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The Permanent Committee on Geographical Names

ALGERIA

Language & Toponymy

How politically driven language policies have impeded toponymic progress

P C G N
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(Maps added June 2004)

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SECTION A: **Introduction**

Ethnic and Linguistic Composition of Algeria

1   Algeria has a current (2003) population of 33,577,500, living in an area of 2,381,741 square kilometres[1]. This makes it the second largest country in Africa[2], almost ten times the size of the United Kingdom. The first major settlers were the Berbers[3], a people of indeterminate origin and disparate sub-groups, who were followed in the eleventh century by the Arabs. The Berbers were largely converted to the religion of Islam brought into North Africa by the Arabs, and this common religion helped to fuse a measure of cohesion into the geographically separate Berber groupings.

2   The connections between Berbers and Arabs in Algeria are so intertwined that a true distinction along ethnic lines is impossible. Instead, the two communities are conventionally identified on the basis of mother tongue. On this basis, there are thought to be approaching 7 million speakers of Berber in Algeria today, amounting to some 20% of the total population of the country. The Berber tongue, which belongs to the Hamitic group of languages, has four distinct sub-divisions within Algeria[4]. The most important of these is Kabyle Berber, spoken in the Kabylie area[5], centred on the prefectures[6] of Tizi Ouzou and Bejaïa, but also extending into parts of the prefectures of Boumerdes, Bouira, Bordj Bou Arréridj and Sétif[7].

3   Since independence, language has been a huge political, social and ideological issue in Algeria. Arabic was chosen at the outset as the language which was to represent Algeria's identity and religion, and official attitudes towards both Berber and French have been largely negative. The first constitution (1963) and principal constitution (1976) of post-independence Algeria omitted all reference to French and Berber, and the latter stated baldly in Article 3 that "Arabic is the national and official language". The Algerian authorities have even at times rejected use of the very word "Berber", either on the secular grounds that the term undermines national unity, or on the religious grounds that it is a term hostile to Islam[8]. Yet Arabic is rarely heard in Kabylie, where Berber and French are spoken. In reality, French is the *lingua franca* of Algeria.

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[1] = 919,595 square miles. For further population and boundary information, see Annex C.
[2] Sudan is the largest.
[3] See *Berber* in Annex A.
[4] See Annex A, under *Amazigh*.
[5] See *Kabylie* in Annex A.
[6] The prefecture (*wilaya*) is the first-order administrative division of Algeria. There are 48 in total (see Annex B).
[7] See Annex G (Map).
[8] Such an attitude has also been evident in Morocco. At the 5th United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names in 1987, the Moroccan representative demanded the removal of the word "Berber" from the text of the final report, despite having used that word himself in his oral submissions to the conference.

SECTION B: **Language Policy**

The Arabisation Programme

4   Algeria's progress towards the independence from France it achieved in 1962 was bloody and brutal, leaving behind a deeply ingrained antipathy towards the former colonial power. Independence also came at a time when the concept of pan-Arab socialism was in vogue in North Africa and the Middle East. The new rulers of Algeria believed that the future of their country lay in a combination of socialism and Arabisation, and an anti-colonial eschewal of all things French. This policy mix, introduced by the first president, Ben Bella, was continued and extended under his successor Boumedienne[9].

5   Part of the drive towards a single Arab national identity in Algeria consisted of introducing a language policy with a highly political content. The French language, part of a culture which was deemed to have deprived Algeria of its true heritage, became a *lingua non grata*, and Algeria refused to associate with the burgeoning francophone movement. Similarly ostracised was the indigenous Berber language, which was considered an impediment to the promotion of Arabic as Algeria's primary goal, and seen also as a channel for the promotion of internal ethnic divisions. A feverish programme of Arabisation during the 1960s saw first all primary education, then most secondary education, switch entirely to the medium of Arabic. Local administration and much of central government also began to operate in Arabic.

6   Yet this process did little more than impose a politically generated artificiality on to the true nature of Algeria's linguistic culture. Attempts to remove the colonial legacy collided with the fact that French was the natural *lingua franca*, the language two Algerians would instinctively adopt on initial encounter. Moreover, the variant of the Arabic language which the political agenda prescribed was Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), the variant favoured by pan-Arab ideology. But MSA was more associated with the Middle East, and was largely unintelligible and indeed alien to the Maghrebi Arabic speakers of Algeria. Indeed, Algerian unfamiliarity with MSA was such that textbooks in this particular variant were scarce, and teachers of MSA had to be imported from countries such as Iraq and Syria. Despite the education programme, whereby all basic schooling was in MSA by 1982, much of Algeria's industry and commerce continued to operate in French, which remained the most operationally viable language.

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[9] Since independence, Algeria has been ruled as follows:
  1962-65: President Ben Bella
  1965-78: President Boumedienne
  1979-92: President Bendjedid
  1992-94: *Haut Comité d'État* (= High State Committee)
  1994-99: President Zeroual
  1999 →: President Bouteflika

7   Although the period under Algeria's third president, Bendjedid, saw a dilution of the socialist ideology, there was no halt to the promotion of the Arabic language, in its MSA variant. Even Algeria's Arabs were uncomfortable with this; they preferred Maghrebi Arabic as their colloquial medium. Moreover, they preferred their reading material not to be in Arabic at all, but in French, largely because written Arabic was strongly associated with MSA. The Berber community, which figures prominently in Algeria's administration and which has mostly used French in its everyday communications with other Algerians, was even more resentful of this ongoing drive towards MSA. Berbers more than most saw MSA as a foreign language with a political message, and periodically sought recognition of the Kabyle branch of Berber[10] as a national language. But a conference on Berber culture planned for Tizi Ouzou[11] in spring 1980 was banned by the authorities; this precipitated strikes and protests[12], which in turn sparked a period of harsh repression against the Berber community.

8   In other spheres, the drive towards Arabisation continued apace. By 1990, all television channels were broadcasting in Arabic (either MSA or Maghrebi). In January 1991, Law 91-05 on the universal use of Arabic was drafted, a law designed to eradicate the state of French-Arabic bilingualism in Algeria and make Arabic the sole language for all purposes – official and even commercial – by 1992. As it transpired, this draft law was frozen before it could become operative, in the chaotic aftermath of annulled elections in 1991[13]. And on removing Bendjedid in 1992, the military-backed *Haut Comité d'État* (HCE) did call for an end to the "dictatorship of a single language", nominally seeking a rapprochement between the Arabic and French languages, and between Arab and Berber cultures.

9   Such concessions, though, were more cosmetic than real. By the mid-1990s, all secondary and higher education had been Arabised. In December 1996, draft Law 91-05 was resurrected, coming into effect in July 1998 as the "Arabic Language Generalisation Law". From this date, all transactions, meetings, correspondence, declarations and statements of all Algeria's agencies and institutions had to be in Arabic, on pain of a fine (which was doubled for a second offence). This law applied for example to newspapers and TV programmes; the latter had to be dubbed into MSA if the original were in a foreign language. All signboards and traffic signs also had to be solely in Arabic[14]. Use of both Berber and French in all these circumstances was banned, and the government reiterated that Algeria would not join the francophone community[15].

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[10] *Tamazigh*: see paragraph 11 and Annex A.
[11] The main town of **Grande Kabylie** (see Annex A).
[12] A period known as the "Berber Spring"; cf footnote 23.
[13] Elections which, had the results been honoured, would have installed an Islamic Republic in Algeria.
[14] Though an exception was made for signs in specified tourist areas, where a foreign language could be added in parallel.
[15] Algeria has always been a member of the Arabic Division of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN). But when the French-speaking Division of UNGEGN was created in 1998, Algeria declined to join it.

10   Yet popular command of MSA continued to be poor. Even government officials, the very people responsible for this continuing drive towards Arabisation, were often shown to be personally uncomfortable with MSA[16]. Quite simply, French was the more useful language and, despite the best efforts of government, French did largely remain the language of education in the universities. But the generally confused linguistic situation had begun to produce a bilingually illiterate class of youngsters, who were reaching maturity unsure of themselves in either French or MSA. In consequence, Algerian educational and professional qualifications came to possess a limited value both domestically and in the international arena.

Recent developments regarding Berber

11   By far the most important Berber element in Algeria is that found in the Kabylie region[17], where over 5 million Berbers live. It is the Kabyle branch of the Berber language, written in Roman script and known as *Tamazigh*[18], which possesses the real political and cultural significance.   The sizeable Berber element in administrative positions in Algeria is largely of the Kabyle branch; many Kabyle Berbers live in Algiers. Initially, Berber aspirations were that Tamazigh be made a national language, but since 1991 the *Mouvement Culturel Berbère* (MCB) has demanded that Tamazigh be given full official language status. The Berbers also demand that Maghrebi Arabic, rather than MSA, should be the official language of Algeria alongside Tamazigh[19]. However, Berber demands, though forcefully expressed, have largely been limited to cultural and linguistic aspirations; there is no significant Berber separatist or nationalist movement.

12   In 1995, meeting in exile at Sant'Egidio in Italy, Algeria's main political parties agreed a "National Contract" which for the first time affirmed *Amazighité*[20] as a defining element of Algeria's character, alongside Islam and Arabism. The contract was rejected by the Zeroual regime within Algeria, which insisted that the constitution of the country (specifying Arabic as the sole official language) be respected. The official reasoning given was that since "all Berbers were Arabs", there was no need for Berber to be an official language; especially a variant written (as Tamazigh is) in "colonial" Roman script. As a concession, however, the regime did join with the MCB in that same year to create the *Haut Commissariat à l'Amazighité* (High Commission for Berber Identity), describing Tamazigh as a heritage language and promising to allow its use in education[21] and the media. By 1997, the universities of both Tizi Ouzou and Bejaïa were offering Algeria's first ever degree courses in Berber language and culture, and Algerian TV offered a short daily newscast in Berber.

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[16] President Bouteflika has frequently lapsed into French, Law 91-05 notwithstanding.
[17] See Annex G (Map).
[18] See *Tamazigh* in Annex A.
[19] Kabyle Berbers communicate with other Algerians in French, and a significant number of them would also like to see French as an official language. Other Berber branches in Algeria have had less association with French.
[20] Perhaps best understood as "Berber Identity".
[21] From September 1996, at age 13 and upwards.

13   The 1998 "Arabic Language Generalisation Law"[22] infuriated the Kabyle Berber community. After a period of rising tension, rioting broke out in spring 2001 in the Kabylie area as part of a renewed demand for the recognition of Berber culture and of Tamazigh as an official language. These riots[23] spread to the Chaouia[24] Berber area in the Massif de l'Aurès, and became enmeshed with protests over economic issues and political repression. The 15 principal Berber demands were crystallised in a document published as the "El Kseur Platform"[25]. Kabyle Berber communities began to organise themselves into effective units known as *Aarouch*[26] and, for the first time, there began to be calls for the autonomy of the Kabylie region. Berber confidence grew to the point where an observer delegation spoke Kabyle Berber when visiting the United Nations in New York, in December 2001.

14   By way of response, Bouteflika recognised Tamazigh as a national language in a constitutional amendment of February 2002, amending Ordinance N° 35/76 of the 1976 constitution. Tamazigh became an accepted language in Algeria's educational system at all levels, and the Amazigh cultural dimension of all subjects was to be respected. Now, according to Bouteflika, the common heritage and identity of the entire Algerian people could be properly acknowledged. But Kabyle Berbers remained unimpressed that the constitutional amendment fell short of granting Tamazigh full official status, and protests continued. Again, the government proffered the argument that official status would encourage separatism, though as has been demonstrated there had never been any sign of such a demand in Algeria's four decades of independence. Even the new call for autonomy was a muted appeal, arising not to provoke political separation, but simply because Tamazigh did not have official status.

15   Currently, there remains considerable tension between the Algerian government and the Berber citizens' group "Coordination of the *Aarouch*". But in June 2003 the Algerian Prime Minister, Ahmed Ouyahia, astonished the nation by addressing the National People's Assembly in Kabyle Berber. The subject before the Assembly was the crisis in Kabylie, which had begun to spread not just to the Chaouia Berber area as in 2001[27], but even to the remote and isolated Berber regions in the extreme southern Sahara of Algeria, such as around Tamanrasset. Recognition of the increasing power of Berber in these southern regions came with the renaming in 2000 of the airport at Hassi Messaoud[28] after Krim Belkacem, a significant Kabyle Berber figure at the time of the struggle for Algerian independence.

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[22] See paragraph 9.
[23] A period known as the "Black Spring"; cf footnote 12.
[24] See Annex A, under *Amazigh*.
[25] Or "El Kseur Manifesto"; produced in El Kseur, a predominantly Berber town in Bejaïa *wilaya*.
[26] See Annex A, under *Aarch*.
[27] See paragraph 13.
[28] 3142N 0603E.

Recent developments regarding French

16   In the summer of 2003, the government reversed four decades of hostility by introducing French into the curriculum from the second year of primary education. It seems as though, fully four decades after independence, French can finally be looked at as a language in its own right, for its own importance, rather than as a manifestation of colonialism, grudgingly accepted only in the sphere of tertiary education. As noted periodically in the above paragraphs, French had in fact never lost its *lingua franca* status. As an example, all documents submitted by Algeria to the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names sessions and United Nations Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names have invariably been written in French, rather than Arabic. Almost all Algeria's oral presentations to those forums have also been in French, with exceptionally an occasional oral contribution in Arabic.

SECTION C: <u>Toponymy</u>

Developments up to 1998

17   The language policies of post-independence Algeria have inevitably had an impact on toponymy. Initially, especially in the period 1962-65, Algeria changed the names of many places to remove traces of the French colonial era[29]. But the authorities did not alter the colonial practice of writing all geographical names directly in Roman script, in a French orthographic style. Even in 1981, when the Bendjedid regime issued a decree supposedly concerning the Arabisation of place names in Algeria[30], the decree stipulated that geographical names should continue to be written directly in Latin characters (and even in French orthography). What was planned to be different was that the precise spellings of Algeria's toponyms would henceforth be based on Arabic phonetics, in order better to reflect their indigenous origins. Had this decree been implemented, the outcome as regards toponymy would have been considerable[31]. However, the decree was in fact rescinded before ever coming into effect.

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[29] See Annex D.
[30] Law 81-27 of 7 March 1981: "Concerning the establishment of a national lexicon of names of cities, villages and other localities".
[31] Changes stipulated included the following:
Alger to El Djezaïr
Constantine to Qacentina
Mascara to Mouaskar
Médéa to Lemdiyya
Mostaganem to Mestghanem
Oran to Wahran
Tamanrasset to Tamenghest
Tiaret to Tihert

18   In April 1990, decrees relating to the naming of administrative divisions (the *wilaya* at the first-order level and the *commune* at the second-order level)[32] came into effect. These stipulated that the names of such divisions were ultimately a matter for the Ministry of the Interior, on the recommendation of the popular assemblies at the relevant administrative level. By the mid-1990s, the Algerian *Institut National de Cartographie* (INC) had established a register of some 40,000 toponyms for the country[33]. About half of these names were designated as "official"; these were the names of administrative divisions and principal settlements. The remaining half, relating to physical features, small settlements and *lieux dits*, were designated "unofficial"[34]. All along, it was acknowledged that the spellings of all toponyms were established in a Roman script form, irrespective of whether each given toponym was of Arabic, Berber, or other origin.

Developments since 1998

19   In the mid-1990s, the INC introduced a *Laboratoire de Recherche et Développement en Toponymie*, which became established as a full *Commission Permanente de Toponymie* (CPT) in November 1998, consisting of twelve members from various interested government departments. Whereas the *Laboratoire* had operated under the INC, the CPT was established under the auspices of the new *Conseil National de l'Information Géographique* (CNIG), also created in 1998, and enjoyed ministerial level authority. Significantly, the timing of these developments coincided with the introduction of Law 91-05, the Arabic Language Generalisation Law[35]. Part of the intention of this law was that, from July 1998, the sole official spellings of Algerian toponyms would be those in Arabic script. Whereas the 1981 Law 81-27[36] would have involved the re-spelling of toponyms, albeit still in a French style, Law 91-05 necessitated wholesale changes to almost all the 40-45,000 captured Algerian toponyms[37]. Each of these would now require re-writing into Arabic, instead of Roman, to create the sole official form. These forms would then require romanization from that Arabic, according (presumably) to the United Nations approved romanization system for Arabic.

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[32] Law 90-08 relating to the *commune* and Law 90-09 relating to the *wilaya*.

[33] A similar figure to the 45,000 or so found in the Algeria component of the database of the US Board on Geographic Names.

[34] This distinction between "official" and "unofficial" is based on category of feature, and is similar to the distinction found in pre-1994 South Africa. It is profoundly different from the terminological distinction usually adopted in UNGEGN, whereby a single feature, of whatever category, may be considered to have both an "official" and an "unofficial" name.

[35] See paragraph 9.

[36] This Law was in fact quickly rescinded; see paragraph 17.

[37] See Annex E.

20   But, despite the forcefulness of law 91-05 in other spheres of life, the toponymic situation remained largely unaltered. Refuge was taken behind a tacit understanding on the part of the authorities that, while in theory the law was unyielding in its demand that toponyms be in Arabic, in practice it was permissible to write toponyms in a "descriptive" manner. Thus, toponyms could be "described" in Roman script, and these "described" forms could be shown on maps[38]. In this neat way, a convenient *modus operandi* designed to delay or even obviate any irreversible shift to Arabic, and instead to continue showing toponyms in Roman script, has been devised.

21   Meanwhile, since 1998 Algeria has also begun the field recording of Berber toponyms in their original Berber forms[39]. Given that Berber has four sub-branches in Algeria, none of them with any standardised written form, this plan was always going to be problematic. Recording Berber names in the Tifinagh style[40] might suit those concerned with the indigenous identity of the Algerian Sahara, but it would render the names largely incomprehensible to any wider audience; even to Berbers of the Kabylie. However, elements of government remain opposed to one obvious alternative, Roman script, for any of Algeria's toponyms, since they regard this script as a manifestation of colonialism. To such elements, the only ideologically pure script is Arabic, but the fact is that this script is technically deficient for the writing of Berber, in that it possesses too few vowel and consonant letters[41]. The CPT, now renamed as the *Commission Permanente Spécialisée de Toponymie* (CPST) has somehow to resolve this hotly political issue, with the added impetus that since early 2002 Kabyle Berber (Tamazigh) has enjoyed constitutional status as a national language[42]. The other main functions of the CPST involve establishing the principles, rules and procedures by which both existing and newly field collected toponyms of Algeria are standardised and spelt, encouraging research into a national toponymic database, and establishing relations with appropriate national and international agencies concerned with toponymy.

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[38] This explanation was provided orally by Algeria to the UK at the 20th Session of UNGEGN, 2000.
[39] This plan was reported orally by Algeria at the 7th United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, New York, 1998.
[40] See *Tifinagh* in Annex A, and also Annex F.
[41] Arabic script cannot easily show the vowels **e** and **o**, nor the consonants **g**, **ñ** and **v** (all needed in Berber).
[42] See paragraph 14.

22   Interestingly, the CPST has been experimenting with the addition of modified Arabic letters to the standard Arabic inventory, in order to represent the additional sounds encountered in Berber. This may suggest that representing Berber toponyms in modified Arabic script will prove to be Algeria's preferred option. Likewise, the *Base de Données Toponymiques* (BDT-DZ) of the *Institut National de Cartographie et Télédétection* (INCT)[43] indicates that the fields allowed for toponymic capture include spellings in both French and Arabic[44]. If this is the case, and assuming a continued use of Roman script for Algeria's other toponyms, then a romanization system for Berber Arabic will be required.

23   Meanwhile the INCT, having lost to the CNIG[45] the national toponymic function it used to enjoy in its days as the INC, has instead established two internal committees concerned with geographical names:
       (a) the *Commission de Toponymie*, which deals with the field collection and office treatment of names; writing systems; toponymic guidelines; names selection for maps; the creation of a toponymic database; terminology bulletin; glossary of abbreviations; *et cetera* – all for the INCT's in-house products
       (b) the *Comité de Toponymie*, which has a decision making role within INCT as regards (for example) the validation of toponyms before they appear on official INCT maps.

SECTION D: Conclusion

24   As regards both the promotion of Arabic-script toponyms and the collection of Berber toponyms, therefore, Algeria continues to lack any coherent national toponymic policy. There is no definitive agreement on the script in which Algeria's toponyms should be written; no scientific standard for any proper script correspondence between Arabic and Roman; and no decision on which script to utilise in the writing of Berber toponyms. But, at long last, the political imperatives which have caused Algeria to lag several decades adrift in its toponymic progress can now be discussed in a more open climate. At a toponymic seminar in Algiers in April 2002, for instance, a paper was presented which openly listed the three principal politically driven considerations which have influenced Algeria since independence:
       (a) an antagonistic complex towards French colonialism
       (b) a complex towards the imitation of some perceived Middle Eastern model
       (c) an obsessional complex towards national unity.
       These are indeed precisely the impediments hindering toponymic progress which have been noted throughout this present document. As matters stand, PCGN and BGN will continue to take as found the toponyms encountered in Algeria's national mapping, written in Roman script and a French orthography.

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[43] Formerly the INC; see paragraphs 18 & 19.
[44] *Fichiers de Données Toponymiques: Systèmes de traitement automatique des données:* Document E/CONF.94/INF.38, 8th UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, Berlin, 2002.
[45] See paragraph 19.

ANNEX A: Glossary and Definitions

Aarch (pl: *Aarouch*)**:**   village communities brought together ("federated") ethnically by tribe. The Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) form is *'Arsh* (plural *'Urūsh*); a word meaning "tribe".

Amazigh: (or *Amazight*): a Berber person; also denotes the spoken Berber language, of which there are four (mutually almost unintelligible) dialects in Algeria:
1)   Kabyle Berber: spoken by at least 5 million in the **Kabylie** region and also in the cities (especially Algiers): see *Tamazigh*
2)   Chaouia Berber: spoken by 1.5 million in the Massif de l'Aurès south-east of Batna
3)   Mzab Berber: 50,000 speakers in isolated pockets in the Ghardaïa area
4)   Tuareg Berber: 25,000 speakers in southern Algeria on the Ahaggar plateau (nomads with links to Mali & Niger): see *Tifinagh*.

Amazighité: "Amazigh identity"; "Berber identity".

Berber: from Greek *Barbaroi* & Latin *Barbarus*: "the uncivilised", "foreigner"; four separate population groupings in Algeria (see *Amazigh*).

Grande Kabylie: a region centred at 3635N 0410E; part of **Kabylie**
variants = *Great Kabylia* or *Kabylie du Djurdjura*
an oval stretching from the Oued Isser near Lakhdaria (3633N 0335E) to the Oued Soummam in the vicinity of El Kseur (3641N 0451E), with a highland spine towards the south culminating in Djebel Djurdjura (2300m) at 3626N 0413E, and a northern limit of the Mediterranean Sea. Main town = Tizi Ouzou (3643N 0402E).

Imazighen: a general self-designation for the Berber people; translates as "free men".

Kabylie: a region centred at approximately 3630N 0430E
variants = *Kabylia* or *Les Kabylies*
Grande Kabylie & **Petite Kabylie** together, centred among the mountain ranges of the Tell Atlas (or "Little Atlas"; known in Algeria, Morocco & Tunisia as Atlas Tellien).
adjectival form = Kabyle
origin = the Arabic expression *Bilād al Qabā'il* ("land of tribes")

Petite Kabylie: a region centred at 3630N 0525E; part of **Kabylie**
variants = *Little Kabylia* or *Kabylie des Babors*
stretching from Amizour (3638N 0455E) in the west to El Maad (3635N 0552E) in the east, culminating towards the south in the Massif des Babors (2000m) at 3633N 0528E, and running northwards down to the Mediterranean Sea at the Golfe de Bejaïa (3645N 0520E). Main town = Bejaïa (3645N 0505E).

Tamazigh: (or *Tamazight*): the written form of *Amazigh*, the Berber language; in practice usually limited to the written form of the Kabyle dialect of *Amazigh*, in Roman script.

Tifinagh: the written form of the Tuareg dialect of *Amazigh*, the Berber language, in ideographic script.

ANNEX B: First-Order Administrative Divisions

Each division is known as a *wilaya* (prefecture)   admin centre = •

Adrar	2545N 0100W	area = 443,782 sq km	pop = 357,800
• = Adrar	2754N 0017W		pop = 70,900
Aïn Defla	3610N 0210E	area = 4,885 sq km	pop = 756,000
• = Aïn Defla	3616N 0158E		pop = 48,900
Aïn Temouchent	3520N 0105W	area = 2,432 sq km	pop = 374,600
• = Aïn Temouchent	3517N 0108W		pop = 62,900
Alger	3645N 0310E	area = 865 sq km	pop = 2,938,300
• = Alger	3645N 0303E		pop = 1,742,800
Annaba	3650N 0735E	area = 1,410 sq km	pop = 637,100
• = Annaba	3654N 0746E		pop = 246,700
Batna	3530N 0555E	area = 11,855 sq km	pop = 1,111,100
• = Batna	3533N 0610E		pop = 278,100
Béchar	3015N 0305W	area = 181,020 sq km	pop = 264,300
• = Béchar	3137N 0213W		pop = 150,300
Bejaïa	3640N 0455E	area = 3,404 sq km	pop = 973,200
• = Bejaïa	3645N 0505E		pop = 168,700
Biskra	3440N 0525E	area = 21,094 sq km	pop = 675,100
• = Biskra	3451N 0544E		pop = 196,100
Blida	3635N 0300E	area = 1,102 sq km	pop = 902,700
• = Blida	3628N 0249E		pop = 175,600
Bordj Bou Arréridj	3605N 0445E	area = 3,676 sq km	pop = 642,200
• = Bordj Bou Arréridj	3604N 0446E		pop = 147,400
Bouira	3615N 0355E	area = 4,722 sq km	pop = 718,600
• = Bouira	3622N 0354E		pop = 91,500
Boumerdes	3645N 0340E	area = 1,486 sq km	pop = 740,300
• = Boumerdes	3646N 0328E		pop = 29,900
Chlef	3615N 0115E	area = 4,440 sq km	pop = 1,015,000
• = Chlef	3609N 0120E		pop = 153,500
Constantine	3620N 0640E	area = 2,204 sq km	pop = 934,800
• = Constantine	3621N 0636E		pop = 530,100
Djelfa	3420N 0340E	area = 33,236 sq km	pop = 987,500
• = Djelfa	3440N 0315E		pop = 176,900

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El Bayadh	3230N 0110E	area = 88,984 sq km	pop = 259,800
• = El Bayadh	3341N 0100E		pop = 68,500
El Oued	3310N 0715E	area = 69,434 sq km	pop = 607,700
• = El Oued	3320N 0653E		pop = 120,200
El Tarf	3645N 0810E	area = 2,968 sq km	pop = 406,200
• = El Tarf	3646N 0819E		pop = 17,100
Ghardaïa	3105N 0310E	area = 78,107 sq km	pop = 340,500
• = Ghardaïa	3229N 0340E		pop = 88,400
Guelma	3625N 0725E	area = 3,842 sq km	pop = 496,300
• = Guelma	3627N 0726E		pop = 124,700
Illizi	2650N 0810E	area = 179,011 sq km	pop = 38,900
• = Illizi	2629N 0828E		pop = 4,000
Jijel	3645N 0600E	area = 2,622 sq km	pop = 658,700
• = Jijel	3648N 0546E		pop = 121,600
Khenchela	3500N 0700E	area = 9,624 sq km	pop = 399,300
• = Khenchela	3526N 0708E		pop = 121,700
Laghouat	3335N 0240E	area = 26,941 sq km	pop = 375,800
• = Laghouat	3348N 0253E		pop = 110,500
Mascara	3525N 0010E	area = 5,699 sq km	pop = 776,600
• = Mascara	3523N 0008E		pop = 92,700
Médéa	3605N 0300E	area = 8,330 sq km	pop = 827,900
• = Médéa	3616N 0245E		pop = 141,700
Mila	3625N 0610E	area = 3,436 sq km	pop = 780,800
• = Mila	3627N 0615E		pop = 62,500
Mostaganem	3600N 0020E	area = 2,165 sq km	pop = 721,900
• = Mostaganem	3556N 0005E		pop = 142,700
M'Sila	3520N 0420E	area = 17,891 sq km	pop = 934,800
• = M'Sila	3542N 0432E		pop = 114,500
Naama	3315N 0045W	area = 33,852 sq km	pop = 189,900
• = Naama	3316N 0019W		pop = 3,700
Oran	3540N 0030W	area = 2,145 sq km	pop = 1,325,200
• = Oran	3541N 0038W		pop = 752,200
Ouargla	3030N 0610E	area = 230,216 sq km	pop = 503,300
• = Ouargla	3157N 0519E		pop = 136,200
Oum el Bouaghi	3550N 0705E	area = 6,712 sq km	pop = 612,100
• = Oum el Bouaghi	3552N 0706E		pop =90,700

Relizane	3545N 0055E	area = 5,208 sq km	pop = 733,200
• = Relizane	3544N 0033E		pop = 119,600
Saïda	3440N 0020E	area = 7,014 sq km	pop = 322,000
• = Saïda	3450N 0009E		pop = 127,200
Sétif	3610N 0530E	area = 6,526 sq km	pop = 1,509,300
• = Sétif	3611N 0524E		pop = 243,000
Sidi Bel Abbès	3450N 0030W	area = 8,306 sq km	pop = 607,500
• = Sidi Bel Abbès	3511N 0038W		pop = 206,700
Skikda	3645N 0650E	area = 4,197 sq km	pop = 902,700
• = Skikda	3652N 0654E		pop = 174,700
Souk Ahras	3610N 0755E	area = 4,029 sq km	pop = 427,800
• = Souk Ahras	3617N 0757E		pop = 132,900
Tamanrasset	2345N 0440E	area = 619,360 sq km	pop = 174,100
• = Tamanrasset	2247N 0531E		pop = 62,500
Tébessa	3500N 0750E	area = 14,207 sq km	pop = 630,800
• = Tébessa	3524N 0807E		pop = 175,800
Tiaret	3455N 0135E	area = 19,556 sq km	pop = 835,500
• = Tiaret	3522N 0118E		pop = 166,700
Tindouf	2725N 0550W	area = 182,838 sq km	pop = 36,700
• = Tindouf	2740N 0808W		pop = 20,100
Tipaza	3635N 0225E	area = 1,700 sq km	pop = 579,600
• = Tipaza	3635N 0226E		pop = 15,400
Tissemsilt	3545N 0145E	area = 3,208 sq km	pop = 299,700
• = Tissemsilt	3536N 0148E		pop = 59,300
Tizi Ouzou	3645N 0415E	area = 2,592 sq km	pop = 1,262,800
• = Tizi Ouzou	3643N 0402E		pop = 152,200
Tlemcen	3440N 0125W	area = 9,408 sq km	pop = 971,400
• = Tlemcen	3452N 0118W		pop = 137,800

ANNEX C: Largest Cities & Boundary Segments

Largest Cities (population over 150,000)

Alger	3645N 0303E	1,742,800	(urban agglomeration = 3,917,000)
Oran	3541N 0038W	752,200	
Constantine	3621N 0636E	530,100	
Annaba	3654N 0746E	399,800	including the attached town of El Bouni, 5km south (Annaba by itself = 246,700: El Bouni = 153,100)
Batna	3533N 0610E	278,100	
Sétif	3611N 0524E	243,000	
Sidi Bel Abbès	3511N 0038W	206,700	
Biskra	3451N 0544E	196,100	
Djelfa	3440N 0315E	176,900	
Tébessa	3524N 0807E	175,800	
Blida	3628N 0249E	175,600	
Skikda	3652N 0654E	174,700	
Bejaïa	3645N 0505E	168,700	
Tiaret	3522N 0118E	166,700	
Chlef	3609N 0120E	153,500	El Asnam 1962-1980; sometimes seen as Ech Chlef
Tizi Ouzou	3643N 0402E	152,200	
Béchar	3137N 0213W	150,300	

Boundary Segments
Algeria shares the following boundaries:

Morocco	1559 km / 974 ml
Western Sahara	42 km / 26 ml
Mauritania	463 km / 289 ml
Mali	1376 km / 860 ml
Niger	956 km / 598 ml
Libya	982 km / 614 ml
Tunisia	965 km / 603 ml

ANNEX D: Name Changes following Independence in 1962

Where the left-hand column contains 2 names separated by a solidus (/), both names were used at different times before independence

Affreville	Khemis Miliana	3615N 0213E
Aïn Mokra	Berrahal	3650N 0727E
Arcole	Bir el Djir	3543N 0032W
Arthur	Tlélat ed Douaïr[46]	3600N 0254E
Aumale	Sour el Ghozlane	3609N 0341E
Baudens	Belarbi	3509N 0027W
Bedeau	Râs el Ma	3430N 0049W
Bernelle	Oued el Ma	3538N 0559E
Blandan	Bouteldja	3647N 0812E
Boghari	Ksar el Boukhari	3553N 0245E
Bône	Annaba	3654N 0746E
Bosquet	Hadjadj	3605N 0019E
Bossuet	Dhaya	3440N 0037W
Bougainville	Sendjas	3603N 0124E
Bougie	Bejaïa	3645N 0505E
Bou Hanifia-les-Thermes	Bou Hanifia el Hamamat	3518N 0002W
Bourbaki	Khemisti	3539N 0157E
Cacherou	Sidi Kada	3519N 0020E
Camp du Maréchal	Tadmaït	3644N 0354E
Canrobert	Oum el Bouaghi	3552N 0706E
Cap Matifou	Bordj el Bahri	3648N 0313E
Cassaigne	Sidi Ali	3606N 0025E
Castiglione	Bou Ismaïl	3638N 0241E
Charon	Bou Kadir	3603N 0107E
Chasseloup-Laubat	Râs el Ma	3607N 0532E
Châteaudun-du-Rhumel	Chelghoum el Aïd	3609N 0609E
Chevreul	Ben Aziz[47]	3627N 0538E
Clairfontaine	El Aouinet	3552N 0753E
Colbert	Aïn Oulmene	3555N 0517E
Col-des-Oliviers	Aïn Bouziane	3635N 0645E
Coligny	Bouira[48]	3612N 0516E
Colomb-Béchar	Béchar	3137N 0213W
Condé-Smendou	Zighout Youcef	3631N 0642E
Corneille	Merouana	3537N 0554E
Damiette / Esmar	Aïn Dhab	3616N 0246E

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[46] subsequently changed again to Seghouane

[47] subsequently changed again to Arbaoun

[48] not the same town as the wilaya centre Bouira (3622N 0354E)

Djouab / Masqueray	Nacereddine	3608N 0325E
Dombasle	El Hachem	3522N 0029E
Duperré	Aïn Defla	3616N 0158E
El Hassanta / Gros-Pin	Aïn Toutia	3607N 0154E
Esmar / Damiette	Aïn Dhab	3616N 0246E
Fauvelle	Menzel	3622N 0747E
Ferry	Oued el Djemaa	3547N 0040E
Fesli Rabah / Lapaine	Ben Smih	3622N 0731E
Fondouk	Khemis el Khechna	3638N 0319E
Fort de l'Eau	Bordj el Kiffan	3644N 0311E
Fort Laperrine	Tamanrasset	2247N 0531E
Fort National	L'Arbaa Naït Irathen	3638N 0412E
Fort Polignac	Illizi	2629N 0828E
Général Gouraud / Pont du Caïd	Bordj Emir Khaled	3607N 0212E
Georges Clémenceau	Stidia	3550N 0000
Géryville	El Bayadh	3341N 0100E
Gounod	Abdi	3615N 0723E
Gros-Pin / El Hassanta	Aïn Toutia	3607N 0154E
Guidjel	Râs el Ma	3607N 0531E
Guyotville	Aïn Benian	3648N 0255E
Haussonviller	Naciria	3644N 0349E
Inkermann	Oued Rhiou	3557N 0054E
Jean Mermoz	Bou Henni	3533N 0005W
Kléber	Sidi Benyebka	3549N 0023W
Lacroix	El Aïoun	3649N 0836E
Lafayette	Bougaa	3620N 0505E
La Fontaine	Aïn Deheb	3450N 0132E
Lamoricière	Ouled Mimoun	3454N 0102W
Lapaine / Fesli Rabah	Ben Smih	3622N 0731E
Lavayssière	Aïn Youcef	3502N 0122W
Laverdure	Mechroha	3621N 0750E
Lecourbe	El Hammadia	3558N 0444E
Les Trembles	Sidi Hamadouche	3517N 0033W
Levasseur	Bir Chouhada	3553N 0623E
Lodi	Draâ Esmar	3616N 0242E
Loverdo	Ouzera	3615N 0250E
MacMahon	Aïn Touta	3522N 0553E
Maginot	Chellalat el Adhaouara	3556N 0325E
Maison Blanche	Dar el Beïda	3642N 0312E
Maison Carrée	El Harrache	3643N 0308E
Makrani / Taine	Laayoune	3541N 0159E
Mangin	El Braya	3537N 0031W
Marbot	Tarik Ibn Ziad	3559N 0208E
Marceau	Menaceur	3629N 0214E
Maréchal Leclerc	Oggaz	3533N 0015W

Marengo	Hadjout	3630N 0225E
Marnia	Maghnia	3450N 0143W
Masqueray / Djouab	Nacereddine	3608N 0325E
Ménerville	Thenia	3643N 0333E
Michelet	Aïn el Hammam	3634N 0418E
Mirabeau	Draâ Ben Khedda	3644N 0357E
Molière	Bordj Bounaama	3551N 0137E
Montagnac	Remchi	3503N 0125W
Montcalm	Tamlouka	3609N 0708E
Montgolfier	Rahouia	3531N 0101E
Navarin	Bir el Arche	3608N 0550E
Nemours	Ghazaouet	3506N 0151W
Orléansville	El Asnam[49]	3609N 0120E
Ouillis	Abd el Malek Ramdane	3606N 0016E
Palestro	Lakhdaria	3633N 0335E
Palikao	Tighenif	3524N 0019E
Pascal	Salah Bey	3551N 0517E
Pasteur	Seriana	3541N 0611E
Paul Cazelles	Aïn Oussera	3527N 0254E
Paul Doumer	Sidi Embarek	3606N 0454E
Penthièvre	Aïn Berda	3639N 0735E
Perigotville	Aïn el Kebira	3622N 0530E
Perrégaux	Mohammadia	3535N 0004E
Philippeville	Skikda	3652N 0654E
Pierre Curie	Oum Ladjoul	3555N 0554E
Pont du Caïd / Général Gouraud	Bordj Emir Khaled	3607N 0212E
Pont du Chéliff	Sidi Bel Atar	3601N 0016E
Port Gueydon	Azeffoun	3653N 0425E
Reïbell	Ksar Chellala	3512N 0219E
Renan	Hassi Mefsoûkh	3547N 0019W
Renault	Sidi M'Hamed Ben Ali	3608N 0050E
Rivet	Meftah	3637N 0313E
Rivoli	Hassi Mameche	3551N 0004E
Rouffach	Ebn Ziad	3622N 0628E
St-Aimé	Jdiouia	3555N 0049E
St-Arnaud	El Eulma	3609N 0541E
St-Barbe-du-Tlélat	Oued Tlélat	3532N 0026W
St-Cloud	Gdyel	3547N 0025W
St-Denis du Sig	Sig	3531N 0011W
St-Léonie	El Mehgoua	3549N 0021W

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[49] after an earthquake devastated this town in 1980, the name was changed again to Ech Chéliff, which in turn was later re-spelt in its current form Chlef

St-Leu	Bettioua	3548N 0015W
St-Louis	Boufatis	3540N 0024W
St-Lucien	Zahana	3531N 0024W
St-Pierre-St-Paul	Ouled Moussa	3640N 0322E
Sonis	Khalouia	3527N 0017E
Taine / Makrani	Laayoune	3541N 0159E
Thiers	Kadiria	3632N 0340E
Thiersville	Ghriss	3514N 0009E
Tocqueville	Râs el Oued	3556N 0501E
Trolard-Taza	Bordj el Emir Abdelkader	3551N 0216E
Turenne	Sabra	3449N 0131W
Uzès-le-Duc	Oued el Abtal	3527N 0041E
Vialar	Tissemsilt	3536N 0148E
Victor Hugo	Hamadia	3527N 0152E
Zurich	Sidi Amar	3632N 0219E

ANNEX E: Notional Effect of Law 91-05 of 1998
(see Section C: paragraphs 19 & 20)

Algerian Spelling	Romanization from Arabic
Adrar	Adrār
Aïn Defla	ʻAyn ad Daflah
Aïn Temouchent	ʻAyn Tīmūshant
Alger	Al Jazāʼir
Annaba	ʻAnnābah
Batna	Bātinah
Béchar	Bashshār
Bejaïa	Bijāyah
Biskra	Biskrah
Blida	Al Bulayyidah
Bordj Bou Arréridj	Burj Bū ʻArīrīj
Bouira	Al Buwayrah
Boumerdes	Bū Mardas (estimated: Arabic not seen)
Chlef	Ash Shalif
Constantine	Qasinṭīnah
Djelfa	Al Jilfah
El Bayadh	Al Bayyāḍ
El Oued	Al Wādī
El Tarf	Aṭ Ṭārif
Ghardaïa	Ghardāyah
Guelma	Qālimah
Illizi	Ilīzī
Jijel	Jījil
Khenchela	Khanshalah
Laghouat	Al Aghwāṭ
Mascara	Muʻaskar
Médéa	Al Midīyah
Mila	Mīlah
Mostaganem	Mistghānim
M'Sila	Masīlah

Naama	An Naʻāmah
Oran	Wahrān
Ouargla	Warqalah
Oum el Bouaghi	Umm al Buwāghī
Relizane	Ghalīzān
Saïda	Saʻīdah
Sétif	Saṭīf
Sidi Bel Abbès	Sīdī Bāl ʻAbbās
Skikda	Sakīkdah
Souk Ahras	Sūq Ahrās
Tamanrasset	Tāminghist
Tébessa	Tibissah
Tiaret	Tīharat
Tindouf	Tindūf
Tipaza	Tībāzah
Tissemsilt	Tīsimsīlit
Tizi Ouzou	Tīzī Wuzū
Tlemcen	Tilimsān

ANNEX F: Examples of Tifinagh letters

Tifinagh (ideographic Berber as found in the Tuareg area: see Annex A) occurs in several varying alphabets. The following shows examples of letters from the Tifinagh alphabet favoured by the *Académie Berbère*. The examples below form a partial alphabet only, limited to utilising as Tifinagh ideographs similar symbols available in Microsoft Word.

Ideograph	**Roman**
•	a
φ	b
∧	d
E	ḍ
÷	e
][	f
Ø	h
Σ	i
I	j
‖	l
[	m
|	n
O	r
⊖	s
C	sh
+	t
X	th
⊨	ts
:	u
Δ	v
Π	y
F	ẓ

ALGERIA:ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS

Administrative regions numbered on map

1	Tlemcen	18	Bouira
2	Aïn Temouchent	19	Bordj Bou Arréridj
3	Sidi Bel Abbès	20	Sétif
4	Oran	21	Jijel
5	Mascara	22	Mila
6	Saïda	23	Batna
7	Mostaganem	24	Skikda
8	Relizane	25	Constantine
9	Chlef	26	Annaba
10	Tissemsilt	27	Guelma
11	Aïn Defla	28	El Tarf
12	Tipaza	29	Souk Ahras
13	Médéa	30	Tébessa
14	Blida	31	Khenchela
15	Boumerdes	32	Biskra
16	Tizi Ouzou	33	Oum el Bouaghi
17	Bejaïa		

ATLANTIC OCEAN

SPAIN

Gibraltar (UK)

Ceuta (Sp)

Melilla (Sp)

ITALY

Sicilia

Pantelleria (It)

MALTA

Gozo

Îles de Kerkenah

MEDITERRANEAN SEA

Tanger

Larache

RABAT

Casablanca

Fès

Oujda

Marrakech

Er Rachidia

Figuig

Béchar

MOROCCO

Islas Canarias (Spain)

Lanzarote

Fuerteventura

Tan-Tan

Laâyoune

Al Mahbas

Tindouf

WESTERN SAHARA (administered by Morocco)

Bîr Mogreïn

'Aïn Ben Tili

Chegga

MAURITANIA

MALI

Aïn Temouchent

Oran

Mostaganem

Chlef

Tipaza

Tissemsilt

Blida

ALGER (ALGIERS)

Boumerdes

Tizi Ouzou

Bordj Bou Arréridj

Bejaïa

Jijel

Skikda

Annaba

Bizerte

TUNIS

Relizane

Aïn Defla

Bouïra

Mila

Guelma

El Tarf

Mascara

Médéa

Sétif

Constantine

Souk Ahras

Tlemcen

Sidi Bel Abbès

Saïda

Tiaret

TIARET

Djelfa

M'Sila

M'SILA

Batna

Khenchela

Tébessa

Oum el Bouaghi

Biskra

Sousse

Sfax

Gafsa

Gabès

Remada

Nālūt

Mişrātah

Surt (Sirte)

NAAMA

Naama

El Bayadh

EL BAYADH

Laghouat

LAGHOUAT

DJELFA

Ghardaïa

El Oued

EL OUED

TUNISIA

TARĀBULUS (TRIPOLI)

BÉCHAR

GHARDAÏA

Ouargla

OUARGLA

Ghadāmis

Ash Shuwayrif

Hūn

TINDOUF

Adrar

ADRAR

TAMANRASSET

ILLIZI

Illizi

LIBYA

Sabhā

Ghāt

Tajarhī

Tamanrasset

NIGER

Assamakka

CHAD

International Boundary
Disputed Boundary
Prefecture (Wilaya) Boundary
★ **Capital City**
◉ **Administrative Centre**

Approx. Scale

| 0 | 100 | 200 | 300 | 400km |
| 0 | 50 | 100 | 150 | 200 Miles |

LOCATION

ALGERIA: KABYLIE REGION

SPAIN

MEDITERRANEAN SEA

Administrative regions numbered on map

1. Aïn Temouchent
2. Mostaganem
3. Tissemsilt
4. Blida
5. Boumerdes
6. Tizi Ouzou
7. Bordj Bou Arréridj
8. Constantine
9. Oum el Bouaghi

Melilla (Sp)

ALGER (ALGIERS)

Boumerdes · Tizi Ouzou · Bejaïa · Skikda · Annaba

Tipaza · Blida · BEJAÏA · Jijel · JIJEL · SKIKDA · ANNABA · El Tarf

CHLEF · Aïn Defla · Médéa · Bouira · Mila · Guelma · EL TARF

Mostaganem · RELIZANE · AÏN DEFLA · BOUIRA · Bordj Bou Arréridj · Sétif · MILA · Constantine · GUELMA · Souk Ahras

Oran · ORAN · Relizane · Tissemsilt · MÉDÉA · SÉTIF · Oum el Bouaghi · SOUK AHRAS

Aïn Temouchent · MASCARA · Mascara · Tiaret · M'Sila · Batna · KHENCHELA

Tlemcen · Sidi Bel Abbès · Saïda · TIARET · M'SILA · BATNA · Khenchela · Tébessa

Oujda · TLEMCEN · SIDI BEL ABBÈS · SAÏDA · Djelfa · Biskra · TÉBESSA

MOROCCO · NAAMA · El Bayadh · BISKRA

Naama · Laghouat · EL OUED

LAGHOUAT · DJELFA · OUARGLA

EL BAYADH · Ghardaïa · El Oued

Béchar · Ouargla

BÉCHAR · GHARDAÏA

Figuig

TUNISIA

Approx. Scale

Legend	
International Boundary	
Prefecture (Wilaya) Boundary	
★	Capital City
⊙	Administrative Centre
	Grande Kabylie
	Petite Kabylie

0 50 100 150 Km
0 50 100 Miles

Geographic Support Main Building, DGC, May 2004   71/04

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