

The Algerian Islamic Movement From Protest to Confrontation: A Study in Systemic Conflagrations

M'hand Berkouk

***Abstract:** The current crisis in Algeria has brought to the forefront the various dimensions of the Islamic tendency in the country. These include the political, the intellectual, the educational and the insurrectional aspects. While analysing the various dimensions of the movement, this paper focuses on the mainstream of the movement. This mainstream is essentially non-violent and actively involved in the established political process. It strives to transform both state and society in line with the essential precepts of Islam. It is the assertion of this paper that Islamic resurgence in Algeria is primarily a cultural phenomenon that cannot be understood by using simple quantitative analytical models. Only a multi-dimensional perspective that has as its centre focus the civilizational and cultural forces can ascertain all the parameters and dynamics of this movement.*

Nowhere is the Islamist challenge more manifest than in Algeria. This was brought to the world's attention not only by the ongoing armed Islamist insurgency but also by the consecutive electoral successes of the Islamists. The purpose of this paper is not merely to analyse this phenomenon historically, or in terms of its different components, but also to understand why this movement has gained so much strength in Algeria. The central focus of this paper is to show that this movement is a home-grown phenomenon that reflects the complexity of the social dynamics of Algeria. An exclusive reliance on economic and political analytic tools is not sufficient to understand the phenomenon that is primarily social and cultural in nature. It is a quest for identity and authenticity.

Dr. M'hand Berkouk is currently Assistant Professor of Political Science, and Head, Department of General Studies, IIUM. E-mail: berkouk@iiu.edu.my

The Algerian Islamic Movement: A Deconstructive Approach

Islamism refers to the process of the ideologisation of Islam and its transformation from the realm of spiritual beliefs to politics. It refers also to the movements that use such an ideology as a reference point or a set of guidelines for their actions and as a "ministry of mobilisation" of the masses at a time when all imported doctrines and ideological references have failed badly in post-independence Algeria.

The link between Islam and politics is not a new phenomenon in contemporary Algeria. In fact, the various resistance movements against the French gained justification not only in the name of Algeria but also of Islam. They were jihāds against infidel invaders. They were defined as acts obligatory for all Muslims. The French further strengthened this conception of colonial relationships by distinguishing Algerians from the settlers first by religion (not by race, ethnic origin or nationality), and secondly by geo-ethnicity. Algerians were called *Muslims* while the others were called *Europeans*. This, and a series of French policies of selective assimilation aimed at stripping the Algerians of their Islamic identity,¹ have not only further engrained this feeling of religious identity but have also strengthened the belief in the sole righteousness of the Islamic model. Islam was a source of identity and a motive for liberation. It was this identity that the Islamic reformist movement (The Association of Algerian 'Ulamā') was trying to establish and it was this motive that was later used by the FLN to rally the people around the nationalist agenda.²

In Algeria, Islamism is a home-grown phenomenon, despite the fact that it interacted with various external intellectual and religio-educational currents, and consequently, was influenced by them. This influence goes back to World War I (1914-1918) when the youth who refused to join the French Army³ emigrated eastward and attended Tunisian and Middle-Eastern universities (al-Zeitouna in Tunisia, al-Azhar in Egypt and other religious institutions in the Levant and the Arab Peninsula).⁴ These self-exiled students returned after the Great War influenced by the neo-reformism of Mohammed 'Abduh and Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī. It was these students who established the Association of Algerian 'Ulamā' that planted the first seeds of nationalism in Algeria.

The Islamic movement reflects not only the social and cultural fabric of society but also the very dynamics that shape, change and lead to either stability or instability. The development of this movement is also affected by the socio-economic conditions of the

country, the type of political system and its political culture and also the different cultural and intellectual currents that waded through society. Moreover, being a constituent part of the Ummah, it is only normal that it would be affected by the intellectual and political debates that permeate it. As far as Algeria is concerned, two factors enhance the depth of "inter-Islamic influences" in the country: the lack of a strong indigenous scholarly tradition in Algeria, and the non-existence of reputable Islamic institutions (like al-Azhar or al-Zeitouna, for example). Both have created a vacuum that can only be filled by external inputs.

One can deconstruct external influence on Algerian Islamism by classifying this influence in terms of three types. The first category is intellectual in essence. Several Algerian Islamists have been influenced by the thinking of the Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt and Syria. This is particularly true for Algerian students who studied in these two countries, or those taught by Egyptian or Syrian teachers working in Algeria. An analysis of the theses elaborated by HAMAS (led by Mahfoud Nahnah) and Nahdah (led by Abdallah Djabballah) reveals the extent of this influence,⁵ as do the organic links that tie the former to the International Movement of the Muslim Brotherhood and the latter to the Tunisian Nahdah movement presided over by the leading Islamist reformer, Rashed Ghannouchi.

The second category could be termed "spiritual influence." A large fraction of Algerian youth has been deeply influenced by the *Salafī* doctrine. This influence was more noticeable in the eighties when the Chadli regime lifted age restrictions on people going for 'Umrah or Hajj. Quite a number of pilgrims (and many students studying in the Arabian peninsula) returned to Algeria enriched by this spiritual experience and deeply touched by the intensity of religious discourse in the Holy Land. They came back spreading their new doctrine and ideas. They further strengthened *Salafī* presence in Algeria. Ali Belhadj is perceived in Algeria as one of the most prominent leaders of this movement which has Sheikh al-Albānī as its spiritual guide.

The final category could be termed methodical influence. More than a thousand Algerians served in the Afghan war⁶ and returned indoctrinated with the kind of thinking that led them to refuse anything but their own concept of the *Khilāfah*. They perceived the existing regime as a legitimate target for their conception of Jihād. These Afghan veterans constitute the hard core of the GIA (Groupe Islamique Armé), which subscribes to an internationalist radical

doctrine. A careful reading of the programme and methodology of the GIA⁷ and its comparison with the book⁸ written by the leader of the International Jihādī Movement (the Syrian, Omar Abdelhakim, or Abu Mussabb) shows that the two movements and programmes are similar in all respects.

The Algerian Islamic Movement: A Typology

The Algerian Islamic movement, like all similar movements across the Muslim world, is neither homogeneous nor monolithic. In fact, it is composed of a plethora of groups, associations and individuals with divergent programmes, strategies, policies and political inclinations. This movement can be classified into three main groups, depending on the strategy for Islamization adopted by each category.

Religio-political Movements: These are composed of Islamic welfare and religious groups, associations and individuals that reject the state's monopoly on Islamic discourse and strive to re-capture the initiative in this area from the authorities by promoting charitable, cultural, educational and social activities. This is how all the politically-oriented Islamic movements started in the sixties and seventies.⁹ The associations, groups and individuals that belong to this category want to re-Islamize society through education, welfare and the spread of the Islamic moral code. In the case of Algeria one can mention the examples of al-Qiyam (The Values) in the sixties as we are going to see later, al-Irchād Wal Islah (the nucleus used by Nahnah to build his Islamist party, HAMAS), and al-Rābitā al-Islāmiyah (The Islamic League), presided over by Sheikh Sahnoun, which served as an umbrella organization for all the currents of the Islamic movement between 1988 and 1991 when the latter was fragmented into three political parties (FIS, HAMAS and Nahḍah), which were unwilling to cooperate with one another, often due to personal differences.

Politico-religious Movements: This category is composed of parties and organisations (FIS, HAMAS, Nahḍah) that base their strategy on direct political participation in national politics through political socialisation, mobilisation of the masses and by taking part in electoral contests. These parties and organisations generally subscribe to the idea of a non-violent transfer of power.

Radical Islamist Movements: This last category is composed of a nebula of militant and hard-line groups seeking the immediate transformation of both state and society through an insurgent strategy (the Armed Islamic Movement or MIA, the Armed Islamic Group or

GIA, the Islamic Salvation Army or AIS, etc).

This categorisation is not water-tight, since groups and/or individuals can move from one category to the other depending on the degree of their political maturation and intellectual sophistication, internal political and socio-economic conditions, the level of state repression or the conditions under which political participation is permitted. It is universally recognised that whenever political freedom is curtailed, people start perceiving violence as the only way for introducing their ideas and programmatic orientations into the political arena.

The main focus of this paper is on the Algerian politico-religious movement, which constitutes, contrary to Western public and expert opinion, the dominant "oppositional discourse and activity" in Algeria.¹⁰ This reality has been blurred by the intense publicity given to the armed insurgency, particularly to the sensationalist actions of the GIA. The fact is that the majority of Algerian Islamists are committed to the idea of power transfer by non-violent means, and are moderate in their political orientations; while the radicals and militants are the exception and not the general rule.¹¹ In order to understand this phenomenon objectively one needs to put aside ones ideological and doctrinal convictions and fathom the diversity of the Islamic movement.

Islamic Insurgency: A Multivariate Approach

Armed Islamist groups are not a novelty in post-colonial Algeria. The first example of armed insurgency was the one undertaken by the MIA (Mouvement Islamique Armé, Armed Islamic Movement) from 1982 to 1987.¹² It was led by Bouyali Mustapha until his death on 3 February 1987. Its activities were concentrated in Algiers and the surrounding *wilāyāt* (regional state) of Blida. Its most publicised action was the attack on the police school in Soumaa (30 kms south-west of Algiers) in 1985 in which one policeman was killed. MIA is the precursor of Islamic radicalism in Algeria.

The current armed groups in Algeria are not homogeneous ideologically, politically or institutionally. They are numerous, despite the attempt of some leaders to unite them under one "army" as was the case with the Congress for Unity in May 1994, which brought together groups from different parts of the country. One can identify here the two most prominent groups: GIA (Groupe Islamique Armé) and AIS (Armée Islamique du Salut). The first because of its

sensationalist actions that enabled it to grab the headlines, and the second for its nation-wide structure, its organisation as an "army" and its allegiance to the historical leadership of the FIS (Abbassi Madani and Ali Belhadj).

AIS is the official military wing of the FIS. It is currently the best equipped armed Islamic group and is centrally-controlled. It is presided over by Madani Mezrag. AIS was created in the spring of 1994 by the internal and clandestine leadership of the FIS, when they realised that the movement was likely to be led by GIA extremists, into "a fight to the death, they wanted no part of."¹³ The AIS, which declared its allegiance to the historical leadership of the FIS, tried to distance itself from the GIA by condemning the latter's terrorist acts, although it did not renounce armed conflict.¹⁴ The AIS's main targets are security forces. It is particularly responsible for attacks on special forces such as the Ninjas, Red Berets and the commandos who constitute the hard core of the anti-terrorist special forces. It has never claimed responsibility for the killing of civilians and foreigners and has always condemned such acts. According to the Paris-based Observatoire des Pays Arabes (OPA), the AIS, in November 1995 had an army about 12,000-15,000 strong.¹⁵ This number is said to have increased with the defection of a large section of the GIA after the assassination of Sheikh Mohamed Said, Abderrezak Redjam and over 140 other Islamists by fellow members of the GIA. AIS and all the groups that are in no way affiliated to the GIA have ceased all their "military" activities after the call for a cease-fire that was initiated by the AIS after its approval by both the internal and external leaderships of the FIS. This cease-fire (effective from 1 October 1997) was seen by these groups as the best strategy for distancing themselves from the bloodshed.

The GIA was created in 1993 as a result of oppression by the regime, oppression which radicalised the extreme fringes of the Islamist movement, that had become disillusioned with the possibility of a meaningful political discourse.¹⁶ This constituted a serious programmatic and methodical deviation of a cross-section of this movement which was essentially peaceful to begin with. It constituted, according to Entelis, a "... shift from the realm of politics to the field of terror."¹⁷ The first action that put them on the list of anti-terrorist agencies and in the media, was the assassination of foreigners (more than 100 have been killed so far). Subsequently they have been accused of engaging in the most hideous and sickening operations: the

killing of women, children, *imāms*, academics, lawyers, etc. This group was composed, in 1995, of 2000-4000 armed insurgents (according to the OPA).¹⁸ Its strength has dwindled, however, because of the withdrawal of several sub-groups from it after the assassination (in November 1995) of 140 Algerianist militants that joined this group in May 1994. It has been further weakened by the death of its leader, Djamal Zitouni, in July 1996.¹⁹ In fact, the GIA has split into several factions, some of which have even engaged in a war of attrition against one other. The split has taken place across two doctrinal lines: *Salafīs* (internationalists) and *Djaza'rites*²⁰ (or Algerianists, those subscribing to a typical Algerian model). One of the most important groups is the GIA which is led by Zitouni's main aide, Antar Zouabri²¹ (Abou Talhā) who is at least as radical as his predecessor. Another group subscribing to the same tendency (*Salafī*) is led by Hassan Abū Walīd (Miloud Hebbi), commander of the Southern Zone (Laghouat, in the Sahara). The third group is composed of several small units all subscribing to the Algerianist school of thought. This new group is called the "Front for Preaching and Jihād" and is led by Mustapha Kertali, the former GIA *emīr* of Larbaa (20 km to the south of Algiers). This group includes the most effective Algerianist armed group, FIDA, which was responsible for the killing of several top officials.

The organisational structure of the GIA is not fully known, but on the basis of several testimonies this group is probably a loose organisation composed of several autonomous groups with no central control. The only link is name and allegiance to the leadership.²² Each group is free to carry on with its own activities and there is no real accountability. This could be the reason why this group is infiltrated by the anti-terrorist intelligence services. The killing of several top leaders of the GIA is a clear proof of the level of infiltration of this group by the authorities. A report by Maghreb Confidential,²³ highlights the ways in which the authorities infiltrate this group. According to this report the following three tactics are used:

1. through false army deserters who allegedly leave with their arms but only for intelligence purposes;
2. by using their (anti-terrorist intelligence) elements living in the inner city which is a breeding ground for potential GIA members; and
3. by creating their own "GIA" groups to carry out activities in the name of the GIA which, in reality, serve the purposes of

the secret services.

The authorities use such acts as part of their campaign of psychological warfare specially designed to convince the public that "Islamism" is ruthless. It kills indiscriminately—children, women, intellectuals, *imāms*, and so on—and is destroying the educational, social, and economic structures of the state. It is therefore to be perceived as a force destructive to the country. Such psychological conditioning is meant to cut Islamist insurgents from their popular base and turn the people against them. It also aims at legitimising the January 1992 *coup d'état* and to give more credibility to the excuses given for the coup and the extraordinary state of affairs that followed.

What is going on in Algeria at the moment has gone beyond the culture of protest that generally defines Islamist movements.²⁴ It is at the stage of confrontation when all attempts at co-existence have failed. The main Islamist party (FIS) won two successive elections and was deprived of the right to constitute the first democratically elected government in the Maghreb.

The Politico-religious Dimension of the Algerian Islamic Movement

When Algeria recovered its independence in 1962 after 132 years of colonial subjugation and exploitation, its politics was dominated by the FLN (Front de Libération Nationale), since all the pre-existing parties and political movements were forced to dissolve within the Front (FLN) that was spearheading the anti-colonial revolution. The Association of '*ulamā*' was no exception; it merged with the Front in 1956.

The FLN and the new "army-party hierarchy"²⁵ held a monopoly over political activism as well as Islamic discourse since the latter was an important requirement for the success of its strategy of political legitimisation.²⁶ It created a Ministry of Religious Affairs to supervise, regulate and administer religious activities. In order to ensure ideological compliance, it transformed Islamic scholars and preachers into civil servants of the state and deterred any Islamic activity outside this "official framework." It resurrected and exploited to the limit the Baddissian (Ibn Baddis, the founder of the Association of Algerian '*Ulamā*') trilogy ("Islam is my religion, Arabic is my language and Algeria is my country") and all the symbolism attached to it. This was part of the strategy of political legitimisation.

State Islam was, however, challenged from three sources. The first

was from within the army-party hierarchy by former militants of the Association of 'ulamā' who remained either with the FLN or with the Army after taking its new name, Armée Nationale Populaire (ANP). These militants preferred to remain within these formalised frameworks either for personal reasons, for fear of creating divisions (*fitnah*) by working outside this framework when Algeria was badly in need of stability and unity, or because they were persuaded that they would be able to actively contribute to the application of November 1954 Declaration that endorsed the reformist ideals of the 'ulamā'. These people opposed the socialist policies of the left; consequently, the state was forced not only to moderate the socialist-inspired programmes of reform but also to dig deep into Islamic thought for the purpose of legitimising these new ideological and programmatic choices by equating socialism with the Islamic concept of social equity. By creating political terminology that conflated two distinct paradigms and sets of principles, they started using the term "Islamic Socialism."

The second method was through organised associations. The precursor of such an undertaking was the formation of an association called "Values" (al-Qiyam). This association was established in 1963 and obtained legal accreditation on 14 February 1963. It was presided over by El Hachemi Tidjani.²⁷ It was active in opposing the ideological choices of the regime and in pressing for the respect of Islamic values and ethics in the construction of the new Algeria. This association was elitist in its composition and intellectual in its tone. It tried to propagate its Islamic vision by holding conferences and lectures, and by publishing a journal called "al-Tahdhīb al-Islami". It focused in its discourse on the neo-reformist ideas of the Association of Algerian 'Ulamā' and even the more radical theses of Sayyid Qutb, and some of the ideas contained in the doctrine of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood.

Despite some less than frequent incursions into the realm of politics, this association was focusing the whole of its work on social, educational and moral issues. However, because of these incursions and its criticism of the Egyptian regime over the assassination of Sayyid Qutb,²⁸ Boumedienne suspended the work of this association in 1966, and finally banned it four years later (1970).

The third method was spearheaded by Islamic scholars and preachers who fought for their intellectual independence and refused to work for "state Islam" and strove instead to promote their own

reformist ideas. The most prominent figure during the early years of independent Algeria (under Ben Bella's rule) was Bachir Ibrahimi who served as leader of the *'ulamā'* after the death of Ben Badis. He was very critical of the ideological and programmatic choices made by the new republic and condemned them as a clear deviation from the principles for which over one million Algerians were martyred. In a letter to Ben Bella on 16 April 1964 he condemned such choices and wrote:

Our rulers do not seem to understand that our people aspire foremost for unity, peace and prosperity and that the theoretical foundations guiding their [the rulers'] work should reflect our Arab and Islamic roots and should not be drawn from foreign doctrines.

Following this, he urged Ben Bella and his government to base their system on *Shūrā* and to strive for a just and equitable polity. For this letter, Sheikh Ibrahimi was sentenced to house arrest until he died in his home on 21 May 1965.²⁹ After his death other religious scholars like Larbaoui, Sahnoun and Soltani carried on propagating these ideas. Until his death, Abdelatif Soltani was the most virulent critic of secularist policies of the successive Algerian presidents. He published a book in Morocco, in 1974, entitled "Mazdakism is the source of socialism" (*Al-mazdakiyya hia asl al ishtirakiyya*). This was a strong critique of the "révolution socialiste," initiated by Boumedienne in 1971, which sought the construction of a socialist Algeria. It also attacked the "révolution culturelle" on the basis that it would corrupt public morals by allowing free-mixing of sexes, legal consumption of alcohol and lack of consideration for Islam by intellectual figures (particularly the writer Kateb Yacine and the feminist Fadhila Merabet) known for their ideological association with the regime. Abdelatif Soltani was known for his rhetoric and activism that cost him several dismissals from his job as a preacher under both Ben Bella and Boumedienne.

Sheikh Soltani was not only involved in debates and intellectual confrontations over legislation on family, Arabization or the place of Islam in the whole institutional setting of independent Algeria, but he even co-led (with Sahnoun and Abbassi Madani³⁰) the November 1982 mass rally and Friday prayer at the Central Faculty of the University of Algiers. This was seen, by the Chadli regime, as a serious test for its political determination not to allow any political opposition or a challenge to its monopoly over Islam as a primary source of political legitimacy. This rally was organised after the start of confrontations

between leftist students and Islamist students over student committees in campuses and over the question of the mosques of the halls of residence. The bloody confrontation at the Ben Aknoun hall of residence in early November that led to the death of one student (Kamal Amzal) and the arrests of several students³¹ precipitated this event. The event was important for several reasons: firstly, it was a clear test of the regime's resilience which was itself undergoing constant transformation to reflect the intra-regime power politics at a time when Chadli was trying to stamp his authority at the expense of the old guard. Secondly, it marked the transformation of the Islamists' strategy from one of clandestinity to semi-clandestinity since it crowned the signatories of the "Communiqué of advice" (Soltani, Sahnoun and Abbassi) as the collegial leadership of this movement. Finally, it issued a fourteen point communiqué that called for Islamisation of the legal system, of education, of the economy as well as professional ethics. It also called on the authorities to ensure public liberties and requested the opening of all closed mosques and prayer rooms in the educational sector. Some of these points were endorsed by the regime. The best example is the promulgation of the 1984 family code which was essentially drawn from Shari'ah.

These events demonstrated once more the role played by university students in the historical development of the Islamic movement itself. In fact, in the sixties (under Bennabi³²) and seventies, university students spearheaded this movement, at least among the youth, and were instrumental in challenging the influence of the communists (Parti De L'Avant-Garde Socialiste, PAGS³³) in this highly sensitive sector (education).

The success of this event impelled the regime to react quickly by arresting this new *de facto* leadership. Abbassi Madani remained in prison, while both Soltani (82 years) and Sahnoun (73) were released 8 days later and put under house arrest.³⁴ Soltani remained under these restrictions until his death in March 1984. His funeral turned into another landmark in the development of the Algerian Islamic movement by bringing together tens of thousands of people, despite the media black-out of his death. This was the "... largest Islamist mobilisation of the clandestine period ..."³⁵

After the death of Soltani, Sheikh Ahmed Sahnoun became the most prominent Islamic leader in Algeria, partly because of his seniority as an Islamic scholar and partly because he lived through and contributed in all the important phases of affirmation undergone by the

Islamic movement, particularly since 1962. In 1988 he founded the Islamic League (*Rabitā al-Da'wah al-Islamiyah*) that brought together the majority of active Islamic groups and rallied around its project, for a period, the different sensibilities of Algerian political Islam (Algerianists, the Muslim Brothers, the *Salafis* and the radicals). This league was apolitical and was reluctant in giving its support for the creation of an Islamist party following the political quake of October 1988 that forced the regime to concede to political reforms based on pluralism and an unprecedented recognition of individual and public freedoms previously unseen in the Arab world.

Several political factions took advantage of this opening up, the lethargy of the regime and its unwillingness to repeat the October 1988 repression that caused the death of over 500 civilians in only five days of violence, to establish political parties even before the law regulating political associations was promulgated.³⁶ The Islamic movement was no exception. It was officially recognised by the Chadli regime as the focal point of opposition in Algeria because of the role it played in stabilising and calming the situation during the October events. Furthermore, Chadli and his regime officially recognised the leadership of this movement when he received Ahmed Sahnoun, Abbassi Madani, Ali Belhadj and Mahfoud Nahnah in his office on 10 October.

The FIS (Front Islamique du Salut, the Islamic Salvation Front) was created in March 1989 and legalised in September 1989. It was soon to become the largest³⁷ and the most active political party in Algeria. It was, from the beginning, an amalgamation of different currents of political thought within the broader Islamic movement. Although they all agree on the ultimate goal (the establishment of an Islamic state), they diverge on matters of political programme and strategy of action.³⁸ The FIS is a real mass party led by a bicephalous leadership with Abbassi Madani as President and Speaker (*Porte Parole*) and Ali Belhadj as Deputy President. The first is intellectual, moderate, pragmatic and politically-experienced; the second, young, confident in public speaking, charismatic and greatly appreciated by the disfranchised youth, particularly because of his uncompromising (and often not so politically-minded) attacks on the regime. This leadership is assisted by an executive and a sovereign Consultative Council (*Majlis al-Shūrā*).

The FIS was able, from the outset, to capitalise on the long history of the Islamic movement by bringing under its control a large network

of mosques and charitable and religious associations that were to serve as bases for the local and regional establishment of its national representation. It also managed to head-hunt most of the people engaged in *Da'wah*. It did, therefore, not only strengthen itself logistically but also enriched its "ideological machine" with eloquent and competent people in order to convert more people to its political vision and platform of action.

The FIS established a dual strategy combining conciliation and aggressiveness. It used a language that appealed to both a segment of the intelligentsia as well as the majority of the population. It attacked the state bureaucracy, its corruption and nepotism, the spread of un-Islamic practices, and focused on social welfare through acts of national solidarity, and large political demonstrations to force the regime to consider Islamist perceptions of matters of national concern.³⁹ This multidimensional strategy and the strong organisation that the FIS managed to build in a short period of time, combined with the willingness of the population to break with the existing corrupt system and the inability of other parties to sell their (often elitist) ideas to the population, gave the FIS a golden opportunity to take part in, and win, the first democratic local and regional elections in June 1990. The FIS gained a landslide victory in these elections. A political and geographical analysis reveals that the FIS won all the large and medium size cities. Sociologically, it gained cross-class electoral support⁴⁰ from businessmen, intellectuals, workers, the unemployed, women and even from within the army and security forces. These elections on the other hand, discredited the ruling party (FLN) and exposed the weakness of the other parties in the absence of the second oldest party⁴¹ (the FFS, Front des Forces Socialistes).

The FIS gained control of most of the large cities—Algiers, Oran, Constantine, Tlemcen, Annaba, Setif, Guelma—with the exception of Tizi-Ouzou (the biggest city of Kabylia) which fell under the control of the Kabylia-based party (the RCD). The south of Algeria, which is traditionally conservative, saved the face of the FLN as it managed to maintain a large number of seats in this constituency. The FIS took control of 32 regional assemblies (APW, Assemblée Populaire de Wilaya) out of 48, and of 853 out of the 1539 seats of the local councils (APC, Assemblée Populaire Communale).

This success had several consequences. Firstly, the FIS electorate and the people in general began pressing for the immediate resolution of their social problems (most notably housing and unemployment) as

promised by the FIS during its electoral campaign. Secondly, the management of the councils under the control of the FIS proved that the choice of candidates from among preachers and people without any managerial skills was risky and at times disastrous. However, the FIS soon managed to understand this reality and tried to correct this mistake by organising "working meetings" for the new councillors. Thirdly, other branches of the Islamic movement which had refused to join the FIS soon realised that the best way for achieving both their ambitions and promoting their vision was through open political participation by creating new parties.

Table 1: Results of the June 1990 Local and Regional Elections (Number of seats won)

Political Affiliation	APC		APW	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
FLN	4799	36.60	667	35.61
PSD	65	0.50	6	0.36
PAGS	10	0.08	1	0.05
RCD	623	4.75	55	2.94
PNSD	134	1.02	8	0.43
FIS	5987	45.66	1031	55.04
PRA	61	0.46	4	0.21
PSL	5	0.004	2	0.11
PAHC	-	-	-	-
PUAID	2	0.01	-	-
Independents	1427	10.88	99	5.29

Fr. Burgat, "La mobilisation islamiste et les elections algériennes du 12 Juin 1990," *Maghreb-Machrek*, No 129, July-September 1990, p.7.

Nahnah was the first to move in this direction. His call for a meeting of all Islamic organisations to be held in September was an

attempt at undermining both the structural and popular bases of the FIS. The meeting was held on 20 September 1990 and was attended by over 300 Islamic associations and groups, some distinguished personalities and minor parties.⁴² Nahnah, encouraged by the relative success of this event and driven by his eternal aspiration to lead the Islamic movement, established in December 1990, the Movement of the Islamic Society (HAMAS). This further divided the Islamic movement rather than strengthen it. Djabbalah soon followed suit by creating, in December 1990 The Movement for Islamic Renaissance (Nahdah).

Finally, the regime understood the fact that it had made a serious political miscalculation by underestimating the real strength and potential for mobilisation of the FIS. It tried soon, however, to undermine the credibility of this party by taking away the major prerogatives held by both the local and regional councils, especially those relating to the distribution of flats and land for construction. Moreover, the newly elected bodies were confronted with a lack of co-operation on the part of designated *Wālīs* (or regional governors). The last straw that led to a confrontation between the two sides was the promulgation of a new electoral law in the spring of 1991 that was specially tailored by the FLN-dominated National Assembly to maintain its control on this legislative body. This law led to a strong protest from several political parties, but it was the FIS that was set to lose. It decided, after the failure of dialogue with the authorities, to launch what was termed a "political strike" or, more precisely, a process of civil disobedience that was organised only at Abbassi Madani's persistent insistence.⁴³ This action was a serious miscalculation by the FIS; the regime and part of the army leadership were hoping for such a mistake in order to restore their waning authority and to preserve their threatened privileges. After starting as peaceful sit-ins in public places (in May 1991), this "political strike" turned bloody with the beginning of June. The bloodshed led to the dismissal of Hamrouche as Head of Government and his replacement by Ghozali who promised the revision of the electoral law and the holding of legislative elections before the end of 1991.⁴⁴ A state of siege was also declared on 5 June which brought the army back into politics. A policy of vehement repression followed. The leaders of the FIS were arrested on 29 June 1991 and thousands of known FIS activists were arrested and detained. Torture was widely used. The regime wanted, through these concerted actions, to destabilise the organisation of the FIS, weaken its unity and exploit the existing differences among its

different factions. This strategy had two objectives: the first was to find a more conciliatory FIS leadership in order to finally domesticate it politically; the second was to avoid the emergence of any new party that would obtain an over-all majority in the National Assembly.⁴⁵ On the other hand, this repression had two consequences for the FIS itself: the first was that the radical fringes of the FIS became disillusioned with the political game and decided to start organising for armed insurgency.⁴⁶ The second was the emergence of a new political leadership after the Batna conference of the party in August. This conference dismissed several members of the *Majlis al-Shūrā* and elected Hachani as an interim President while maintaining both Abbassi and Belhadj in their posts. This new leadership would prove in the following months, despite systematic repression, its political ingenuity, resourcefulness and its organisational inventiveness. In fact, nobody was expecting a second landslide victory for the FIS after the systematic repression and concentrated attempts at destabilisation it was subjected to, the creation of new Islamist parties (HAMAS and Nahdah), and incessant anti-FIS coverage by a large segment of the media. The authorities were projecting a maximum 25% of seats⁴⁷ to be obtained by the FIS at these first democratic legislative elections in independent Algeria. The results of these elections demonstrated once more two strong realities. First, the determination of a large section of the population to finish off the regime and establish an Islamically-oriented polity. Second, it showed how much the regime was unprepared for political change and how isolated it was within a society that was changing very quickly.

The elections themselves were a success, as admitted by several members of the government. The FIS won 188 seats in the first round (231 out of 430 seats were decided in the first round), followed by the FFS (25) then the FLN (15); three seats were won by independent candidates. The FIS was set to win the second round, since it was a favourite for at least 177 of the remaining 199 seats. Algeria was on the verge of democratically electing the first pluralist assembly that would almost certainly yield an Islamist majority in government.

Such a prospect alarmed a cross section of the élite, and some associations as well as some parties such the PAGS and the RCD. The latter was unable to win even a single seat in its stronghold (Kabylia) and even its leader (Said Sadi) was ousted during the first round in his home town, Tizi Ouzou. Sadi did not only call for the cancellation of these elections by the army, because he did not like its

results, but also called for civil disobedience.⁴⁸ In the meantime, the leadership of the army (chiefly Defence Minister General Khaled Nezzar and Interior Minister General Larbi Belkheir⁴⁹) was preparing for a constitutional take-over and the dismissal of Chadli in order to create a political and constitutional vacuum that could only be filled by a new presidential body.⁵⁰ This happened on 11 January 1992 when Chadli announced his resignation while the President of the Constitutional Council (Benhabylles) refused (or was forced to refuse) to assume his responsibilities as a constitutional interim president. This brought to the fore the High Council for Security, a consultative body with no executive powers. This council cancelled the elections and established a High Committee of State composed of five people and presided over by a veteran of the War of Liberation (Mohammed Boudiaf) living in exile (in Morocco) since the sixties. Boudiaf was used, as a hero of the War of Liberation, to give historical legitimacy to the coup and to assume responsibility for any future decisions that would be taken by the army-backed regime. These started with the promulgation of the state of exception, the imprisonment of Hachani and the internment of tens of thousands of Islamists in concentration camps in the Sahara, the banning of the FIS and the promulgation of highly restrictive legislation on individual and public freedoms.

Table 2: Results of the First Round of the Legislative Elections (26 December 1992)

Parties	Seats	(Seats %)	Votes
RCD	0	0	200,267
FIS	188	43.72	3,260,359
FLN	15	3.72	1,613,507
FFS	25	5.81	510,661
PRA	0	0	67,828
MDA	0	0	135,882
HAMAS	0	0	368,697

Source: A. Lamchichi, *L'islamisme en Algérie*, (Paris: l'Harmattan, 1992), 83.

The cancellation of these elections and the repression that followed had three consequences: firstly, it unleashed radicals, who were contained within the complex framework of the FIS, and drove them to engage in a general insurrection against the state. Secondly, the FIS was forced into clandestine work. It established two complementary leaderships, one internal and clandestine and the other external⁵¹ (led by Rābaḥ Kebīr, who lives in exile in Germany). Thirdly, it put the country in a state of civil strife that has cost more than 70,000 lives so far, just for the sake of protecting the interests of the ruling minority.

The FIS has matured politically. Its coalition, in 1995, with seven other parties of the opposition against the regime and its acceptance of all the rules of democracy (as outlined by the National Contract⁵² signed in Rome in January 1995) and the different conciliatory gestures made towards the regime are clear signs of such maturation.⁵³

There are two other major Islamist parties in Algeria, both ideologically subscribing to the *Ikhwān* (the Muslim Brotherhood). One was within the framework established in Rome (Nahḍah), and the other (HAMAS) is participating in the institutions of the actual regime and its leader (Mahfoud Nahnah) was a candidate for the presidential elections and obtained over 25% of the votes despite the elitist character of HAMAS and the unpopularity of its leader among Islamists. This movement is also represented in the current government with seven junior ministers. Both parties signed, on 15 August 1996, the "platform for National Entente" which was initiated by the presidency. The decision to sign this document, at least as far as Nahḍah is concerned, was motivated by reasons of *realpolitik* because several anti-Islamists were pressing for the outlawing of Islamist parties, especially since the presidential elections of 16th November had partially resolved the regime's problem of legitimacy. The solution was to accept a political domestication of these parties and their transformation into quasi-social democrat parties instead of facing the risk of a constitutional dismissal from open political practice. Both parties had to change their names in April 1997 to comply with the new laws regulating political parties that do not allow the use of Islam for political purposes. HAMAS became, thereafter, Ḥarakat Mujtama^c al-Silm (Movement for the Society of Peace, MSP). Harakat al-Nahḍah al-Islamiyyah had to drop the Islamic acronym from its appellation to become only Ḥarakat al-Nahḍah (Movement of Renaissance). Similarly, they had not only to tone

down their Islamic discourse but also to drop all concepts or passages referring to an Islamic system of government from their official literature.

Both parties participated in the latest general elections (5 June 1997) and local elections (23 October 1997). The MSP obtained 69 seats in the lower house of the parliament (less than 20% of the total number of seats) while Nahdah managed to win 34 seats (less than 10% of the total number of seats). Both, like other opposition parties, contested the fairness of the elections and criticised the high-level electoral rigging that characterised these elections. Their outcry was supported by the UN commission of observers that monitored these elections.

The Post-coup Strategy of the Regime

These elections were held as part of a comprehensive governmental strategy of "normalization" that started soon after the first months of military rule (1992). In order to avoid the Islamization of Algerian politics by the FIS after its victory in the first round of the 1991 general elections, and in order to secure their own interests and that of their clients, the army cancelled these elections and adopted a multi-dimensional (and gradual) strategy for the uprooting of the FIS as a political and social force. This zero-sum game strategy contained several sub-strategies: political, socio-economic, repressive, legal and institutional, religious and military.

Politically, after the cancellation of the elections, the army nominated a five-man presidential body (High Committee of State) to rule over the country until the end of 1993. This committee tried to reshape the political map of the country in order to force a state of political *fait accompli*. It banned the FIS, dissolved the local and regional councils it controlled, created a makeshift parliament (Conseil Consultatif National, CCN) of 60 members with no powers, to be replaced two years later with a similar institution (Conseil National de Transition, CNT), engaged in several pseudo-dialogues to gain time and to force a solution that would ensure the continuation of the post-coup system. The rejection of the National contract concluded in January 1995 by the opposition is a clear indication of such intentions. The organisation of the presidential elections (November 1995) despite the refusal of the major parties (FLN, FFS, Nahdah) to take part in it is a further indication and proof of such intentions. The replacement of the 1989 constitution with a new one (referendum organised on 28

November 1996) has further extended the powers of the President and transformed him into a "republican monarch." The powers of the elected assemblies were curtailed, and the possibility of constitutional amendments by the parliament was minimised.

On the socio-economic level, the regime (like all post-coup populist regimes) offered economic incentives to the population by importing more basic commodities and ending the chronic food shortage, promising housing, better conditions of life, etc. However, the implementation of the IMF programme (from April 1994 onwards) demonstrated the impracticability of such promises and showed that the socio-economic problems of the country are structural and will take a long time to solve. The socio-economic situation of the country is worse now than it has ever been, and it is predicted to worsen by 1999 when Algeria will start repaying its debt.

Moreover, the current government, headed by Prime Minister Ahmed Ouyahia, is undertaking dangerous policies of privatisation. The programme, as it is implemented at the moment, is disastrous. The most profitable national companies are being sold at preferential rates to people serving in the nomenklatura. This will almost certainly shape the future political game in Algeria as the army will start moving away, gradually, from open politics to control the game through this newly established politico-financial structure. Power moving from muscle to money.

However, the favoured dimension in this complex strategy is repression. All international organisations dealing with human rights issues agree that Algeria has the worst record in this respect: systematic torture, extra-judicial killings by government death squads, detention without trial and so on. The worst case of such detentions was the creation in 1992 of several concentration camps in the desert holding more than 10,000 men, over 3,000 of whom were medical doctors or people with degrees from prominent Western universities.⁵⁴

These repressive measures were reinforced by new legislation such as the creation of special anti-terrorist courts (September 1993) where even the lawyers representing alleged "terrorists" are not safe from prosecution. In fact, lawyers launched several strikes to defend their rights. These courts, which passed more than 1,000 sentences for capital punishment, were finally abolished in 1995. The second legislation was a new law concerning the media. It was signed in 1993 and dramatically limited the freedom of the press. As a consequence, several journalists were given prison sentences and newspapers were

suspended and, at times, even banned. Moreover, since the government was not able to offer safety to foreign journalists, it managed to tighten its control on information and on the process of filtering news on the security situation. This falls quite in line with the official strategy on propaganda which was aimed at disseminating only those news items that could restore its international standing.

The regime concentrated part of this strategy on regaining its control of Islam as a source of legitimacy and undermining its strength as an oppositional discourse. It took several steps in this direction.

1. Replacing independent *imāms* with government ones;
2. Dissolving mosque committees and replacing them with government civil servants;
3. Encouraging popular Islam (Sūfism) (*les confreries maraboutiques*) financially and by giving more media focus to Sūfis' activities and stressing the positive role they played in maintaining the Islamicity of Algeria when it faced the colonial onslaught. The current minister for religious affairs (Gullam Allah) is a Sūfi leader, from one of the mystic orders in western Algeria; and
4. Importing "enlightened Islam" from al-Azhar.⁵⁵ Many Egyptian scholars and preachers were brought to Algeria in 1992 to correct all the "religious deviations" caused by political Islam. The scheme of the government is to combine brutal force with *apolitical* Islam in order to re-establish its sole right to Islam as a source of legitimacy.

The final dimension of this complex strategy comprises a number of reforms in the military establishment and its adaptation to the conditions of societal bifurcation. These could be summarised in the following:

1. Restructuring of the security forces by creating an anti-terrorist force (60,000 men), a para-military force, a civilian militia, and the restructuring of the intelligence services;⁵⁶
2. Adapting the armed forces to guerrilla warfare, and equipping it accordingly, especially with night-sight equipment and helicopters; and
3. Adopting an anti-terrorist strategy based on the Soviet concept of Dirty War to achieve maximum gains through the combination of provocation, penetration, fabrication of evidence, diversion, and use of agents of influence and disinformation. The objective of such tactics is not only gain in military terms but also in psychological terms by turning the people against the insurgents, and one armed

group against another (several GIA-AIS confrontations and even intra-GIA killings have taken place).

This strategy is not one of containment but of eradication. It aims at the final eradication of the FIS and of the model that the FIS wanted to establish (an Islamic State). Even the other two major Islamist parties that remain legal have dropped the term Islamic state from their rhetoric and foresee Islam only as an intellectual reference. Such eradication will not be possible because of people's attachment to Islam as a comprehensive system and the regime's inability to offer an alternative model to the one that pre-existed it (the Chadli regime). Not only has the regime been unsuccessful in offering an alternative model, but its attempts at toppling the Islamic model have resulted in more repression, more unemployment, less security, less welfare and an Algerian blood-bath. Even the concepts of sovereignty and independence so dear to all Algerians have lost their meaning in the midst of constant foreign interference, both overt and covert. Some specialists are even foreseeing a possible internationalisation of the conflict.⁵⁷

Conclusion

Despite all these efforts and Arab and Western support for the Algerian regime, Islamism remains a strong social and political force in Algeria. If repression has proven its inability to contain the growth of such a phenomenon, the regime would have to use its ingenuity and its desire for survival to find the most effective ways for incorporating Islamic discourse. Both camps ought to work for a historical working compromise at all levels (strategic, political and societal). Only a historical compromise among all Algerians (without exclusion) can get Algeria out of this catastrophic and bloody state of civil war which is causing a serious haemorrhage, and that might jeopardise the whole future of the country.

Notes

1. Allan Christelow, "Algerian Islam in a Time of Transition: 1890-1930," *The Maghreb Review* 8 (1983)5-6: 124-130. See also Adel Faouzi, "Islam, réformisme et nationalisme dans la résistance à la colonisation française en Algérie (1830-1930)," *Social Compass* 25 (1985)3-4: 419-432.
2. Monique Gadat, *Islam et Nationalisme en Algérie d'après El Moudjahid' organe central du FLN de 1956 à 1962* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1988), 21-33.

3. A large number of Algerians refused to be drafted into the French army to participate in the First World War against Germany which was an ally of the Ottoman empire. They believed in the legitimacy of the Ottoman caliphate and thought it was un-Islamic to join non-believers in combatting it, even indirectly.
4. Ali Merad, *Le réformisme musulman en Algérie de 1925 à 1940* (Paris & la Haye: Mouton & Co, 1967), 13-14.
5. M. al-Ahnaf, B. Botiveau and F. Frégosi, *L'Algérie par ses islamistes* (Paris: Karthala, 1991).
6. According to Dahlburg, "At the start of the country's Islamic uprising, returnees from the Afghan war were the source of military expertise. They argued that it was futile to try to take power by peaceful means." See J.T. Dahlburg, "Algerian Veterans, the Nucleus for Mayhem," *Los Angeles Times*, 5 August 1996, p. 11.
7. Abu Abderrahmān Amīn, *Hidāyāt rabbi l-ʿālamīn fī tabyīn uṣūl al-salafiyin wa mā yajibū min al-ʿahdi ʿalā al-mujāhidīn* (Algiers: GIA, 1996).
8. Omar Abdelhakim, *Al-thawrā al-jihādiyā fī Suriyā* [The Jihādī Islamic Revolution in Syria] (no publisher, date or place are mentioned). It is worth looking at the second part entitled *fikr wa manhaj* [Thought and Method].
9. John P. Entelis, "Political Islam in the Maghreb: The Non-violent Dimension," Congressional testimony, US Congress, House of Representatives, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Sub-Committee on Africa, Washington D.C., 28 September 1994.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. For an exhaustive history of the MIA refer to Yahia Abou Zakaria, *Al-haraka al-islamiyah al-mussalahah* [The Armed Islamic Movement], (Beirut: Dār al-Maʿārif, 1993).
13. Entelis, "Political Islam in the Maghreb."
14. Ibid.
15. *L'Express*, 16 November 1995, p. 22.
16. Entelis, "Political Islam in the Maghreb."
17. Ibid.
18. Weekly *L'Express*, 16 November 1995, p. 22.
19. *Compass*, (USA) 29 July 1996.
20. This group joined the GIA in May 1994 when the leader of the Algerianist tendency (Mohamed Said) joined the GIA's *Majlis al-Shūrā*.
21. Zouabri comes from the Islamist stronghold of Boufarik, 25 kms to the south-west of Algiers.

22. They were led until July 1996 by Zitouni as their *emīr* while Mohamed Said served, until his assassination in November 1995, as a member of the GIA's *Shūrā* Council.
23. Weekly *Maghreb Confidentiel*, (Paris) 28 September 1995.
24. Entelis, "Political Islam in the Maghreb."
25. Ibid.
26. M'hand Berkouk, "Al-sharī'ah min mandhour 'ilm al-siyassah al-mu'āsir," in Azzam Tamimi, ed. *Al-shar'īyah al-siyasīyah fī al-Islam* (London: Liberty, 1997), 87-98, 113-135.
27. Tidjanī served as General Secretary of the University of Algiers (1962-1964), and as General Secretary of the Ministry of Religious Affairs (1965-1966).
28. Al-Qiyam sent a letter to Gamal Abdenasser (the President of Egypt) in September 1966 pleading for the release of Sayyid Qutb, but Sayyid Qutb was killed soon afterwards.
29. Fawzi Ben El Hachemi Oussedik, *Mahatāt fī tarīkh al-harakah al-Islamiyā al-Djazāiriya 1962-1988* [Landmarks in the History of the Algerian Islamic Movement 1962-1988], (Algiers: Dār al-Intifādā, 1992), 13-24.
30. It was Abbassi Madani who called for this rally during a Friday sermon delivered at the Ibn Badis mosque in Kouba (Algiers) on 5th November 1982. This call was received with mixed feelings by other factions of the Islamic tendency. While it was rejected by the Algerianists, it was openly supported by Sheikh Ahmed Sahnoun on 7 November 1982. This approbation pushed them to reconsider their positions and participate in this event.
31. 29 students were arrested following this confrontation.
32. Aissa Khelladi, *Les Islamistes Algériens face au pouvoir* (Algiers: Editions Alfa, 1992).
33. The PAGS was the only party tolerated by the regime after 1967.
34. Fr. Burgat, and W. Dowell, *The Islamic Movement in North Africa* (Austin, Texas: Center for Middle Eastern Studies, University of Texas at Austin, 1993), 264.
35. Ibid, 251.
36. Several tendencies started, after the popular endorsement of the new Constitution (on 23 February 1989), to establish themselves as political organisations either as mass movements (FIS) or "cadre parties" (Rassemblement pour la Culture et la Démocratie, RCD, and others). These new organisations were established before the law regulating their work was finally promulgated by the Popular National Assembly on 5th July 1989.
37. The leadership of the FIS claimed on numerous occasions, particularly during 1990 and 1991, that its membership was in excess of three million.

This number seems to be exaggerated in view of the impossibility of gathering such membership in less than two years of formal existence. Secondly, this number is not far from the votes obtained during the contested local and legislative elections. It is not normal that all the votes obtained are from an established membership.

38. It was primarily because of these strategic differences that the leadership of FIS was neither willing nor able to organise its congress for fear of implosion.

39. The biggest such demonstration was the one on the Family Laws (December, 1989) that drew hundreds of thousands of women. It came as a response to the one held a week earlier by feminist associations calling for the revision of this legislation.

40. A. Lamchichi *L'islamisme en Algérie* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1992), 76.

41. The FFS was established on 19 September 1963 by Hocine Aït Ahmed (a co-founder of the FLN and one of the forefathers of Algerian nationalism), Abdelhafid Yahya and Colonel Si Sadek. This party was banned after the "Kabyle insurrection" in Autumn 1963 and Aït Ahmed was imprisoned in early 1964 until his escape from prison in April 1966. He lived in Switzerland and Morocco until his return to Algeria after the re-legalisation of his party on 20 November 1989. The FFS is a member of the Socialist Internationale and is strong mainly in Kabylia and parts of Algiers. The FFS decided not to take part in these local elections judging that the conditions for their success were not met.

42. H. Roberts, "A Trial of Strength: Algerian Islamism," in J. Piscatori, ed. *Islamic Fundamentalism and the Gulf Crisis: The Fundamentalist Project* (Chicago: American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1991), 137.

43. According to some prominent members of the FIS, several leading figures of this party were opposed to such actions and warned Abbassi against the possible negative consequences. They believed that they were giving a golden opportunity to the regime to launch actions against the FIS. They were soon proven right.

44. M'hand Berkouk, "Parliamentary Structures in the Arab World: A Functional and Systemic Analysis," Paper Presented at the Annual Workshop on Democracy in the Arab World, St Anne's College, University of Oxford, 31 August 1995. Also see Ali Merad, *Le réformisme musulman en Algérie de 1925 à 1940* (Paris & la Haye: Mouton & Co, 1967), 13-14.

45. M'hand Berkouk, "The Arab World between Oriental Despotism and Democracy," *The Diplomat* 1 (1996)2: 20-21.

46. According to Aissa Khelladi "Esquisse d'une géographie des groupes islamistes en Algérie," *Herodote* 77 (1995):28-29, the decision to prepare for an armed insurgency was taken in July 1991 at a meeting in the mountains of Lakhdaria (80 kms to the east of Algiers), by a number of people who had

participated in an earlier insurgency with Bouyali and the MIA (1982-1987). The most prominent participants were Chabouti and Miliani. Despite agreeing on the need for an insurgency they disagreed on both tactics and strategy. While the first group was favouring the establishment of an organised army following the example of the National Liberation Army (1954-1962), the second favoured urban guerrilla war to be conducted by small groups.

47. This projection was on the basis of a study done by the Internal Politics Department of the Institut National Des Etudes et des Stratégies Globales (INESG, a think tank that works for the President's office) in the Autumn of 1991.

48. Lamchichi, *L'islamisme en Algérie*, 84.

49. Carol Migdalovitz, "Algeria: Four Years of Crisis," *CRS Report for Congress* 3 (Washington: Congressional Research Service, May 1996).

50. For a good insight into the coup, see P. Dévoluy & M. Duteil, *La poudrière Algérienne: Histoire secrète d'une révolution sous influence* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1994).

51. According to a press release by the FIS Executive Committee Overseas, signed by its president Rābah Kebīr (reported by *al-Sharq al-Awsat*, 10 February 1996), the institutions of the FIS are: (i) The historical and representative leadership: Abbassi and Belhadj; (ii) The internal leadership led by Ali Djeddi, Abdelkader Boukhamkham, Kamal Guemmazi and Abdelkader Omar; (iii) The Islamic Salvation Army (AIS) under the overall leadership of Madani Mezrag; and (iv) The Executive Committee of the FIS overseas under the leadership of Rābah Kebīr.

52. This National Contract was signed by seven Algerian parties (FIS, Nahdah, FLN, FFS, MDA, the Trotskyist Party of Workers, and Contemporary Muslim Algeria) with diverging ideological colourations. These were joined by the Algerian League for the Defence of Human Rights (led by its president Ali Yahia Abdenour). This contract outlined the principles of democratic practice in Algeria and made some suggestions for the resolution of the crisis. The regime rejected it immediately and led a strong propaganda campaign against it by presenting it as an act of foreign interference in its internal affairs.

53. M'hand Berkouk, "Islamic Movements and Democracy: Apprehensions and Aspirations," Paper Presented at the Annual Workshop on Democracy in the Arab World, St Catherine's College, University of Oxford, 29 August 1996.

54. Algerian Forum, *The Rape of a Nation: The Hidden Face of Algeria* (London: Hoggar, 1995), 10-14.

55. Ahmed Rouadjaia, "Le FIS est-il enterré? Al-Azhar au secours de l'Etat algérien," *Esprit* (1993): 94-103.

56. *Weekly Intelligence*, No 261, 27 March 1995, p. 65.

57. Peter St. John "Insurgency, Legitimacy and Intervention in Algeria," *Commentary* (Canadian Security Intelligence Service), No 65, January 1996.