buy books for school Al Washliyah. Al-Washliyah have a work program mainly seeks to improve public education. To achieve this, the organization is learning from educational institutions established by other organizations, for the few pengerusi traveled to Minangkabau. Since then various educational institutions founded by Al-Washliyah from the lowest level as madrassas, to ranking colleges (universities), especially in Medan and North Sumatra is at the root tubers of this organization.

To facilitate its work program, Al-Washliyah formed several assemblies are driven by various peculiarities namely; Tabligh Assembly, to take care of Islamic missionary activity in the form of lectures; Tarbiyah Assembly, to take care of the development of education and teaching; Assembly Learning Fund which supporting care of financially for students.

Then Al-Washliyah been able to establish universities Islamic University (Universitas of Al Wasliyah) in Medan and Jakarta. The role of Al Washliyah in the nation is, Al Washliyah have an assembly which oversees education, its position as the Ministry of Education called the council of Education and Culture Al Washliyah governing education Al Washliyah ranging from kindergarten to the university. This assembly set matters quite a lot, ranging from the curriculum, physical buildings, facilities, administration and others. Position this assembly is strong enough and big enough role to regulate education Al Washliyah. In line with the mission of propaganda carried Al Washliyah, the madrasa education besides giving knowledge to the Muslim community, it is also intended to form a cadre cadre of scholars and jurists who will forward the ideals of its predecessors.

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Tabligh good works to increase knowledge of problems related to the world and the hereafter. In addition, he also serves as a means of communication, so that the interaction and mutual giving and receiving knowledge or experience. The fact indicate where sermons have many functions, such as increasing public awareness, strengthening social relationships and increase the number of experts Al-Washliyah. It also follows the modern way, even sometimes to Tabligh Akbar, the organization distributed leaflets outlining talking points that will be delivered. This way people will know in advance the contents of sermons and more visitors are expected to come.

Here are the steps al-Washliyah in order to follow the times that prove that the organization is open to progress. Overall this development was started in the city of Medan, North Sumatra, thus institutionally Al-Washliyah is reflected in its development in North Sumatra. Due to limited, although Muhammadiyah is a large organization in Indonesia, but in North Sumatra power of the number of followers and influence still can not go beyond Al-Washliyah primarily in rural areas, as evidenced by the election of a religious teacher rather than Al-Washliyah be a member of the Regional Representative Council (a kind senators to represent the province of North Sumatra) in Jakarta that indicates the number supporting than Al-Washliyah experts.

The role of Al-Washliyah prominent and is the main activity is education. Al-Washliyah have an assembly which oversees it, namely, the Assembly Tarbiyah that governs all educational institutions owned Al-Washliyah start than the education of children of pre-school to higher education rankings. The Assembly set up a lot of problems such as physical building, learning tools, human resources, curriculum, management and others. This position assembly is very important in advancing education in Al-Washliyah, even becoming a major tool in running a preaching mission through education. In addition, Al-Washliyah also seeks to establish prospective scholars and jurists who will forward the ideals of its predecessors through educational institutions. Al-Washliyah education has certain advantages, particularly in education Arabic or mastery of other subjects.

## Conclusion

In fact, education and philosophy became an integral part in the formation of the Islamic Development Politics developed by Jamiyatul Al Wasliyah. They have developed a moderation method is seen as a middle

way in the midst of the forces of mainstream Islamic movements in Indonesia. They have to integrate and articulate the ideals of religious, social, intellectual and cultural inspired by Islam.

The founders of Al-Jam'iyatul Wasliyah which generally are open to encourage these organizations have a lot of cooperation with other organizations. In principle, Al-Washliyah together there with other Islamic organizations in the ideals and objectives, and the establishment of Al-Washliyah not to create boundaries, but as one container community that very many to be equally beraktiviti useful for the advancement of Islam.

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