



Terms and Conditions of Use of Digitised Theses from Trinity College Library Dublin

Copyright statement

All material supplied by Trinity College Library is protected by copyright (under the Copyright and Related Rights Act, 2000 as amended) and other relevant Intellectual Property Rights. By accessing and using a Digitised Thesis from Trinity College Library you acknowledge that all Intellectual Property Rights in any Works supplied are the sole and exclusive property of the copyright and/or other IPR holder. Specific copyright holders may not be explicitly identified. Use of materials from other sources within a thesis should not be construed as a claim over them.

A non-exclusive, non-transferable licence is hereby granted to those using or reproducing, in whole or in part, the material for valid purposes, providing the copyright owners are acknowledged using the normal conventions. Where specific permission to use material is required, this is identified and such permission must be sought from the copyright holder or agency cited.

Liability statement

By using a Digitised Thesis, I accept that Trinity College Dublin bears no legal responsibility for the accuracy, legality or comprehensiveness of materials contained within the thesis, and that Trinity College Dublin accepts no liability for indirect, consequential, or incidental, damages or losses arising from use of the thesis for whatever reason. Information located in a thesis may be subject to specific use constraints, details of which may not be explicitly described. It is the responsibility of potential and actual users to be aware of such constraints and to abide by them. By making use of material from a digitised thesis, you accept these copyright and disclaimer provisions. Where it is brought to the attention of Trinity College Library that there may be a breach of copyright or other restraint, it is the policy to withdraw or take down access to a thesis while the issue is being resolved.

Access Agreement

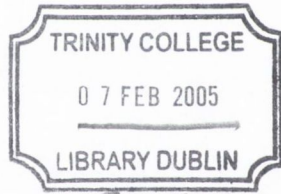
By using a Digitised Thesis from Trinity College Library you are bound by the following Terms & Conditions. Please read them carefully.

I have read and I understand the following statement: All material supplied via a Digitised Thesis from Trinity College Library is protected by copyright and other intellectual property rights, and duplication or sale of all or part of any of a thesis is not permitted, except that material may be duplicated by you for your research use or for educational purposes in electronic or print form providing the copyright owners are acknowledged using the normal conventions. You must obtain permission for any other use. Electronic or print copies may not be offered, whether for sale or otherwise to anyone. This copy has been supplied on the understanding that it is copyright material and that no quotation from the thesis may be published without proper acknowledgement.

The International Dimension
of Democratisation:
The case of Algeria

by
Francesco Cavatorta PhD

2004



THESIS

7397

Declarations

I declare that this thesis has not been submitted for a degree at this or any other university.

Francesco Cerotorta

I declare that this thesis is entirely my own work.

Francesco Cerotorta

I agree that the Library may lend or copy the thesis upon request.

Francesco Cerotorta

Summary

Between October 1988 and January 1992, one of the most interesting attempts to move away from authoritarian rule towards democratic governance occurred in Algeria. While the attention of the world was focused on events taking place in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, the Algerian ruling elite was leading the country on the course of democratisation. This study attempts to explain how the transition was triggered, how it developed and how it ended. At the same time, the project rejects the 'nativist' assumption that characterises for the most part the literature on transitions and explains the transition process by concentrating on the role played by the external environment.

The traditional literature on transitology explains process of democratisation through domestic factors and argues that the installation of a new political system is very much an indigenous action. This research challenges this and offers, through an in-depth examination of Algeria, an alternative view that takes into account the international environment.

Building on the pioneering work of scholars such as Whitehead, Pridham, Hurrell and Yilmaz, the dissertation borrows concepts and theoretical tools from the literature of international relations (IR) and attempts to build a bridge between comparative politics and IR.

The theoretical framework used to explain the failed Algerian transition revolves around two dimensions that have been neglected in the study of transitology and that are directly connected to the external environment: the geo-political position of the country and the nature of the state in economic terms. In the case of Algeria, it is of the utmost importance to understand that its geo-political location in the Mediterranean and its *rentier* economy influenced the development and the outcome of its regime change. From these two dimensions, a set of variables is derived and these variables lead to the formulation of hypotheses that are then tested against the evidence gathered.

The evidence shows a rather high degree of variance in terms of validation of hypotheses. Some of them hold true and therefore they point to the necessity of incorporating external variables, without which an explanation of the transition would be incomplete. Other hypotheses are instead not confirmed and point in the direction of domestic factors having more explanatory power. To conclude, it is suggested that a dynamic model including both domestic and international variables should be adopted.

The thesis makes a number of contributions to the academic debate surrounding the study of transitions. First of all, it fills the gap existing in the theoretical formulation of the

weight that external forces have in transitions. After all, these do not occur in a vacuum. Secondly, it examines a country that has not been studied in great detail, particularly in the English language literature. Thirdly, by focusing on a Muslim country, it highlights important issues revolving around the complex relationship between Islam and democracy. Fourthly, it highlights that the two dominant theories of international relations (Neo-Realism and Neo-Liberalism) can only offer a very small contribution to understanding regime change. Finally, the thesis is a small step towards building bridges between international relations and comparative politics. The research suggests that it is imperative to think of the two distinct traditions as being in a dynamic relationship. The evidence from the case study shows quite clearly that, on the one hand, domestic factors alone cannot account for the triggering, development and ending of the transition. The same evidence, on the other hand, shows that international factors alone are unable to explain regime change as well. Both sets of factors are necessary to have a complete explanation of such a political phenomenon and this points to the dynamism and intertwining that characterises both domestic and international politics.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface and Acknowledgments	p. iii
Chronology	p. v
Chapter 1 - Introduction: Algeria's Process of Democratisation	
1.1 Algeria's failed Transition to Democracy	p. 1
1.2 Algeria's Transition Between Comparative Politics and IR	p. 9
1.3 A Map for the Road Ahead	p. 13
Chapter 2 – The Research	
2.1 Introduction	p. 17
2.2 The Project	p. 20
2.3 The Literature on Regime Change – Preliminary Overview	p. 21
2.4 The Research Question	p. 25
2.5 Methodology	p. 34
2.6 Diverging Views on the Use of Case Studies in the Social Sciences	p. 36
2.7 The Case-Study: Algeria	p. 41
Chapter 3 – Models of Transition and the International Dimension	
3.1 Introduction	p. 46
3.2 International Variables: a neglected aspect of regime change	p. 48
3.3 The international Dimension	p. 58
3.4 Theoretical framework	p. 72
3.5 Definitions and Assumptions	p. 76
Chapter 4 – Algeria's transition: Alternative Explanations of a Transition to Democracy	
4.1 Introduction	p. 83
4.2 The Conditions for Democracy	p. 88
4.3 The Domestic Actors Model	p. 95
4.4 Islam and Democracy	p. 106
Chapter 5 – Explaining Algeria's Transition: The International Connection	
5.1 Introduction	p. 117
5.2 The Two Dimensions	p. 119
5.3 The Rentier State	p. 127
5.4 The Geopolitics of the Mediterranean	p. 134
5.5 Typology of Variables	p. 138

5.5.1 External Shocks	p. 139
5.5.2 Direct Active Policies	p. 145
5.5.3 Larger Trends	p. 150
5.6 Hypotheses	p. 152
5.7 Conclusion	p. 155

Chapter 6 – The External Context of the Algerian Transition

6.1 The Economic Factors	p. 157
6.2 The Political Factors	p. 173
6.2.1 The End of the Cold War	p. 174
6.2.2 The Fall-Out from the Gulf War	p. 177
6.2.3 The Impact of ‘International Islam’	p. 182
6.3 Conclusion	p. 184

Chapter 7 – The External-Domestic Links: Shattered Dreams of Democratisation

7.1 External shocks: the Economic Recession	p. 186
7.2 External Shocks: The Victory of the Afghan Rebels	p. 191
7.3 External shocks: the Gulf War 1990/1991	p. 195
7.4 External shocks: The End of the Cold War	p. 200
7.5 Direct Active Policies: promotion of Democracy	p. 204
7.6 Direct Active Policies: the Promotion of Political Islam	p. 212
7.7 Direct Active Policies: The Role of Non-State Actors	p. 216
7.8 Larger Trends: Democracy as a Universal Value	p. 220
7.9 Conclusion	p. 224

Chapter 8 – Conclusion

8.1 The International Dimension	p. 226
8.2 The International Dimension in Algeria	p. 231
8.3 Counterfactuals: Would the Have Story Been the Same?	p. 235
8.4 Implications for Transitology	p. 238
8.5 Implications for IR	p. 240
8.6 Future Research	p. 248

Epilogue

The Rewards	p. 251
Façade Democracy and Crony Capitalism	p. 255

Bibliography	p. 256
---------------------	--------

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The political events that occurred in Algeria between 1988 and 1992 are testimony to the political vitality that exists in the Arab world. The need and the desire for change remain just as powerful more than ten years after a promising process of democratisation was ended with a military coup (in January 1992). This is not only true of Algeria, but for much of the Arab world where democratic reforms are largely lacking. The dramatic events of September 11th seem to justify *ex post* the stance taken by the Algerian Army, and by sectors of the population, towards the Islamic Salvation Front. The Algeria authorities were quick to seize the opportunity to compare the terrorist attacks against the United States with the ones suffered by the Algerian state during the civil war following the coup. Nothing could be further from the truth. The Algerian civil war followed the decision by the military to cancel the result of free and fair democratic elections and to disband the Islamic Salvation Front which had won them.

The years between 1988 and 1992 saw the country experiment with political pluralism. The Algerian people engaged in this with immense enthusiasm. This research project investigates the origin of the political changes that occurred during that period, analyses the process of democratisation and offers an explanation for the failure of democracy to consolidate in light of the external context surrounding the transition. It is often argued that transitions are purely domestic affairs, but neglecting the influence that powerful economic and political forces exercise at international level is methodologically unsound and factually wrong. No polity is completely isolated in the globalised world we live in. Analysing how international forces and actors operate, directly and indirectly, in the international system, could provide a better understanding of past political phenomena in order to have better policies for the future. Over 100,000 people lost their lives during the Algerian civil war and we have few images or pictures of that. This research hopes to make a small contribution in understating how this happened.

I am indebted to a number of people. First of all I am indebted to the staff of the Department of Political Science at Trinity College Dublin for their help and encouragement to carry on with this project until conclusion. I offer my thanks in particular to Nalini Persram and Ken Benoit, who read many drafts of this manuscript and offered useful advice. Throughout my time in Trinity College I was lucky to enjoy

the company of many friends, particularly Eoin O'Malley, Raj Chari (*and la familia*) Caroline O'Flanagan, Jane O'Mahony, Fiachra Kennedy, Pat Lyons, Susanna Pearce, Karen Devine, Patrick Bernhagen, Matt Kerby, Eric Shea and Shiera El-Malik. A special note of thanks goes to Nat O'Connor who patiently read the manuscript and painstakingly corrected my grammar. I am also indebted to all my colleagues in the Department of Politics at University College Dublin for their support. I am particularly grateful to Tom Garvin for giving me the opportunity to work at UCD, 'experimenting' my ideas on third year students taking my course on Political Islam. A special mention goes to Michael Kennedy, Jean Brennan, Niamh Hardiman and Kevin Howard. I also enjoyed the friendship and hospitality of Mamar Merzouk (and his wife Victoria), with whom I had countless discussions about his native Algeria.

I am also very grateful to John Entelis, who provided invaluable help with his comments on parts of the thesis, to Lise Garon, who welcomed me to Quebec and offered valuable insights on Algerian politics, and Abderrahim El-Omari, whose knowledge of North African politics and whose political commitment I deeply admire.

I am obviously much indebted to all those policy-makers and experts who were kind enough to give me the time to ask them way too many questions about Algeria. Some asked me to omit their names and I gladly oblige. Regarding the others, I wish to thank Djiallal Malti, Paul Marie de la Gorce, and Robert Neumann. My appreciation goes also to the personnel of the *Bibliothèque Nationale de France* and of the Library at the *Institut de Recherches et d' Etudes sur le Monde Arabe et Musulman*. I am solely responsible for translating quotations from articles, books and interviews from French and Italian into English.

Many thanks also to the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences and to Trinity College for funding provided during my studies.

None of this would have been achieved without the unwavering support of my partner Séverine, who always believed we would end up living in the Middle East, and to my family in Italy. I see too little of Roberta, Tania and Anna. Finally, this is dedicated to the memory of my father, who unfortunately was not able to see this project completed.

CHRONOLOGY

July 3rd 1962: Algeria becomes independent from France.

September 29th, 1962: Ben Bella becomes Prime Minister.

June 19th, 1965: Colonel Houari Boumedienne deposes Ben Bella through a coup d'etat.

April 26th, 1968: The policy of Arabisation is launched.

January 1st, 1970: The first quadrennial plan of economic development is prepared.

November 8th, 1971: The government begins to implement the 'agrarian revolution'.

November 12th, 1974: Algeria and the US re-establish full diplomatic relations following their interruption after the Six days War.

April 10th-12th, 1975: French President Giscard d'Estaing officially visits Algeria.

November 19th, 1976: A new Constitution is approved by referendum. It re-emphasises the primacy and the role of the FLN.

December 10th, 1976: Boumedienne is elected President. This move normalises the institutional set-up of the country after the 1965 coup.

Decemebr 27th, 1978: President Boumedienne passes away suddenly.

February 7th, 1979: Chadli Bendjedid is elected President. His election takes place after being nominated by the Council of the Revolution.

March-April, 1980: The Berber Spring begins. The aim of this popular protest in Kabilye is to have the Berber language and culture officially recognised. Demands for democratisation are also made.

November 10th, 1980: Following a recession, some measures are adopted to give more freedom to private enterprise.

November 31st, 1981: President Mitterrand visits Algeria.

February 3rd, 1982: France and Algeria sign an important economic agreement on the export of gas to France.

November 7th-10th, 1983: Chadli visits France. It is the first official visit of an Algerian president to France.

January 12th, 1984: Chadli is re-elected to the Presidency.

May 29th, 1984: A new family law is signed. It re-introduces restrictive practices for women, limiting some of their rights.

January 16th, 1986: A new National Charter is adopted. Among the measures approved is the increasing role that the market should play in the Algerian economy.

December 8th, 1987: A new law extends privatisation measures to the agricultural sector.

October 4th-October 12th: Following riots in every major Algerian city, the state of siege is declared. The Army intervenes to put down the demonstrations.

October 10th, 1988: Chadli promises far reaching political reforms and two days later the state of siege is lifted.

December 22nd, 1988: Chadli is elected for a third time to the Presidency.

February 23rd, 1989: The new Constitution is approved. References to socialism and the primacy of the FLN disappear. Provisions for multipartism are enshrined.

March 4th, 1989: The Army officially withdraws from the FLN apparatus.

March 9th, 1989: Mitterrand visits Algeria to support Chadli's reforms.

March 21st, 1989: The FIS is created.

September 10th, 1989: Mouloud Hamrouche is appointed Prime Minister. His objective is to lead the country out of the economic crisis. He leads a team of reformers.

September 14th, 1989: The FIS is officially recognised by the authorities.

October 29th, 1989: An earthquake hits the area of Tipasa. Only the FIS is able to help the population highlighting the tremendous inefficiency of the state apparatus.

June 12th, 1990: Local elections are held. For the first time there is effective political competition. The FIS wins 54% of the vote; the FLN wins only 28%.

January 15th, 1991: The Gulf War begins.

May 23rd, 1991: The FIS organise a general strike and marches to protest against the new electoral law, which favours the FLN.

June 4th, 1991: Clashes between FIS supporters and security forces. The parliamentary elections are postponed and the Hamrouche government resigns. Ghazali is the new Prime Minister.

June 30th, 1991: The two leaders of the FIS are arrested.

December 15th, 1991: The FIS leadership agrees to participate to the parliamentary elections called for December 26th in spite of the arrest of its leaders.

December 26th, 1991: The FIS emerges as the leading party in the country, winning 47.3% of the vote and 188 of the 230 seats assigned in the first round.

January 2nd, 1992: Massive march of anti-FIS forces in Algiers. Some parties call for the cancellation of the first round of elections.

January 11th, 1992: Chadli resigns, leaving power to the Army. The second round of election scheduled for January 16th never takes place.

January 14th, 1992: A High State Committee with 5 members headed by Boudiaf is given presidential functions.

February 9th, 1992: Following protests from FIS supporters, the state of emergency is declared. Initially it should last for one year.

June 29th, 1992: Boudiaf is assassinated.

July 15th, 1992: The trial against Madani and Belhadj ends. The two FIS leaders will serve 12 years in prison.

December, 1992: The local councils elected in the summer of 1991 are disbanded. The civil war begins.

CHAPTER 1 - Introduction: Algeria's Process of Democratisation

One of the most interesting, but least analysed attempts at moving away from authoritarian rule towards democratic governance took place between 1988 and 1992 in Algeria. This study attempts to explain how the transition was triggered, how it developed and how it ended, by focusing on the role played by the external environment.

1.1 Algeria's Failed Transition to Democracy

In October 1988 Algeria experienced a sudden explosion of street violence triggered by economic and social discontent. People protested against the economic reforms introduced by the government and for a few days chaos reigned in the country. These 'bread riots', as they are labelled, were a turning point in the history of Algeria because they provided the opportunity for the regime to introduce liberalising reforms resulting in an attempt by the ruling one-party regime to turn the country into a fully-fledged democratic state.¹

For a few days during the month of October, the country was at a standstill due to anti-government demonstrations being held in all major cities. It was the biggest crisis the regime had to face since independence. Frustrated by poor social conditions, lack of economic prospects and absence of political freedom, many ordinary Algerians took to the streets calling for the resignation of President Chadli and for reforms that would put the country back on the course of economic, social and political development. The government responded to the demonstrations by calling on the Army to crackdown on the participants. The number of deaths provoked by the Army's intervention is still a matter of contention (some commentators put the figure at 500, others at more than 1,000), but the shock of seeing the popular Army shoot the citizens it had fought for during the war of independence was enormous. The harsh repression seemed to signal that the ruling élites were not ready to release their grip on power.

However, in a surprising twist, the riots proved to be the beginning of a far-reaching liberalisation process. The origin and the events surrounding the riots were more complicated than it first appeared and two opposing versions exist on the rioting. Some suggested that the demonstrations and the following crackdown had been organised by conservative elements within the FLN to unsettle President Chadli and the

¹ Among others, see Djallal Malti, *La Nouvelle Guerre d'Algérie*, (Paris, La Découverte, 1999); William B. Quandt, *Between Ballots and Bullets. Algeria's Transition from Authoritarianism*, (Washington DC, Brookings Institution Press, 1998).

economic reformers within the party and the government. Others claim the opposite and argue that the riots had been planned to undermine the conservatives within the FLN who opposed the market-orientated reform of the president.² The two views obviously clash, but what is certain is that “different groups - students, trade unionists, Communists and Islamists - exploited the unrest to demand substantial political reform and the dismantling of the state apparatus which allowed a tiny elite and the military to abuse Algeria in the name of the people.”³ Despite the bloody intervention of the Army, to the surprise of many, these demands for change were quite swiftly met. President Chadli announced shortly after the crackdown that radical reforms were not only necessary, but that they were already being drawn up. Chadli had hinted at the necessity of wide ranging changes in a speech to party members just a month before the riots and he pressed ahead with his programme even after the October riots.⁴ A new Constitution was quickly drafted and took effect in February 1989. The new constitution contained numerous liberal features, but its most significant aspect was the introduction of effective political competition. The National Liberation Front (FLN) ceased to be the only legal party and Algerians were permitted to form new political movements and apply for legal recognition. The government would decide which parties would be legalised and among the parties that applied for official recognition that were legalised was the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS). Thus began the Algerian process of political liberalisation.

For just over three years, Algeria experienced the most open period of political freedom in its history. New political parties were formed in a very short time, long-time exiled politicians came back to Algeria to partake in the construction of a new domestic order, the press was finally free and critical, civil society became very active as the number of associations springing up all over the country demonstrated, elections were fought quite fairly, and the new institutions seemed to be more responsive to the needs of all citizens. In spite of a promising beginning, the process of democratisation failed to consolidate itself and the democratic experiment came to an end in January 1992. At this point, the Army directly intervened in the political life of the country to prevent the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) from taking control of the government after their victory in

² Youcef Bounadel, “Political parties and the transition from authoritarianism: the case of Algeria”, *Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 41, No. 1, 2003, p. 8.

³ A. Thomson, *An Introduction to African Politics*, (London, Routledge, 2000), p. 235-236.

⁴ For the details of his speech, please see Dossiers et Documents, ‘‘L’Algérie a l’heure des choix’’, *Maghreb-Machrek*, n. 122, Octobre-Décembre 1988.

the first round of the parliamentary elections held in December 1991 and reinstated authoritarian rule. Following the intervention, a bitter civil conflict began between the Armed Forces and pro-Islamic armed groups. Since the beginning of the armed conflict in the spring of 1992, over 100,000 people have been killed and the ‘agony of Algeria’⁵ continues to this day. Politically the country has been unable to revert back to a truly democratising process and it remains an authoritarian state, where the Army and the security forces still dominate both political and economic life behind the cover of civilian rule.

The preponderant role of the Army has been a constant feature in Algerian politics and it has been widely documented.⁶ For the moment, it suffices to say that the generals behind the scenes always were, and are to this day, the real wielders of power. They see themselves as the guardians of the unity of Algeria and the ultimate defenders of the state institutions.⁷ For these reasons, they lead a privileged life and expect to enjoy benefits denied to the majority of the population. Their historical legitimacy stems from the victory, against all odds, in the war of independence against France. In the words of Paula Balta and Claudine Rulleau: “[after independence] we witness the emergence of a caste, which will be able to combine political authority, business and matrimonial alliances: the Army.”⁸ A much-cited quote sums up the role of the Army in Algeria from the historian Mohamed Harbi: “Every State has its army; in Algeria, it is the Army that has its own state.”⁹

At the time, the Algerian transition to democracy did not really make the headlines for a number of reasons. First of all, the world was paying much more attention to changes taking place in the Soviet Union. Secondly, Algeria had been a ‘closed’ country and there were few experts who could elaborate on the changes occurring there. Finally, Algeria belonged to the Muslim world and events there that did not have an immediate and clear impact on the West did not seem to receive much attention. Thus, until very recently, the Anglo-Saxon comparative literature on transitions to democracy has neglected both Algeria and the Arab world. One other possible explanation for this neglect is the perception that very few or no transitions took

⁵ Martin Stone, *The Agony of Algeria* (London: Hurst, 1997).

⁶ Among others, see Paul Balta and Claudine Rulleau, *L'Algérie: les Essentiels*, (Toulouse: Ed. Milam, 2000).

⁷ Aziz Enhaili and Oumelkheir Adda, “State and Islamism in the Maghreb”, *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 7, No. 1, March 2003, p. 66.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

⁹ Mohamed Harbi, as cited by Francois Soudan, “L’après-Chadli a commencé”, *La Jeune Afrique*, No. 1450, 19th Octobre 1988, p. 9.

place in the region even at the height of the 'third wave.' This is however a mistaken perception, as the Arab world did experience significant changes.

The choice of the country under examination has two different aspects and they have to do with both academic and political concerns, which will be made clearer in Chapter 2. For the moment, it suffices to say that uppermost has been the preoccupation with understanding a country and a conflict which have been largely ignored in the West or, when analysed, have been widely misrepresented. Neglect and misunderstanding have in particular characterised most media coverage and therefore the general public has been distant or 'ignorant' about the plight of Algeria and Algerians. In his most recent book, Benjamin Stora points out that there is only one picture of the conflict that 'toured the world' and is immediately recognisable: a woman with an empty look in her eyes crying for the death of family members. The picture of this modern 'Madonna' was published in 1997, five years after the beginning of the civil war. Six years after the publication of the picture, the country is still engulfed in violence, authoritarian rule and depressing economic conditions. Stora argues: "among the representations of the [current Algerian] war, what strikes is the persistency of absence, the feeling of a vacuum of images."¹⁰ He further asks rhetorically: "If a war is not shown [in the media], does it really exist?"¹¹

This lack of attention to the conflict, to its origins and to its development has led some reputed scholars and analysts to explain it along the following lines: "Algeria has been torn apart by political violence emanating from radical Islamist groups bent on overthrowing the secular, military-backed government."¹² Such a point of departure for the analysis of the Algerian crisis, although containing some elements of truth, is nevertheless rather misleading and poorly informs the public and policy-makers. A simplification of the conflict in these terms indicates a lack of understanding of its origins and therefore it prevents us from making informed choices about viable solutions.

Looking at Algeria through the prism of transitology and through the identification of rational actors participating in a highly complex game is more conducive to understanding the country's failures than simply relying on simplistic explanations of 'good versus evil', 'fundamentalist versus secularist', or culturally-biased

¹⁰ Benjamin Stora, *La Guerre Invisible. Algérie, Années 90* (Paris: Presse de Sciences Po 2001), p. 7

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

¹² Maria Do Ceu Pinto, "European and American Responses to the Algerian Crisis", *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 3, No. 3, Winter 1998, p. 63.

ones referring to the autocratic civic culture of the country or the inherent authoritarianism of Islam. Some scholars reject this approach and claim that Algeria is not a 'democratisation problem.'¹³ This research will instead assume that the Algerian problem is indeed illustrative of a transition 'gone bad', but, moreover, that Algeria is instrumental in highlighting some of the shortcomings of the present state of the literature on transitions. In particular, transitology has refrained to deal convincingly with the dynamic that exists between the domestic and the international when accounting for the outcomes of processes of democratisation. With respect to this shortcoming, this research will link concepts from international relations to the analytical tools of transitology. The choice of using the transition literature in combination with the international relations one is not uncontroversial, but there is an existing trend in the scholarship pursuing precisely this objective.

In the following table it is possible to see Algeria's democratic experience in comparative terms with other countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA): what emerges is not only the extent to which Algeria actually did democratise, but also the contemporaneous effort that the vast majority of the other countries in the MENA region made to satisfy demands for democratic governance. This seems to point to the presence of factors that all these countries need to deal with and in particular to the profound changes taking place in the international system.

For the most part, these pro-democracy and pro-market economy reforms were nothing but cosmetic changes, which were intended as a strategy to readjust the grip of the regimes on the power they had. In this respect, Algeria was no different, as the initial reforms were intended as means to find renewed legitimacy for the regime. What sets Algeria apart is that these reforms quickly gathered substantial pace and led the country to become a 'democracy' for a few years.

The table below shows how the most important countries in the Arab world dealt with the issue of political and economic liberalisation in the immediate aftermath of the end of the Cold War, and following a very significant economic recession.

Table 1.1: Liberalisation in the MENA region

¹³ Jean Leca, "Paradoxes de la Démocratisation. L'Algérie au Chevet de la Science Politique", *Pouvoirs*, No. 86, 1998, pp. 7-28.

	Pre-1988 Authoritarianism	Liberalisation	Degree	Outcome
Morocco	Monarchy	Yes	Partial	Failure
Tunisia	One party regime	Yes	Partial	Failure
Libya	Personal dictatorship	Yes	Very limited	Failure
Egypt	Presidential dictatorship	Yes	Very limited	Failure
Jordan	Monarchy	Yes	Partial	Success
Syria	Personal dictatorship	Yes	Very limited	Failure
Iraq	Personal dictatorship	No	-	-
S. Arabia	Monarchy	Yes	Very limited	Failure
Algeria	One party regime	Yes	Full	Failure

A quick overview of the political developments in other countries confirms that in all cases (Iraq did not implement any change) the reforms failed to lead to a successful transition and in most cases the type of regime did not change. In Morocco, the process of reforms initiated by the late King Hassan II and known as *alternance* is considered a failure and the current King is still the supreme decision maker.¹⁴ In Tunisia, the transition lasted only two years as the general who had replaced the former ruler and who had promised a quick move towards democracy proceeded to hijack it.¹⁵ In Libya, Qadahafi made some cosmetic changes to the institutional set-up of Libya's government to give the impression of popular involvement in decision-making, but power stills rests with him.¹⁶ The same can be said for both Egypt¹⁷ and Syria.¹⁸ Mubarak in Egypt still rules without any sort of democratic legitimacy, while in Syria power passed from father to son in what is now a 'hereditary republic'. The 1989 reforms served only the purpose of strengthening the regime by pre-empting and co-opting opposition. Saudi Arabia also

¹⁴ John Entelis, "Un Courant Populaire Mis à l'Ecart", *Le Monde Diplomatique*, No. 589, September 2002, pp.21-22.

¹⁵ Nicolas Beau and Jean-Pierre Tuquoi, *Notre Ami Ben Ali*, (Paris: Editions La Découverte, 1999).

¹⁶ For reforms in Libya see Dirk Vanderwalle, "Qadafhi's 'Perestroika': Economic and Political Liberalisation in Libya", *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 45, No. 2, Spring 1991, pp. 216-231.

¹⁷ For reforms in Egypt in the late 1980s see Mona Makram-Ebeid, "Political Opposition in Egypt: Democratic Myth or Reality?", *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 43, No. 3, Summer 1989, pp. 423-436.

¹⁸ For reforms in Syria, see Volker Perthes, "Stages of Economic and Political Liberalisation" in Eberhard Kienle (ed.) *Contemporary Syria. Liberalisation between Cold War and Cold Peace*, (London: British Academic Press, 199), pp. 44-71.

is no exception to the trend and the creation of a Council to advise the King in the early 1990s did not signify any real democratic change.

Thus, putting Algeria into comparative context confirms that the case is most interesting to analyse. Relative to the class of cases, Algeria is 'exceptional' for a number of reasons. First of all, it was among the earlier countries to democratise and by February 1989 it had adopted a 'liberal' Constitution allowing in particular for multi-partism. Secondly, its degree of liberalisation and democratisation was the most substantial. No other country in the region went as far as Algeria in terms of political reforms and civil rights, including freedom of assembly and freedom of the press. Thirdly, the Algerian elites were the only ones in the region to 'accept' the risk of legalising an antagonistic Islamic opposition. They may have done so in order to co-opt it more easily or they may have done it in order to offset other players in the transitional game, but what remains is that they allowed an Islamic party to fully partake to the political life of the country. Finally, the two electoral consultations that took place before the military coup were considered to be 'free and fair'. The region has a strong tradition of rigged elections, but twice Algeria did not conform to the pattern.

A further interesting aspect for studying a country in this region is the context of an international system that was profoundly changing. The winding down of the Cold War had profound and obvious implications for the actors directly involved in it with all the readjustments that needed to be made in terms of national security and diplomatic relations. There were however profound consequences for the international system as whole and one of the most important ones proved to be the acceleration of the democratising trend. This trend did not have an impact only on the satellite countries of the Soviet Union, but reverberated throughout the globe and seems to point to the existence of a connection between all the cases. This means that Algeria should be looked at through international lenses. By taking into account the external environment, it is possible to analyse the transition and its ultimate failure as a product of actors' interests and forces at the international level and not simply of exclusively domestic variables. When thinking about the opening up of the political system, it is difficult for instance not to perceive the link with changes taking place in the wider world outside the Arab world. Conversely, it is problematic not to look at the many failures of democracy in the MENA region without referring to the same international context. Cantori argues, for instance, that "the American policy stakes in the Middle East are so high that democracy as a policy objective is potentially politically destabilising and therefore an

unaffordable luxury.”¹⁹ But this stance is not American alone; the European Union both as an actor and as a collection of different member states can be accused of the same interest. In fact, it can be argued that France and other European countries had more at stake in Algeria than the United States. It follows that taking into account such an external environment could add valuable insights to explanations of transitions in the wider Arab world and, at the same time, it could provide better knowledge of the difficult relationship between Islam and democracy. The issue of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) and its democratic credibility was central to the perceptions and strategies put in place by all other actors involved in the Algerian transitional game. There is very little doubt that much of the debate around the failed transition centres on this issue. This has enormous implications for relations with the Muslim world and, specifically, the political movements that found their legitimacy on Islam as a system of beliefs and political action. There is for instance a fundamental question that must be dealt with both academically and politically: if such movements participate in the democratic procedural game and win, should they be allowed to exercise power or should they be stopped from ruling? A better understanding of this past experience may lead to the adoption of better strategies for democratisation, as recently suggested by Carothers.²⁰

Finally, the Algerian case has profound implications for and is instrumental in understanding issues concerning the promotion of democracy abroad. There is very little doubt that democracy is 'triumphant' in ideological terms in the post-Cold War period; it is a universalised value. The liberal version of it is particularly dominant and its proponents do not seem to see any alternative to it; democracy is either liberal or is not democracy. In the case of Arab countries in particular the argument may not be so simple and there is a school of thought both in the West and in the Muslim world that argues in favour of an Islamic democracy. If the FIS had been allowed to rule, would we have witnessed democratic governance or, as the FIS detractors argue, would we have witnessed a return to religious authoritarianism and obscurantism? This question has profound consequences for how we deal with the many 'liberalised autocracies'²¹ that

¹⁹ Louis Cantori, “The Limitations of Western Democratic Theory: The Islamic Alternative” paper presented at the Conference of Middle East Studies Association, in Orlando, Florida, United States, November 2000, p. 1.

²⁰ Thomas Carothers, “Is Gradualism Possible? Choosing a Strategy for promoting Democracy in the Middle East”, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Working Paper, No. 39, June 2003.

²¹ Daniel Brumberg, “Liberalisation Versus Democratisation. Understanding Arab Political Reform” Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Working Paper, No. 37, May 2003, pp. 3-20.

exist throughout the Arab world. Today, the contention of many Western governments is that in many Arab countries we see signs of democracy developing and taking hold because democracy is indeed universal. But is this the case or is Claude Ake correct when he points out: “if democracy is being universalised, it is only because it has been trivialised to the point that it is no longer threatening to power elites around the world, who may now enjoy democratic legitimacy without the notorious inconveniences of practising democracy?”²²

Thus, there are numerous implications deriving from a better understanding of Algeria, both relative to the class of regional cases and relative to the lessons it can offer for the international community. They have even more relevance today at a time when Western engagement with the Muslim world is so controversial, ranging from support for authoritarian regimes to full scale military intervention to rid some countries of perceived anti-West dictators.

1.2 Algeria’s Transition Between Comparative Politics and IR

Explaining how the Algerian authoritarian regime collapsed, how the process of democratisation developed and how it ended could offer new evidence to perceive the relationship between domestic and international factors as a dynamic one. Transitions have to be studied in their international context because there are two converging trends that make them an international phenomenon. One trend is a ‘regional’ one and is related to the concept of contagion, whereby countries in the same geographic area seem to experience the same ‘drive’ towards regime change at the same time. This occurred in Eastern Europe and Latin America, and the Arab world is no different. The other trend has to do with the ‘timing’ of the transition, whereby geographic proximity is also accompanied by timing proximity. These two trends, as already noted by Whitehead, point to international factors operating to influence transitions previously thought to be solely domestic affairs.

Due to the growth of the literature regarding the effects of 'globalisation', recent research has witnessed the emergence of studies attempting to link external actors and variables to domestic political and economic developments. Obviously, this is not an entirely new phenomenon and some scholars of international relations theory (IR) have dedicated some of their work to exploring this topic. However, the large majority of this

²² Claude Ake, “Dangerous Liaisons: the Interface of Globalisation and Democracy” in Axel Hadenius (ed.) *Democracy's Victory and Crisis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 282.

literature separates domestic and international politics quite neatly and very rarely attempts to see them as inter-linked.

A neat division between domestic and international politics is now believed to be detrimental to an explanation of political phenomena. As early as 1996, Jacobsen, in a review article of new trends in IR, argued that “the heyday of models that depict the state as a rational unitary actors, billiard ball, or black box apparently is drawing to a close.”²³ While such distinction between the domestic and international levels may have been justified in the past, particularly given the methodological concerns of parsimony and the ‘levels of analysis’ approaches, today it seems very difficult to argue that there are no links between the two.

From this division it has followed that: “traditionally, comparative politics and international relations have been separate spheres of endeavour.”²⁴ When it comes to comparative politics, the result has been the neglect of the role of international and transnational variables to explain domestic political processes. One phenomenon that has been firmly within the camp of comparative politics is regime change. Specifically, transitions from authoritarian rule towards the establishment of democracy have been mainly analysed by looking at domestic factors. In the words of Haynes: “comparative analysis tends to look no further than domestic factors to seek its explanations.”²⁵ An example of how international factors are usually treated in the context of regime change is found in Pinkney. He argues: “external factors can make democratisation easier or more difficult, but the actual transition will depend on the ability of internal actors to utilise the opportunities offered.”²⁶ International Relations has also relied heavily on structural models, but it has at least attempted to engage with the ‘domestic.’ Evidence of this is found in the very large body of literature that tries to explain foreign policy outcomes by looking at domestic structures and that resulted in the proposition that ‘democracies do not go to war with each other.’

The focus of this project is to instead attempt to build a bridge between the two literatures of IR and comparative politics and re-analyse the process of transition in Algeria paying particular attention to the role of external variables. The opportunities

²³ John Kurt Jacobsen, “Are All Politics Domestic? Perspectives on the Integration of Comparative Politics and International Relations Theory”, *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 29, No. 1, October 1996, p. 93.

²⁴ Jeffrey Haynes, “Comparative Politics and ‘Globalisation’”, *European Political Science*, Vol. 2, No. 3, Summer 2003, p. 21.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

²⁶ Robert Pinkney, *Democracy in the Third World*, (London: Lynne Rienner, 2003) p. 159.

Pinkney talks about may in fact not exist at all and they could be better described at times as 'forced choices.' Moreover, it cannot be excluded *a priori* that some external actors could be active on the domestic scene in their own right. Thus, the necessity for this type of approach has become recently more insistent and the design of this research, to a large extent, precedes it. It is however worth noting that Jeff Haynes is not the only scholar who "point[s] out that while, traditionally, the comparative literature has ignored or, at best, only cursorily referred to external factors as a supplementary add on, the impact of relevant international and transnational actors"²⁷ should be examined further. Laurence Whitehead, Geoffrey Pridham, Samuel Huntington and Douglas Chalmers are the first generation of scholars who attempted to come to terms with the role of external factors during democratisation. The second generation attempted more forcefully to give international factors a central explanatory role. Hakan Yilmaz²⁸ built an open model of democratisation and applied it to Southern Europe with a considerable degree of success. Gillespie and Youngs noted: "the complexities of the international system dimension to political change have been inadequately factored into studies of democratisation"²⁹ and proceeded to insert them and apply them to North Africa. Richard Sakwa³⁰ concluded much of the same and decided to analyse transitions in Eastern Europe through international variables. Finally, Jean Grugel³¹ attempted very recently to reconcile the studies of democratisation and globalisation.

This renewed interest in regime change and in the role of external actors did not emerge only out of academic concerns, but is also related to two fundamentally political elements. The first one is that within globalisation, there is an "emerging world-wide preference for democracy."³² Most political parties, governments and leaders across the globe today make explicit references to democratic governance and a previously contested concept is now widely accepted to mean Western-style liberal democracy. This

²⁷ Haynes, *op. cit.* p. 24.

²⁸ Hakan Yilmaz, "External-Internal Linkages in Democratization: Developing an Open Model of Democratic Change", *Democratization*, Vol. 9, No. 2, Summer 2002, pp. 67-84.

²⁹ Richard Gillespie and Robert Youngs, "Themes in European Democracy Promotion", *Democratization*, Vol. 9, No. 1, Spring 2002, p. 1.

³⁰ Richard Sakwa, "Introduction. The Democratic Experience" in Richard Sakwa (ed.) *The Experience of Democratisation in Eastern Europe*, (London: Macmillan Press, 1999).

³¹ Jean Grugel, "Democratisation Studies Globalisation: the Coming of Age of a Paradigm", *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, Vol. 5, No. 2, May 2003, pp. 258-283.

³² J. Mittelman, "The Globalisation Challenge: Surviving at the Margins", *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 15, No. 3, 1994, p. 429 as cited in Jeff Haynes, *op. cit.*

does not mean that all of those who espouse democracy are 'true believers' or 'true practitioners' nor does it mean that those governments celebrating the virtues of democracy are in themselves truly democratic, but it is significant that liberal-democracy seems to be the only remaining ideology by virtue of the fact that it denies being such and instead purports itself to be the 'natural' order of society. This worldwide consensus about democracy is also linked to the perceived benefits derived from an increasing number of nation-states adopting this system of government as a way of guaranteeing international peace. Thus, the absence of international conflict is linked to the emergence of an area of democratic peace. The second motive behind this interest in the relationship existing between transitions and external factors is the strategy of democracy-promotion put in place by both the United States and the European Union (both as a unified actor and through the unilateral actions of its members). There is, in fact, a growing literature that argues the merits of such strategies and emphasises the links between democracy-promotion, development and international peace.³³ It is therefore very important to have a better understanding of transitions and the role external actors should play in order to be more effective in their strategies.

Both academic and political interests are the basis for this study. From a purely academic point of view, it is important to emphasise that, theoretically, there are many points of contact between domestic actors and international actors and forces. It is in fact quite difficult to imagine how actors totally autonomous from the surrounding environment can carry out such a 'founding' moment as the creation of a new political and often economic system in a virtual vacuum. These contacts can take the form of direct policies and structural influences or can be seen in the context of the 'spirit of the time'. Furthermore they can involve actors at different levels and may not be limited to nation-states. The purpose of this research is therefore to utilise the case of Algeria to look at processes of democratisation that include a set of international factors, which may be useful explanatory variables. If the evidence bears out the hypotheses generated through the study, the implications for the literature on regime change would be numerous. First of all, the discovery of a more influential role played by international factors would challenge the assumption that the 'creation' of democracy is simply a domestic game and would point to the necessity of re-directing research towards more

³³ Gary Gambill argues precisely that the absence of democracy in the Arab world is the result of the lack of true democracy promotion on the part of the United States. See, Gary Gambill, "Explaining the Arab Democracy Deficit, Part II: American Policy", *Middle East Intelligence Bulletin*, Vol. 5, No. 8-9, August-September 2003, pp. 1-17.

integrated explanations. While the belief that the creation of democracy is purely a domestic affair has been to a certain extent already abandoned, it is necessary to offer new evidence supporting the crucial role of the external environment in the creation of new domestic political and economic structures. Secondly, it would demonstrate that external actors play a role in supporting, at times decisively, key domestic constituencies in order to arrive at their most preferred outcome (be it democracy or a return to authoritarian rule), thereby confirming that nation-states, in order to 'survive', need to a certain extent to conform to the dominant rules and rulers of the international system. Thirdly, it may mean that some domestic choices are indeed forced upon domestic actors by outside actors and variables. Fourthly, there would be implications for the type of actors operating in the system, as the presence of non-state actors actively involved in processes of democratisation would indicate that nation-states may not be the all powerful entities in the system. Finally, there would also be implications for policy-making as well. If the international element is indeed important, the type of international influence could make a difference to the outcome and by changing policies it can be conceived that outcomes could be changed as well.

From a political and policy-orientated point of view, the question about the role of external actors in triggering, facilitating or impeding a transition and its following phases is of extreme importance in the international system. Increasingly, the formal sovereignty states enjoyed in the past is being eroded and a better understanding of how regime change comes about, develops and concludes will help indicate what lies ahead for the remaining authoritarian regimes.

To conclude, the primary objective of the thesis is to offer a critique of transitology as it stands today with its almost exclusive focus on the 'domestic'. Such critique is accompanied by the utilisation of concepts drawn from international relations. There are many theories of IR that can be employed to support such an enterprise, but they also suffer from a number of shortcomings and they should not be uncritically accepted and incorporated.

1.3 A Map for the Road Ahead

Chapter 2 deals in some detail with the context within which this study takes place. First of all, it highlights the reason for the study and places it in the context of the literature on transitions from authoritarian rule to the establishment of a democratic system and its consolidation or demise. It specifies the research question by looking at

the literature on international relations and looks at the main theories and concepts that could be applied for such a study. Finally, it addresses methodological questions and, in particular, it addresses the reasons behind the choice of Algeria as a single case study.

Chapter 3 consists of the literature review on issues of regime change. It contends that most of the studies carried out in transitology do not deal satisfactorily with the external environment and do not engage sufficiently with international variables. There are notable exceptions to this trend and there are scholars whose work contributes to highlighting this deficiency in the literature and offers ways to incorporate such factors. The work of these scholars will be analysed and criticised at the same time in order to take on board useful categories and to improve on them. The chapter concludes with an overview of the hypotheses that will be tested and with the main assumptions and definitions.

Chapter 4 will deal with the domestic politics based explanations offered for the Algerian transition. While chapter 3 focuses on general theoretical points, this chapter will deal specifically with the Algerian case. It will look at the views that have been offered to explain the process of transition and the failure of consolidation in Algeria, and establish that on their own they fail to adequately tell the whole story of the transition. It is necessary to highlight these alternative explanations to identify their weak points and the answers they do not offer. Firstly, it will be established that some of these explanations are too strongly based on variables that have lost much of their explanatory power in the literature. Secondly, it will be argued that other explanations are potentially useful, but need to be linked to the external environment to acquire stronger credibility. Finally, it will also be made clear that the political change in Algeria from 1988 onwards was a real and substantial shift in the form and nature of its government. The fact that the process of democratisation was initiated in order to preserve the privileged position of those already in power should not lead to the conclusion that change was not real. Almost all transitions begin because the ruling elites seeks to maintain power through the generation of renewed legitimacy, which usually takes the form of electoral and democratic consent. Such liberalisation, while seeking renewed legitimacy, tends to generate pressures and forces that are soon beyond the control of the initiators. Concerning Algeria, the move away from authoritarianism and towards the establishment of a new political system was of considerable importance and led the country to enjoy a period of unprecedented political openness: the transition was for real. Even before legislative elections were held, Hudson stated that “in less than two years

[Algeria] has overhauled its constitution, permitted political parties of all stripes to function -including Islamic parties- lifted press censorship and encouraged the development of newspapers, and greatly simplified the procedures for establishing associations.”³⁴.

Chapter 5 will be dedicated to the conceptualisation of the explanation for the case study based on IR literature and definitions. It will identify the dimensions that are relevant in terms of international influence in domestic politics and it will specify the range of actors involved. There are two dimensions that should be taken into consideration when looking at transitions. Countries are not isolated from their surroundings and it is important to clearly identify both their geo-political and economic environments to determine the degree to which they could be affected by changes in these contexts. The chapter will also deal with the issue of the appropriate level of analysis. Much of IR theory is concerned with states and state actions. While states remain very important actors on the international scene, the picture emerging would be incomplete if other entities and agencies were not taken into account. It is not really a case of choosing one or the other, but a case of taking into account that both have something to contribute to the analysis.

Chapter 6 will look in detail at the external environment at the time of and throughout transition, looking both at political and economic variables. The focus will be on the events and changes taking place outside Algeria and attention will be paid to the consequences of such events. This chapter is more empirical than chapter 5 and will begin to make connections between the claims made in that chapter and the emerging evidence about the case study. A more detailed discussion of how the evidence supports or disproves the hypotheses discussed in Chapter 5 will be made in Chapter 7 when each hypothesis will be analysed. It will emerge that the evidence does not support some of the hypotheses and that there are at best tenuous links between the domestic and the international spheres. However, it will also emerge that some hypotheses can convincingly be supported, legitimising the claim that the two spheres interact dynamically.

In the concluding Chapter, the results will be discussed in light of the research question. There are a number of consequences that will emerge for assumptions made both in the transitions and in the international relations literatures and they will all be

³⁴ Michael Hudson, “After the Gulf War: Prospects for Democratisation in the Arab World”, *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 45, No. 3, Summer 1991, p. 414.

discussed in some detail. These implications will hopefully contribute by questioning some of the traditional assumptions present in both literatures.

Finally, it is possible to examine in brief the developments that took place since the military coup and analyse if events over the last decade tend to support the explanation offered here for the failure of the transition, particularly when looking at external factors. This is done in a short epilogue after the conclusion.

CHAPTER 2 – The Research

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to highlight the reasons behind this study, to justify it in terms of the existing literature and to explain the methodology, with particular attention paid to the choice of a single case study. At the heart of the project lies an interest in the process of democratisation in Algeria. This type of political phenomenon has acquired considerable political importance and has attracted substantial academic attention.

The 1990s in particular saw the collapse of many forms of authoritarian regimes and attempts to move towards a different political system based on people's democratic consent. The collapse of communist rule dramatically changed the global political landscape, so much that the Western victory in the Cold War led some to hail the end of history.¹ These processes of regime change have however given rise to profoundly different outcomes: some countries managed to move to a Western style liberal democracy without too many difficulties (Poland and Hungary are the best examples in Europe), many other are trapped with a stagnant quasi-democratic system (e.g. Morocco, Egypt, Peru)² and still others reverted to some form of authoritarian rule after a promising start on the road towards full-scale political liberalisation (e.g. Tunisia and Pakistan).

The different outcomes and the relatively low 'failure rate' should not detract from the importance of understanding how authoritarian regimes collapse, how the domestic actors attempt to construct a new political system, and how they either fail or succeed in building a stable democracy. Algeria falls precisely into the category of 'failed democratisations'. The interest in Algeria is combined with the necessity to explore further the external dimension of transitions, as explanations purely based on domestic factors are misleading. This is a rather under-researched aspect of how transitions occur and how the process develops over time and concludes. While there are numerous studies preoccupied with analysing the domestic environment, there is comparatively little work on the external constraints, incentives and disincentives to democratisation.

¹ Francis Fukuyama, "The End of History?", The National Interest, No. 16, Summer 1989.

² The category of so-called semi-democracies seemed to be on the rise in the mid-1990s, as highlighted in Fareed Zakaria, "The Rise of Illiberal Democracy", Foreign Affairs, Vol. 76, No. 6, November/December 1997, pp. 22-43.

It is also interesting to note that some countries and some regions have been analysed in far greater detail than others. When it comes to regional focus, countries in the Middle East and North Africa fared quite badly, although recently there has been a renewed interest in studying issues linked to liberalisation and democratisation in this area. The absence of this region from comparative studies on regime change may be due to the perception that real changes did not seem to have occurred in terms of regime transformation, leading some scholars to talk about 'Islamic exceptionalism'³ when it comes to the establishment of democratic institutions in the Muslim world at large.⁴ In fact, this perception does not stand up to empirical testing. Radical political transformations did occur in a number of countries in the Arab world, although for a very limited period of time.

While it is true that most regimes in the Middle East and North Africa today look, superficially at least, much like they looked in the 1970s, profound transformations took place both at governmental and societal level. The Muslim world has not been entirely immune to global trends emphasising market economy and liberal democracy.⁵ Most countries in the region experimented with liberal economics and had to deal with massive technological changes, which allowed the growth of a more lively and independent civil society.⁶

As far back as 1988, Michael Hudson pointed out that "the recent work of members of the Middle East Studies Association [...] on social formations also conveys the complexity and autonomy of the incipient civil society: the informal economy, women's activities, local politics, patron-client relations, interest groups, affinity groups,

³ The issue of the supposed Middle East exceptionalism has been widely discussed by Simon Bromley, "Middle East Exceptionalism – Myth or Reality?" in David Held, David Goldblatt, Margaret Kiloh and Paula Lewis (eds.) *Democratization* (London: Open University Press, 1997).

⁴ Bernard Lewis is particularly critical about the inability of Islam to come to terms with democracy as one of the pillars of modernity and argued that "many Islamic countries have experimented with democratic institutions of one kind or another..[but] the record, with the possible exception of Turkey is one of almost unrelieved failure." He also added: "the only European model that worked, in the sense of accomplishing its purposes, was the one-party dictatorship." See Bernard Lewis, "Revolt of Islam", *The New Yorker*, November 19, 2001, pp. 50-63.

⁵ For an overview of the signs of democratisation at the end of the 1980s, see Michael Hudson, "Democratisation and the problem of legitimacy in Middle East politics", *Middle East Studies Association Bulletin*, Vol. 22, No. 2, December 1988, pp. 157-171.

⁶ For an analysis of the impact of technology on Middle Eastern societies, see for example Annabelle Sreberny-Mohammadi, "The Media and Democratization in the Middle East: The Strange Case of Television," *Democratization*, Vol. 5, No. 2, Summer 1998, pp. 179-199.

labour and agricultural associations, charitable and educational organisations are the building blocks of a civil society autonomous (or potentially so) from state and regime.”⁷ These changes should not lead scholars to conclude that democracy exists in the region and more critical scholars suggest that we should not even speak in terms of degrees of democracy since “as an analytical category [it] cannot be present to varying degrees or percentages.”⁸ While this warning is entirely reasonable, “it is important not to confuse the absence of democracy with the question of prospects for democratisation.”⁹

Together with these societal and technological changes, there have been numerous specific political experiments aimed at curbing the democratic deficit. A number of authoritarian regimes did collapse or changed dramatically. The fall of the Bourguiba’s regime in Tunisia for instance led to an opening up of the political space. The regime fell due to a ‘medical’ coup, but there were real hopes that the new leader would seriously liberalise the political system as he explicitly declared. For this reason a transition pact was signed, which constituted an “effort to reiterate and celebrate the solidarity of the Tunisian people [...] while admitting and indeed encouraging the existence of pluralism of ideas and interests.”¹⁰ The political transition eventually failed,¹¹ although to some, elements of it are still ongoing.¹²

In other countries as well there were attempts to build a new system based on real popular consent, such as Algeria and Jordan. According to Rex Brynen, “on November 8, 1989, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan went to the polls in what were to be the first general parliamentary elections in more than 23 years, and the freest and fairest vote in that country’s history.”¹³ In Algeria, the single party political system was abolished in 1989 to open the door for the most interesting and far-reaching programme of political reform in any Arab country. These attempts, and other less celebrated ones, were not entirely successful and democracy has not been consolidated anywhere in the

⁷ Hudson, op. cit. p. 163.

⁸ Oliver Schlumberger, “The Arab Middle East and the Question of Democratization: Some Critical Remarks,” *Democratization*, Vol. 7, No.4, Winter 2000, p. 113.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 113.

¹⁰ Lisa Anderson, “Political Pacts, Liberalism and Democracy: The Tunisian National Pact of 1988,” *Government and Opposition*, Vol. 26, No. 2, Spring 1991, p. 260.

¹¹ Larbi Sadiki, “Political Liberalization in Bin Ali’s Tunisia: Façade Democracy”, *Democratization*, Vol. 9, No. 4, Winter 2002, pp. 122-141.

¹² Jerry Sorkin, “The Tunisian Model”, *Middle East Quarterly*, Vol. 8, No. 4, Fall 2001. Available at <http://www.meforum.org/article/107>.

¹³ Rex Brynen, “Economic Crisis and Post-Rentier Democratisation in the Arab World: the Case of Jordan”, *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 25, No. 1, March 1992, p. 69.

region,¹⁴ but there is an important story to be told about the collapse of authoritarianism, the development of the liberalisation period leading to full democratisation, and the failure of consolidation, which in most cases led to a return to some form of authoritarian rule.

In spite of the pessimism concerning the democratisation of the region and the possibilities for regime changes that would lead to more pluralistic and freer polities, past events demonstrate that, albeit temporarily, democracy can be a reality in the Middle East and North Africa. The entire region is of immense interest from both an academic and political point of view and merits the attention of students of regime change. An explanation of the Algerian transition in light of external variables could contribute to shed some light on the region as a whole.

2.2 The Project

The lack of systematic understanding of the external environment during regime change along with important questions arising from the Algerian transition, combine to form the direction of this project.

Far from being simply an examination of the reasons behind the attempted Algerian transition to democracy and its failure to consolidate in the period between 1988 and 1992, this study tries to understand the Algerian transition in its international context, recognising the importance of international constraints and variables when changes in regime occur. There are some studies of the failed democratisation of Algeria, particularly in French academia, ranging from personal accounts of political and military figures involved in the decision-making processes to in-depth analyses of Algerian socio-economic and political developments. However, the literature lacks a comprehensive study of the external environment, which may have strongly conditioned Algerian domestic developments. At the same time, the literature on transitions has recently gone through considerable changes and there is renewed interest in the international dimension. Recent transitions highlighted the necessity for the literature to take international factors into greater account, given that their impact had been previously underestimated. While it is still hotly debated ‘what’ exactly caused the collapse of communist rule in Eastern Europe, the external environment was never accorded primacy as a key causal mechanism.

¹⁴ For the case of Jordan, see Mehran Kamrava, “Frozen Political Liberalization in Jordan: the Consequences for Democracy”, *Democratization*, Vol. 5, No. 1, Spring 1998, pp. 138-157.

Intuitively, most scholars agree that the changes taking place in the Soviet Union, and the launch of the so-called ‘Sinatra doctrine’ by Gorbachev, triggered transitions in Eastern Europe by removing the threat of the use of force in case of political choices detrimental to Soviet interests. But there is little attempt to engage with these effects in a systematic manner. Furthermore, once the point about the change of policy in the Soviet Union is made in order to contextualise the process of domestic regime change, the vast majority of studies focus their attention on endogenous factors and variables to explain the development and the outcome of the transition. Despite this predominant interest on the interplay of domestic actors, in recent works emerges a ‘contamination’ of the traditional approaches to regime change with approaches derived from international relations theories.

This takes place in the wider context characterising the discipline of political science as a whole, where it is increasingly believed that comparative politics and international relations cannot be analysed in isolation. Thus, this study situates itself within the emerging literature dealing with external-internal links when explaining regime change. Such literature is becoming increasingly relevant, as globalisation seems to be blurring the boundaries between domestic and international politics. Looking at external constraints during the process of regime change “involves challenging one of the most deeply rooted paradigm divides within political science, that between international relations and comparative politics.”¹⁵ The underlying objective of this enterprise is to build a bridge between the two traditions by providing a critique of transitology, which needs to incorporate the international dimension much more organically. The method used to illustrate this point is an extensive empirical study of one case that would provide the basis for reconsidering and re-analysing the existence of a link between two realms (inside/outside) often seen as mutually exclusive.

2.3 The Literature on Regime Change – A Preliminary Overview

The literature on the democratic transformation of societies expanded considerably from its inception in the late and mid 1970s.¹⁶ The end of the Cold War and

¹⁵ Philippe Schmitter, ‘The Influence of the International Context upon the choice of National Institutions and Policies in Neo-Democracies’, in Laurence Whitehead (ed.) *The International Dimensions of Democratization*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 26.

¹⁶ A very important study in four volumes on democracy and development in 3 continents was conducted at the end of the 1980s and serves as one of the best comparative studies in the field. Larry Diamond, Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Democracy in Developing Countries* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner, 1986, 1988).

the collapse of communist ideology dramatically increased the number of countries undergoing a radical change in their political, economic and social structures, thereby increasing the number of cases available to test previous theories on regime change. Building on studies conducted to explain the transitions of Portugal, Spain and Greece, a number of scholars utilised the same theoretical frameworks to deal with the transformations taking place in South America, Central America, and Eastern Europe in the late 1980s and early 1990s. These examinations fall into three broad categories: 1) in-depth analyses of a specific country; 2) comparative studies of countries in the same geographic area; and 3) studies of countries with the same type of authoritarian regime or other common features such as previous democratic experience. There are also a number of more theoretical studies that attempt to deal with the phenomenon of democratisation as such and focus their attention on similarities and differences in processes and outcomes. Two broad schools of thought can be identified. One deals in detail with the actions and strategies of domestic actors (actor-led transitions), while the other emphasises prerequisites for democratisation and structural constraints (structure-led transitions).

The vast majority of these studies are based on the assumption that the analysis of domestic factors is sufficient to explain the initiation, timing, development and outcome of the transition. Philippe Schmitter refers to this approach as the ‘nativist assumption.’ According to Schmitter no political phenomenon is more rooted in the domestic sphere than the setting up of new political institutions. These domestic variables include the following: a) the strategies of the most important actors and their interaction; b) the level of socio-economic development that a country reaches at a particular point in time when it is supposedly ready for a change; and c) a more comprehensive mix of the two. Such analyses are certainly an important part of any understanding of political liberalisation, democratisation and consolidation, but they neglect one fundamental aspect: the international context. In referring to the transitions that took place in Southern Europe in the 1970s Schmitter contended that “one of the firmest conclusions [of the study was that transitions] were largely to be explained in terms of national forces and calculations.”¹⁷ The case against the inclusion of international variables in the study of regime change is best summarised by O’Donnell

¹⁷ Philippe Schmitter, “An Introduction to Southern European Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Italy, Greece, Portugal, Spain and Turkey” in Guillermo O’Donnell, Philippe Schmitter and Laurence Whitehead (eds.), *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Southern Europe*, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), p. 5.

and Schmitter. They state: “it seems to us fruitless to search for some international factors or context which can reliably compel authoritarian rulers to experiment with liberalisation, much less which can predictably cause their regimes to collapse.”¹⁸

Schmitter and others obviously recognised that external actors could impose democracy through military occupation and they cited the cases of Germany, Japan and Italy. However, they quickly pointed out that these cases were ‘outliers’ and did not conform to the pattern of regime change explained in their studies. The same argument can be applied to countries in Central America, which experienced democratisation-by-imposition, such as Puerto Rico, *de facto* annexed by the United States. Defining these cases as ‘exceptions’ highlights one of the major issues surrounding transitology, that international variables are left on the margins of the debate. If they cannot be marginalised due to their obvious preponderance, they are deemed to be central explanatory mechanisms only in the exceptional circumstance of foreign invasion and cannot lead to generalisations regarding the wider phenomenon of regime change. This exceptionalism is to the detriment of the inclusion of international variables in all other cases. If invasion and imposition are the only manner in which the external environment is deemed to be important for regime change, the international dimension is excluded from those models of regime change that do not involve some form of military invasion. The problem with this approach is that international factors may also be relevant in the absence of an invasion, as there are many other ways to influence domestic actors and their strategies without resorting to a full-scale military operation that results in the establishment of an externally-sanctioned most-preferred form of government. Furthermore, invasion presupposes that the only actor to have an influence is another state, while in fact world politics can be characterised as having multiple channels of influence where the state is only one of the many protagonists alongside non-state actors or semi-state actors.

There is also another point worth discussing about the general relevance of the international aspect of democratisation. Far from being the ‘essentially contested concept’ that it is in political theory, democracy is a well-established objective model when it comes to the literature on democratic transitions. For instance, the fact that democracy in Germany, Japan and Italy was established after a foreign invasion (admittedly after a defeat in war) and depended on the presence of a foreign

¹⁸ Guillermo O’Donnell and Philippe Schmitter, *Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies*, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), p. 18.

administration for a number of years, points in the direction of an internationally standardised model of democracy. Democratic institutions were built according to the model of the invading countries and their success in consolidating, despite imposition, should not obscure the fact that there exists a pre-existing format of democracy that is internationally sanctioned as the proper one by the dominant states in the system.

One of the main tenets of transitology is indeed the coincidence between democracy and the specific type of democracy that is Western-style liberal democracy. When a process of liberalisation begins in a given country, the population within the country determines the validity of their future democratic choice only up to a point. In fact, full democratic legitimacy and credentials depend, in the final analysis, on the process of international recognition. The outside world, and therefore external actors, have to judge if the process of democratisation succeeded or failed. What emerges from all of this is that the only accepted version of a successful democracy is a Western one. It follows that the international variables acting in Germany, Japan and Italy, which led the three countries to become democracies, are also at work in the larger international system. These factors may not be based on a direct military invasion and imposition of a model of governance, but certainly there is the expectancy that the result of a transition has to conform to a pre-existing model.

This model is the one adopted in the countries dominating the international system. This is exemplified by Schmitter and Karl's work on the essential features of democracy.¹⁹ While highlighting that democracy "does not consist of a single unique set of institutions"²⁰, their definition is clearly minimal and coincides with the procedural version first expanded on by Schumpeter.²¹ Thus, any actor involved in regime change has a very well established blueprint to follow, which restricts the menu of choices and leads inevitably towards an internationally standardised form of democracy.

With this in mind, it is also worth noting that radical transformations of political and economic structures do not occur in a vacuum and the international context might be a very relevant factor and play an important role during the whole process of transformation. In some of their work following the study *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule* of 1986, both Schmitter and Whitehead began to recognise the importance of the international environment and Schmitter admitted: "perhaps, it is time to reconsider the

¹⁹ Philippe Schmitter and Terry Lynn Karl, "What Democracy Is...And Is Not", Journal of Democracy, Vol. 2, 1991, pp. 75-88.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 76.

²¹ Joseph Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1954).

impact of the international context upon regime change.”²² Pridham came to the very same conclusion in his study of the international dimension to regime change in Eastern Europe.²³

It is argued that there are well-grounded justifications for the neglect and the underdevelopment of the international dimension as an explanatory variable. There are both theoretical and practical reasons for the lack of a coherent and systematic analysis of the international context, which we will examine in greater detail in the following chapter. However, the void is not total and there is a limited, but substantive literature that deals with this important aspect of regime change. Drawing from that literature, it is possible to build a framework for understanding how the international dimension should be defined, how it influences the domestic actors and how, ultimately, it is a factor that should be accounted for. From that, it follows that it is necessary to examine the research that has been carried out so far and then integrate it with definitions imported from other literatures in political science in order to arrive at a better explanation. In particular, it seems necessary to explore how the literature of international relations theory could be utilised to clarify concepts of international context and to individuate the proper level of analysis and the main actors. Schmitter admits that this is not an easy task, but bridging the two traditions is the way forward if we want to arrive at better-informed explanations.

Finally, it should also be highlighted that the category ‘international factors’ can be further sub-divided. Thus, the factors that can be interpreted as being the cause of transitions are not the same as the ones determining the success or the failure of transitions. The international causes behind the triggering of democratisation and influencing its development are different from the international factors helping to consolidate a new democracy or contributing to a return to authoritarian rule. The point they have in common however is their external nature.

2.4 The Research Question

The attempt to construct an explanation of democratisation for Algeria that structurally includes international variables as essential explanatory variables is the motivation behind this research. Some attempts at constructing a more ‘inclusive’

²² Schmitter, ‘The Influence of the International Context’, p. 27.

²³ Geoffrey Pridham, “The International Dimension of Democratisation: Theory, Practice and Inter-Regional Comparisons”, in Geoffrey Pridham, Eric Herring and George Sanford (eds.) *Building Democracy? The International Dimension of Democratisation in Eastern Europe* (London: Leicester University Press, 1997), pp. 7-29.

explanation, which would take into account the role of international factors, have been made since the early days of 'transitology', but this is still an area in need of further theoretical and experimental research. There are however studies that offer some insights into how to think about the impact of international forces on domestic structures. In this respect, Huntington's analysis of how the third wave of democratisation came about is a useful starting point and tool of analysis.

In his book *The Third Wave Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*, Huntington lists a number of international variables that seem to be the main sources of change in the domestic decision-making environment. The idea is that international trends, and policy shifts of the main international players, are capable of generating 'domestic' outcomes in third countries. One of the claims of the book is that during the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s specific international triggers or forces impinged on the fundamental decisions by both leaders and popular opposition movements, to move away from authoritarian rule. He lists five changes that "seem to have played significant roles in bringing about the third wave transitions in the countries where they occurred and when they occurred."²⁴ They are all related to the international system and they will be analysed in detail in the following chapter. These changes made their influence felt in countries with radically different domestic political arrangements and across three continents. This analysis is quite persuasive, but limited both geographically, as none of the Middle East is taken into account, and analytically, as Huntington does not take its analysis to the logical conclusion and, instead, reverts to explaining transitions according to the traditional domestic-centred approach. After detailing these international forces, he fails to explore the implications of their influence throughout the entire transition process. Huntington chooses instead to focus on internal dynamics and on domestic actors and their bargaining strategies.

One example of this gap is Huntington's use of President Reagan's pro-democracy foreign policy.²⁵ Aside from the problematic definition of Reagan's foreign policy as being pro-democracy, there is a substantial problem in methodological terms. Huntington argues that this change in American foreign policy represented one of the main triggers that convinced leaders around the world to abandon authoritarianism. Huntington argues that the rhetoric of democracy and the attention paid by the Reagan

²⁴ Samuel Huntington, *The Third Wave. Democratization in the late Twentieth Century*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), p. 45.

²⁵ The role of US foreign policy throughout the late 1970s and 1980s is found at pp. 91-98 of Huntington's *The Third Wave*.

administration to the world struggle between democracy and communist authoritarianism both promoted a dynamic of change within the American sphere of influence and attracted support from opposition movements within the Soviet sphere. The pro-democracy policy is held to be extremely important because it showed that the US was indeed committed to democratic change and would reward those willing to choose that path. Ruling elites and opposition movements throughout the world would then perceive the game they were playing very differently since the structure of their incentives had been radically changed by the change of behaviour of an external actor. While this may be true, would it not be just as important to analyse how this pro-democracy policy influenced actors throughout the whole process of transition and over time? If this pro-democratic foreign policy is as important in initiating change as Huntington believes it is, would it not be methodologically more sound to assume that it may have an influence during the entire process of transition given that policies are constantly changing and adapting to different contexts? What would the implications for a transition be if the US suddenly decided that pro-democracy policies should be reversed in the name of a superior national interest or policy objective?

The failure of Huntington's analysis lies in the refusal to systematise how international factors are not simply broad triggers that domestic actors contend with at the beginning of the transition, but powerful forces that may have a decisive impact throughout the process by affecting how the domestic actors constantly calculate the costs and benefits of their actions in light of international pressures and changes. Huntington's work is one of the best examples of how 'the international context' or international variables are usually treated as marginal.

Despite the evident impact that changes at the international level had on Eastern Europe and its democratic transformation, the field of regime change is still reluctant to accept the validity of approaches that question the nativist assumption. In his work on building democracy in Eastern Europe, Pridham affirms that "a final conclusion from this study is that the international dimension has, if anything, been somewhat underrated even in the transitions in Eastern Europe, at least after the key factor in the pre-transition phase, the USSR, withdrew from the forefront of events once these transitions started."²⁶ Some analysts have gone further and argued that even the initial reforms of the Soviet leadership undertaken in 1985 were the result of external constraints.²⁷ If these reforms

²⁶ Huntington, *The Third Wave*, p. 28.

²⁷ Fred Halliday, "The end of the Cold War and international relations: some analytic and theoretical conclusions" in Ken Booth and Steve Smith (eds.) *International Relations*

are seen as the first liberalising step in a process that led to the establishment of democratic rule in Russia, they concluded that the changes could be better explained by looking outside the Soviet Union rather than looking at its domestic problems. However, this analysis tends to stop at explaining Soviet collapse rather than challenging directly and explicitly the main tenets of the traditional literature on transitions to democracy.

Thus, while there are studies examining the impact of international variables on regime change, there is a need to explore further such an under-researched area. The research is therefore driven from the dissatisfaction with the current literature on democratisation, which should include the international context in a structured manner. As mentioned already, the research programme has a simple question: how did the Algerian transition develop and ultimately led to the return of authoritarianism? Much has been written about the failure of Algeria to complete its promising initial liberalisation and the whole process, from its inception to its conclusion, has been analysed thoroughly. The explanations offered vary greatly, but they have one factor in common: they are almost exclusively based on domestic factors, be they social, economic, institutional, cultural or political.

The exclusion of international factors is puzzling given the following: 1) the strategic importance of Algeria in the Mediterranean geo-political context; 2) the oil and gas resources the country possesses; 3) and the international prestige it enjoys in the developing world. Algeria was never a totally isolated country like Albania; it entertained a close relationship with its former colonial power and had important military links with the Soviet Union. Due to the prestige derived from its war of independence, Algeria was also a leading country in the Arab world. Since the early 1980s it had begun to rebuild bridges with the United States and economic and political exchanges increased. Algeria was not only diplomatically connected to the rest of the world, but its economy was also integrated into the wider world market. The production and export of natural resources made Algeria an important player on world markets. Finally, the country was also a player in international organisations (it was behind the launch of the doctrine of the New International Economic Order at the UN) and its economic problems and possible solutions had been informally discussed with the major international financial institutions. Given this, it becomes evident that it is impossible to look at the

Theory Today (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995) and Kees van der Pijl, 'Soviet Socialism and Passive Revolution' in Stephen Gill (ed.) *Gramsci, Historical Materialism and International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

issue of regime change and its ultimate failure without taking into account the external environment and the resulting constraints or incentives.

The research deals with an aspect of regime change (external influences), which needs to take into account how the literature on international relations understands this phenomenon. It is therefore important to state at the outset of this project that in order to understand how the international system works and which actors are important, it necessary to engage with the theories of international relations; explaining a transition that includes external variables needs concepts and definitions from the literature of international relations and the problem is indeed to identify which theory or which aspects of a theory can be useful in this endeavour. The two dominant theories in the field do not seem to be particularly suited, if taken completely and uncritically on board, to deal with issues relating to regime change, although they both have important selective contributions to make. Paying attention to these two dominant theories is essential because they both deal with 'democracy' and democratisation in a rather unsatisfactory manner. They are to large extent foils that can be used to demonstrate that the insertion of the international dimension in processes of democratisation does not have to be couched in the language of the dominant IR theories.

Neo-Realism²⁸ focuses almost exclusively on the state and state actions and this would not be helpful in explaining the role other international actors such as international organisations may have had. Furthermore, Neo-Realism concentrates only on systemic forces, while a more interactive model where domestic actors are at the same time constrained by and capable of influencing the system would seem to be more appropriate. Finally, Neo-Realism may be useful in interpreting the foreign policies of key actors in the region such as the United States and France, but the way Neo-Realists understand the formation of foreign policy (i.e. dictated by systemic pressures and the position of a country in the system) neglects how a multitude of actors and interests go into the formation of a specific foreign policy action. If we stick to the theoretical position of Neo-Realism as conceived by Kenneth Waltz, it transpires quite quickly that all that matters is the structure of the system and the position of a given state within that structure.²⁹ From that, it follows that domestic politics will inevitably adapt to international circumstances and pressures that are not simply the sum of different foreign

²⁸ Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (London: Addison-Wesley, 1979).

²⁹ For a discussion on the relationship between neo-realism and foreign policy, see Gideon Rose, "Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy", *World Politics*, Vol. 51, No. 3, October 1998, pp. 144-172.

policies, but something that is generated independently through the interactions of the different nation-states. Thus, domestic politics is treated somewhat as a black box that has to adapt to the international environment and that has to be constantly on the lookout for changes in the system. The roles of domestic elites, culture or the spread of capitalism do not enter into the equation.

This attempt at separating the two levels of analysis does not seem to be justified when it comes to the case of Algeria and may not be the most appropriate method to investigate transitions as a phenomenon. The role of international variables may indeed be very relevant, but it is only the interaction with domestic politics that can lead to satisfactory explanations. It is the existence of a theoretical link between the two domains that constitutes the core of any explanation. What a neo-realist vision can contribute is simply a matter of contingency (i.e. the geo-political interests of powerful states with respect to Algeria).

One of Neo-Liberalism's main contentions is that the spread of democracy inevitably fosters international peace, which is in the interest of the whole international community.³⁰ There is a substantial body of evidence that links the nature of a regime to its external behaviour and the main finding is that democracies do not go to war with each other precisely because they are democracies, although democracies are often created through war.³¹ In other words, the domestic structure determines foreign policy behaviour and actions and all democratic states refrain from going to war with each other because of their similar political systems based on shared norms or on what Deudney and Ikenberry call "civic identity."³² There is much statistical evidence to support the claim that democracies do not fight each other³³ and Levy goes as far to argue that the claim is "as close as anything we have to an empirical law in international politics."³⁴ An enormous amount of work has gone into attempting to explain why democracies do not go to war each other, ranging from the dispersion of power (typical in democratic

³⁰ For an overview of the liberal approaches to international relations, see Michael Doyle, "Liberalism and World Politics", American Political Science Review, Vol. 80, No. 4, December 1986, pp. 1151-1163.

³¹ Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, "Domestic Politics and International Relations", International Studies Quarterly, Vol. 46, No. 1, 2002, pp. 1-9.

³² Daniel Deudney and John Ikenberry, "The Nature and Sources of the Liberal International Order", Review of International Studies, Vol. 25, no. 2, April 1999.

³³ Bruce Russett, *Grasping the Democratic Peace: Principles for a Cold-War World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).

³⁴ Jack Levy, "Domestic Politics and War", in Robert Rotberg and Theodore Rabb (eds.) *The Origins and Prevention of Major Wars* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 88.

regimes) that institutes multiple veto points to the impossibility of democratically elected leaders leading citizens into a war against another elected and equally legitimate leader. Another explanation relates to the fact that democracies function on the rule of law and the values deriving from it inform the foreign policy of democracies, particularly in dealing with a similar foreign government. While it is difficult to pin down the reasons why democracies tend not to fight other democracies and tend instead towards the construction of security communities with shared values, there is little doubt that the claim can be considered true.³⁵ However, problems begin to arise if the logic of the democratic peace is followed through to its logical conclusion, which in many respects resembles the quest for the Kantian perpetual peace. The implication of democratic peace is that an extension of it depends on the 'conversion' of authoritarian regimes to democracy and that is the reason why many democracies are created through war. This conversion, either imposed through military action or chosen in autonomy, inevitably extends the area of democratic peace to comprise an increasing number of countries, which will be integrated into the existing area of peace with mutual benefits in terms of the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

The first difficulty is that spreading liberal-democracy is in the interest of the dominant actors in the system and not simply in the interest of all countries, particularly if the inequality it generates is widespread in both economic and cultural terms. Scholars such as Wohlforth³⁶ and Sheetz³⁷, who argue rather convincingly that the absence of war in the relationships between democracies is due to American hegemony, have a particularly solid argument. The American dominance of world politics is such that all other democratic actors prefer to have some small influence in the formulation of world policies rather than having to 'fight' their own corner. Moreover the alliance, held together by American power to fend off the Soviet threat, is used to require conformity with American preferences when it really matters to Washington. In such a context the conversion of authoritarian states is simply incidentally useful and does not *per se* lead to more peaceful relations. The democratisation of the world can become an imperial objective that will guarantee long-term stability to the hegemonic actor.

³⁵ Robert Jervis, "Theories of War in an Era of Leading-Power Peace", American Political Science Review, Vol. 96, No. 1, March 2002, p. 4.

³⁶ William Wohlforth, "The Stability of a Unipolar World", International Security, Vol. 24, Summer 1999, pp. 5-41.

³⁷ Mark Sheetz, "Debating the Unipolar Moment", International Security, Vol. 22, Winter 1997/1998, pp. 168-172.

The second problem is that the focus of the Neo-Liberals is on one very specific type of democracy that fits the criteria of the current leading powers. Neo-Liberalism is incapable of dealing with a political system that could be understood as democratic although it would look quite different from a Western liberal-democratic system. The dismissal of democratic experiments that do not conform to the model set by Western conceptions of what democracy looks like implies that a regime considered democratic by its own people nevertheless needs approval from Western democracies to be considered as such. It is admittedly difficult to conceive of democratic institutions that are different from the ones adopted in Western liberal democracy, but the concept of democracy itself may be interpreted differently and therefore the resulting institutions may privilege 'alternative outcomes' to the ones striven for in Western liberal democracies. Neo-Liberalism has become very influential after the end of the Cold War and its emphasis on democracy has led to all Western liberal democracies adopting the promotion of democracy abroad as one of their main policy objectives, but the very contradictory policies in this field lead one to believe that democracy *per se* may not actually be the best stabiliser for the international system. When the result of democratisation is the likelihood that a very radical party will come to power and will challenge Western dominance, the policy of democracy promotion ceases to be consistent. Sorensen, for instance, argues: "if international support (that is, support from the dominant countries in the developed world) is forthcoming only to the elite-dominated democracies, the possibilities for welfare improvement for the poor as a result of the democratic transitions may very well be limited."³⁸ This signifies that any radical government coming to power through what are considered classic democratic means is doomed to fail if it privileges welfare issues over corporate interests. These days, the case of Venezuela is paradigmatic of how the international community politically boycotts President Chavez because of his interpretation of what 'democracy' actually means. In many quarters, democracy is precisely equated with social justice and not simply with institutional procedures, and therefore it is not easy to separate these two issues of democratisation and improvement of living standards.

A third difficulty with the argument of democratic peace is that it seems to imply that one democracy would not attempt to overthrow another or hamper the democratising efforts of another regime because of the net benefit of dealing with a democratic regime

³⁸ Georg Sorensen, *Democracy and Democratization* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1993), p. 105.

once consolidated and integrated in the system. Thus, not only would the system be more stable and more peaceful, but also individual state-to-state relations would improve if democracy were to succeed elsewhere. In fact the theory of democratic peace seems to exclude actions aimed at subverting democracy. However, the historical record points as much in the direction of democracies undermining other democracies as it does in the opposite direction. The established democracy of Chile was for instance undermined thanks to major international pressures coming from the United States.³⁹ The Prime Minister of Iran, Mossadegh, “fell victim to a pro-Shah coup engineered by an alliance of royalist military officers, hired street mobs and the US and British intelligence agencies,”⁴⁰ confirming that established democracies were ready to undermine other democracies that did not toe the line. Iran may have not been a beacon of democracy in 1953, but it was certainly not a fully-fledged authoritarian regime. The recent failed military coup in Venezuela has highlighted the prominent role of the US administration in attempting to rid the country of its regularly and popularly elected president.⁴¹ Thus, far from being an isolated episode, this strategy had been successful in the past and is still popular in today’s New World Order despite the disappearance of the Soviet threat. In particular, a new regime may come to power through democratic means and still be considered non-democratic because it fails to conform to the economic and political order that prevails in the system. Finally, neo-liberalism tends to neglect issues of power differentials and the biased role of international institutions.

The examination of regime changes in the international context can be therefore a useful and productive enterprise in terms of highlighting the problems that dominant theories of international relations have and strengthening alternative approaches. If the more dominant theories of international relations fail to explain one of the most relevant political phenomena of the last thirty years, despite the presence of considerable

³⁹ In a recent work detailing the behind the scenes manoeuvring of the US Administration in Chile in the 1970s, it clearly emerges from unclassified documents that the extent of US involvement in the killing of President Salvador Allende and the installation of a military dictatorship has been considerable. See Christopher Hitchens, *The Trial of Henry Kissinger* (London: Verso Books, 2002). For an earlier account of the active support of the United States to the Chilean plotters, see James Petras and Morris Morley, *How Allende Fell* (Nottingham: Spokesman, 1974).

⁴⁰ John Limbert and Mark Gasiorowski, “Islamic Republic of Iran” in David Long and Bernard Reich (eds.) *The Government and Politics of the Middle East and North Africa* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 2002), p. 53.

⁴¹ A recent TV documentary chronicles in detail the coup against Chavez and the US role in it. The documentary is titled “The Revolution will not be televised”. A shorter version of such documentary titled “Chavez – Inside the Coup” was broadcast by RTE (Irish Public Television) in winter 2003.

evidence pointing to the role of the ‘international context’, their grip on the discipline should be relaxed.

2.5 Methodology

In order to look for confirmation of the working hypotheses and to find elements that will give substance to the theoretical assumptions, the project uses both interviews and documentary analysis. Much of the research project deals with the specifics of the case study, and the nature of the research means dealing with different types of interactions, both through recognised diplomatic channels and through personal and unofficial links.

Interviews are a key component for this research for a number of reasons. First of all, interviews may reveal insights that the official documents and other second-hand material are not suited to give to the general public. The actors involved in the actual policy-making might receive and therefore act according to a different, unpublished set of orders or indications from their respective governments/agencies. Secondly, much of the conduct of foreign policy, be it official state policy or foreign policy of non-state actors, depends on personal relationships that form among the different actors and their personal views might help in confirming or informing the working hypotheses. Joel Aberbach and Bert Rockman convincingly argue: “interviewing is often important if one needs to know what a set of people think, or how they interpret an event or series of events, or what they have done or are planning to do.”⁴² These are precisely the objectives to be achieved in this research project. Elite interviewing raises important questions. According to Jeffrey Berry, “the methodological issues in elite interviewing are serious and involve both issues of validity – how appropriate is the measuring instrument to the task at hand? - and reliability - how consistent are the results of repeated tests with the chosen measuring instrument?”⁴³ These methodological issues are particularly acute for the type of interviewing carried out, which relied exclusively on open-ended questions to a set of players in the transition process. Berry highlights that open-ended questions are subject to a real paradox: “the valuable flexibility of open-ended questioning exacerbates the validity and reliability issues that are part and parcel of this approach.”⁴⁴ The risks associated with open-ended questions are therefore

⁴² Joel Aberbach and Bert Rockman, “Conducting and Coding Elite Interviews”, PS, December 2002, p. 673.

⁴³ Jeffrey Berry, “Validity and Reliability Issues in Elite Interviewing”, PS, December 2002, p. 679.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 679.

potentially very high and Berry selects three, which need to be dealt with in order to minimise problems. The primary potential problem in elite interviewing through open-ended questions is the subject's persuasive power. It is inevitable to find some interviewees more objective than others and more measured than others. In Berry's words again, "there is a very high risk of finding one interviewee more persuasive than others and having that one interview strongly shape our understanding of the issue."⁴⁵ The problem can be solved by resorting to multiple sources and by keeping in mind that subjects are under no obligation to tell the truth and therefore their interviews should be carefully weighted in light of the post they occupy and the agency they represent.

The second major problem has to do with the exaggerated role complex, by which the interviewee emphasises his/her own personal role to the detriment of other subjects and to the detriment of the information left out. The third obstacle to obtaining reliable information is linked to probing issues. Since interviewers have consciously or not a preconceived idea of what they are looking for, probing the subjects to suit these preconceptions could be a problem in terms of reliability. Berry suggests solutions for this problem as well, but they are less convincing than the previous ones and this problem remains a very difficult one to solve. To conclude however, it is worth highlighting that "for projects where depth, context, or the historical record is at the heart of data collection, elite interviewing using broad, open-ended questioning might be the best choice."⁴⁶ This seems to justify the choice of both the method of elite interviewing and the specific use of open-ended questioning for this research project.

In order to offset these two potential difficulties, more neutral data will be looked at. For instance, economic assistance and foreign investments are one of the most important variables in determining the level of political support and influence of donor countries and international financial institutions over the recipient country. Analysing the changes in the economic relationships between Algeria and donor countries and financial institutions might shed some light on how the pattern of co-operation evolved. Economic aid and assistance are used to shore up friendly governments and this instrument was used after the military took over, for instance through the rescheduling of debt loans. The same could be said for political support and military aid. To explore these issues, the project relies on a range of secondary sources.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 680.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 682.

Accompanying this is the extensive use of political memoirs and interviews given by the protagonists to journals, newspapers and magazines at the time. Arranging some interviews has been more difficult than anticipated, as some protagonists have died (as in the case of the former French Ambassador to Algeria during the crisis or the caretaker of FIS in December 1991), some are in jail (as former French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas and the two FIS leaders), and some were not available. Obviously political memoirs in particular suffer from the same type of problems that interviews have. Andrew Gamble stresses that: “memoirs [...] are valuable sources on the inside story but often have less to say to the outside story,”⁴⁷ but they nevertheless provide useful insights. It is for this reason that it is important to look at other data, as mentioned above.

To establish causal mechanisms the project will examine the actions and policies of the leading states in the system, as they represent the best way to explain how the position of different nation-states in the international system forces them to pursue policies that are aimed at maintaining the status quo or improving it. However, it should not be ignored that there are international financial institutions which also play a crucial role in the system when it comes to economic relationships between the developed and the developing worlds. Finally, there are also other entities such as charities, non-governmental organisations and other non-state actors that are often involved in supporting domestic actors and that are autonomous from states in their decision-making processes from states. According to Doh Chull Shin, “the National Endowment for Democracy in the United States, the Westminster Foundation for Democracy in Britain, the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, the Friedrich Erbert Foundation, the Friedrich Neumann Foundation, and the Hans Siedel Foundation in Germany, in addition to non-governmental organisations in other industrialised democracies, have also encouraged democratic reforms with material and moral support for the expansion of autonomous organisations and the news media.”⁴⁸

2.6 Diverging Views On the Use of Case Studies in the Social Sciences

Before outlining the main arguments and justifications for the choice of the case study, it is important to briefly discuss the methodology of research using case studies. In

⁴⁷ Andrew Gamble, “Political Memoirs”, *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, Vol. 4, No. 1, April 2002, p. 150.

⁴⁸ Doh Chull Shin, “On the Third Wave of Democratization. A Synthesis and Evaluation of Recent Theory and Research”, *World Politics*, Vol. 47, No. 1, October 1994, p. 153.

the literature on methodology in the social sciences, it is increasingly argued that dealing with an in depth analysis of a single case does not lead to any discovery that may provide useful information for the same class of phenomena under examination.⁴⁹ This point has been reiterated rather strongly by David Laitin in a recent article.⁵⁰

When it comes to a single case study, according to Daniel Little, “the central problem in this type of problem is that we are dealing with a unique series of events, all of which are antecedent to later events in the historical process.”⁵¹ Summarising the literature contrary to the use of case studies for methodological reasons, Flyvberg argues that there are at least five “misunderstandings or oversimplifications about the nature of the case study as a research method.”⁵² Flyvberg proceeds by listing these five misunderstandings and then sets out to clarify why the use of case study as a research method is very useful and constitutes a valid enterprise in the social sciences.

The first oversimplification about the detailed examination of a single example is that “general, theoretical knowledge is more valuable than concrete, practical knowledge.”⁵³ While there are powerful arguments in favour of theoretical knowledge as the most important type of knowledge in the social sciences, it should be kept in mind that “in human affairs there exists only context-dependent knowledge.”⁵⁴ Flyvberg declares that social scientists should be content with the type of context-dependent knowledge that the case study is able to offer. Flyvberg’s defence of the case-study leads him to make sweeping statements about theorising that are not wholly acceptable and his position on that is not shared in this research, but his point about the usefulness of case-studies remains valid. The acceptance of this last point does not mean that the case study can be a sequence of anecdotes through which we know more. The examination and in depth analysis of a single case should fit into a larger literature that contributes to the attempt at understanding a class of phenomena. Contributing to better explanations and to a deeper understanding of important political phenomena is the real value of a case-study approach. Flyvberg concludes the section on the first misunderstanding arguing

⁴⁹ Gary King, Robert Keohane and Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry. Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), pp. 208-212.

⁵⁰ David Laitin, “The Perestroika Challenge to Social Science”, *Politics & Society*, Vol. 31, No. 1, March 2003, pp. 163-184.

⁵¹ Daniel Little, *Varieties of Social Explanation. An Introduction to the Philosophy of Social Science* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1991), p. 29.

⁵² Bent Flyvberg, *Making Social Science Matter. Why Social Inquiry fails and how it can succeed again* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 66.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 66.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 71.

that: “predictive theories and universals cannot be found in the study of human affairs. Concrete, context-dependent knowledge is therefore more valuable than the vain search for predictive theories and universals.”⁵⁵ As mentioned, Flyvberg’s position seems to be too strong to agree with because it seems to indicate that knowledge serves no purpose other than knowledge itself, while social science should be about applied knowledge, predictions based on general theories included.

A second and more powerful oversimplification about case study is that it is not possible to generalise on the basis of a single case. If this view is accepted, case study as a research method is deeply flawed because it would not fulfil its primary objective: contributing to scientific advancement. The problem is particularly significant because of the strong tendency to equate the social sciences with the natural sciences. Flyvberg does not see this as an insurmountable problem and argues that the validity of the research design depends more substantially on which case is chosen and how it is chosen. The justification for choosing one case study lies in the fact that “the case study is well-suited to identifying black swans because of its in-depth approach.”⁵⁶ Furthermore, the myth about findings in the natural sciences should also be dispelled. At the end of the day, Galileo’s law of gravity proved Aristotle wrong through a single careful experiment and one observation and not through observations across a wide range. Moreover, these observations were not carried out in some numbers. When it comes to the social sciences, Beveridge argued that: “more discoveries have arisen from intense observation of very limited material than from statistics applied to large groups.”⁵⁷ While it should be recognised that Beveridge was writing before quantitative methods could rely on the sophisticated modern computer programs we have at our disposal today, the real scientific value of what is produced in the social sciences is still disputed, particularly in the absence of clear replication procedures and standards.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 73.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 77.

⁵⁷ W.I.B. Beveridge, *The Art of Scientific Investigation*, (London: William Heinemann, 1951), p. 101.

⁵⁸ Michael Laver convincingly argued that political science does not enjoy the two great benefits of normal science: cumulation and collaboration. The issue of cumulation is particularly problematic because its absence does not lead to scientific advancement. The role played by replicability for instance has a very low value in political science. The solution to these problems according to Laver is the creation of a systematic and replicable method to create new knowledge. As a profession, political science is still far from achieving this goal and this calls into question the real scientific value of what is produced. Michael Laver, “Is Political Science Science? And If Not Should It Be?”, Seminar at Trinity College Dublin, Dublin, October 4th, 2002.

The third misunderstanding regarding case studies is strictly linked to the second and deals with the supposed inability of the case study to perform hypothesis testing and theory building. This claim is strongly disputed by Flyvberg, and Eckstein goes as far as to say that case studies are better for testing hypotheses than for producing them.

The fourth misunderstanding is linked to the idea of researcher's bias. Many argue that a research design built around a case study suffers from the problem of bias in so far as the researcher may be involved personally in the case under examination and in so far as the 'evidence' to be gathered is not objective. While there is little doubt that the social sciences in general suffer from the problem of bias (it is difficult to study a social phenomenon objectively, as the researcher cannot step outside his/her own reality to observe a phenomenon of which he/she is part and product), it may not be true that the case study is particularly predisposed towards the verification of the researcher's preconceived notions. Other methods suffer from this problem to the same degree. Flyvberg defends the case study on the basis that "the element of arbitrary subjectivism will be significant in the choice of categories and variables for a quantitative or structural investigation."⁵⁹ Moreover, for the latter types of study the problem of bias is compounded by the fact that it cannot be corrected through the study and it may affect the results because of the lack of proximity to the object of inquiry.

Finally, the narrative of the case study should not be seen as drawback for the method chosen. It is often perceived as the downside of case study that they are unable to be summarised in general theories. This is not so much a misunderstanding as it is the truth. It is indeed difficult to 'skip' the narrative and move to the level of summary, but there are arguments which could be used to defend the narrative. First of all, there may not be an agreement on what the narrative is or on 'how the story is told'. A case study with the insight and the ability to tell a story, albeit a story on which not all agree, can provide useful information in terms of differing interpretations that affect behaviour and outcomes. Secondly, "often it is not desirable to summarise and generalise case studies."⁶⁰ Robert Yin, in a very detailed work defending case study as a method of investigation,⁶¹ argues that despite being "stereotyped as a weak sibling among social science methods"⁶², it is possible to design social research focussing on this method.

⁵⁹ Flyvberg, op. cit., p. 83.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 84.

⁶¹ Robert Yin, *Case Study Research. Design and Methods* (London: Sage, 1994).

⁶² Ibid. p. xiii.

It should be noted however that Flyvberg's approach has come under severe criticism and his work has not been accepted by other social scientists. David Laitin in particular rebuts all the claims made by Flyvberg not only concerning the use of a single case study, but also regarding the usefulness of methodological pluralism. With the view that "the social world is sufficiently different from the natural world that any hopes for a Galilean conquest over the unknown in social science will forever remain unrealised,"⁶³ Laitin emphasises the necessity of scientific aspirations. While Laitin's arguments focus much more on the necessity to meet scientific standards (such as "openness of procedures, internal coherence of argument, good measurement of variables, increasing attempts to unravel context, assiduous concern for valid causal inferences, and rewards for replication")⁶⁴ and on the necessity for all to work within the same scientific frame, he also challenges the use of purely descriptive or narrative-based case-studies. Thus, he states: "comparativists who do qualitative case-studies have no claim to disciplinary recognition by virtue of the fact that examination of a single case study is a time-honoured procedure in their field."⁶⁵ While there is much to agree with Laitin's arguments when it comes to the necessity for improved scientific standards in the discipline, there is also much to disagree with his dismissal of case studies, if the proper research design is put in place.

This type of research remains very relevant not simply because it can be highly informative, but also because there are criteria of scientific rigour that can be applied to ensure that the examination respects the standards the discipline sets itself. In particular, there are two different criteria that are necessary for a narrative based on a single case study, which needs to demonstrate causality: "fairly detailed knowledge about the sequence of events within the large historical process and credible theoretical of inductive hypotheses about various kinds of social causation."⁶⁶ If a research project is able to fulfil these two criteria, the choice of focusing on a single case may be justified. As argued more recently by Nicholson-Crotty and Meier, "despite the bias against such studies in our discipline, [...] research designs focusing on a single state are sometimes preferable to those employing data from all 50 states."⁶⁷

⁶³ Laitin, op. Cit., p. 164

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 181.

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 180.

⁶⁶ Little, op. cit., p. 30.

⁶⁷ Sean Nicholson-Crotty and Kenneth Meier, "Size Doesn't Matter: In Defense of Single-State Studies", *State Politics and Policy Quarterly*, Vol. 2, No. 4, Winter 2002, p. 411.

2.7 The case study: Algeria

All of what has been discussed previously is contingent on making an informed selection about the case study itself and for this project there are a number of valid reasons to choose Algeria. Algeria began its liberalisation process at the same time as many of the countries in Eastern Europe and Latin America, as the necessity and the intention to reform the system had been announced in November 1988. These reforms would deal with specific institutional and political matters and would complement the market-oriented reforms undertaken a few years previously, with the intention of renewing the legitimacy of the regime. The 'democratic' constitution that opened the door to political liberalisation by granting the right to form political associations and by ending one-party rule dates to February 1989. President Chadli was hailed as the Gorbachev of the Desert and his programme of reform was equated to the Soviet perestroika.⁶⁸

However, given the apparently marginal role played by Algeria on the international scene in the struggle between communism and the 'free world', the country did not warrant much attention from students of democratisation. Most of the attention was focused on other areas of the world, which seemed to have much greater strategic importance. The media, diplomatic corps, academics and policy-makers were much more concerned with events in Eastern Europe, Latin America and South Africa. Thus, despite being a process of democratisation that could have fit into the larger story on regime change being written at the time for other parts of the world, the Algerian case was never seriously included in such studies..

It follows that the Algerian transition began and evolved without much scholarly attention devoted to it, particularly in the Anglo-Saxon literature. There are notable exceptions to this trend, namely John Entelis, Philip Naylor, William Quandt, and Hugh Roberts. Algeria did not feature in the vast study on the third wave carried out by Huntington nor the country was taken into consideration in the emerging literature on comparative democratisation. While it is true that Huntington was writing in 1989/1990, it should not be forgotten that the new liberal constitution of Algeria was adopted in February 1989 and deserved at least a citation. The Algerian transition has been covered in greater detail by French academics, but the vast majority of the work done follows the military intervention of 1992 and is largely framed in the context of secularism versus

⁶⁸ Rachid Tlemcani, "Chadli's Perestroika", *Middle East Report*, No. 163, 1990, pp. 14-18.

religious fundamentalism. There are numerous studies, in both English and French, which focus their attention on the causes of the failure of the transition, the ensuing civil war and the consequences of the Algerian tragedy for the international community. In particular, the conflict between the authorities and the Islamic groups has drawn most of the attention for its strategic relevance in the context of the perceived global conflict between the West and Islam.⁶⁹ There is therefore a need to fill a gap in the literature of Algerian politics and, at the same time, there is the need to venture outside the conventional 'case-studies' to add more value to comparative transitology.

It is important to offer an innovative analysis of the process and the failure of the Algerian transition to democracy. The transition was completed, although not in the sense that the democrats hoped for. The old regime collapsed and a new regime was put in place, radically different from the previous one, but non-democratic all the same. There are different types of work regarding Algeria and the international environment, and they include studies of how the international community reacted to the intervention of the military during the 1992 elections, studies on how the international community could help solving the political conflict, examinations of France, US and/or Europe's positions towards the parties involved in the fighting following the cancellation of elections, and works on how domestic actors attempted to influence the perceptions and strategies of external agents.⁷⁰ What is lacking is a careful and systematic analysis that would provide a solid understanding of how domestic forces were influenced by and

⁶⁹ Edward Shirley, "Is Iran's Present Algeria's Future?", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 74, No. 3, May-June 1995; and James Phillips, "The Rising Threat of Revolutionary Islam In Algeria", *Background*, Washington DC, The Heritage Foundation, November 1995.

⁷⁰ For the reactions of the international community to the coup see Yahia Zoubir and Youcef Bouandel, "Islamism and the Algerian Political Crisis: International Responses", *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 11, No. 2, Spring 1998, pp. 117-133 and Claire Spencer, "Algeria: a New European Approach?", article published on the web-site <http://www.waac.org/rep98/aneweuropoanapproach.htm>; for the failure of the international community to help bringing about a solution to the conflict see Paul Rich, "The Algerian Crisis and the Failure of International Mediation", *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 11, No. 2, Spring 1998, pp. 134-151; for France's position towards Algeria during the post-election crisis see Hugh Roberts, "Algeria's ruinous impasse and the honourable way out", *International Affairs*, Vol. 71, No. 2, 1995, pp. 247-267 and for an account of the US position see Robert Mortimer, "Les Etats-Unis face à la situation algérienne", *Monde Arabe. Maghreb-Machrek*, No. 149, Juillet-Septembre 1995, pp. 3-22; for an overview of how the Algerian parties played the international card to further their objectives see Hugh Roberts, "The International Gallery and the Extravasation of Factional Conflict in Algeria", *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 12, No. 1, Summer/Fall 1998, pp. 209-246; and for a general account of the external environment at the time of the 1991 Algerian elections see Nicole Grimaud, "Prolongements externes des élections algériennes", *Les Cahiers de l' 'Orient*, No. 23, Troisième Trimestre 1991, pp. 29-40.

perceived their external environment prior and during the transition. It could be conceived that what are perceived as being influences can also be interpreted as forced choices on domestic actors dictated by external conditions. The focus of this study is precisely on the stages preceding the military coup of 1992, which could be seen as the final stage of the transition: the installation of a new political regime that replaced the regime that initiated the transition. The lack of attention paid to the attempts at political liberalisation in the region is one of the main reasons behind this project. There are descriptive studies of constitutional reforms and of the consequences of partial openings of the political system, but there is little in terms of theorising about democratisation in the region.

The extent to which the external environment is important in determining domestic political and economic structures is generally underestimated, even though poorer countries in the immediate periphery of Europe are very sensitive to external factors. Algeria is indeed such a country, having close economic ties with Southern Europe through the export of oil and gas, and even closer links with its former colonial power. It is worth examining such a transition, as it can offer insights into how countries in a similar position and similar situation may move towards democracy.

A third reason why Algeria is a good case study has to do with the fact that a closer examination of its attempt to change regime could shed some light on the political processes of a country that has been largely misrepresented. From the very beginning of the transition, much has been made of the relationship between Islam and democracy. The simplification of the whole process, understood in terms of Westernised secular elites versus radical Islamic militants, serves a political function rather than providing useful tools of analysis. A better understanding of the Algerian case could provide a different framework through which important issues could be looked at and interpreted. It would be possible for instance to gain useful insights on wider issues such as the relationship between Islam and democracy. Highlighting the complexity of regime change and taking into account the international context would avoid reaching negligent and simplified explanations.

A fourth valid reason for choosing Algeria is that the findings could be of interest for future transitions in the wider Arab world. Providing generalisations from one case study is methodologically difficult, but there could nevertheless be useful lessons learned in comparative perspective. There have been other attempts at democratisation, both before and after the Algerian failed transition, and findings from

this case study may be useful to highlight the importance of the external environment in relation to other Arab countries. This is particularly important at a time when the Arab world is at the heart of radical foreign policy choices made by the United States regarding the export of democracy.

Finally, it is important to try to understand attempts at regime change in the region to highlight that the Arab world should not be associated solely with authoritarianism. Despite the final failure of the Algerian transition to fully consolidate, it is a relevant case study insofar as it can encourage other scholars to look at tendencies in the region that disprove those who argue that authoritarian rule seems to be the only game to play. In the words of Michael Hudson, “given the predominance of authoritarianism, political scientists working on the Middle East understandably have concentrated on explaining the absence of liberalism and democracy, to the neglect of studying less prominent countervailing tendencies.”⁷¹ This was true in 1991 at the time when Hudson was writing and to a large extent it is still true today, as Oliver Schlumberger also underlines.⁷²

Algeria provides a difficult test for the open model of democratisation because it did not seem to constitute a priority at the time for the principal international actors and it could constitute an example of a critical case. Algeria, albeit connected to a certain degree to the Soviet Union, was not formally an ally or a satellite of Moscow, but rather a leader of the non-aligned movement espousing Third-Worldism.⁷³ For this reason, at the time of the collapse of communism in Europe, it was not prioritised in the West. The Middle East and North Africa were not the primary interest of Western countries, which were much more preoccupied with the changes in Eastern Europe and what this meant for the stability of the international system as a whole. This international ‘neglect’ seems to point to the predominance of domestic factors when accounting for the transition. Algeria attracted little attention in terms of press coverage and diplomacy until the transition was fully on its way and the Islamic Salvation Front emerged as the leading party in the country. It seems that the primary objective in this region for the leading actors in the international system was not regime change.

To be sure, Algeria’s proximity to Southern Europe, its special relationship with France and its role as a leading oil and gas exporter meant that a certain degree of

⁷¹ Michael Hudson, “After the Gulf War: Prospects for Democratisation in the Arab World”, *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 45, No. 3, Summer 1991, p. 408.

⁷² Schlumberger, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

⁷³ Robert Malley, *The Call from Algeria: Third Worldism, Revolution, and the Turn of the Century* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996).

attention was paid to its political and economic developments. The international ‘neglect’, to which the country was subjected, has to be compared with the very high degree of attention received by Eastern Europe. On balance, Algeria did not occupy first place in the list of priorities for many international actors nor was at the bottom of the list. Nevertheless, it could be argued that the country constitutes a moderate ‘fringe’ case.⁷⁴ Thus, if the evidence confirms the validity of the decision to look at the external environment in such a case and points to the significant impact of external factors, it may have a considerable influence on the whole understanding of transitions. To conclude, if the role of international variables is considerable in countries that are not at the centre of the attention of the international community, it could be argued that their impact is even stronger in those areas where international attention is focused. This line of thinking follows, in methodological terms, the idea of Harry Eckstein about ‘crucial’ case studies. Eckstein argues that by choosing a ‘least likely’ observation, it is possible to make significant scientific advancement. If the hypothesis that external factors play a significant role in the Algerian transition turns out to be correct in a least likely scenario, this would strengthen the inferences that can be made from it. If instead the hypothesis is not confirmed, it will be possible to criticise it in the light that it is not satisfactorily explaining an important case. It should however be noted that Eckstein has come under severe criticism on the grounds of alternative explanations, measurement error and determinism. These three problems have led King, Keohane and Verba to conclude: “the single observation is not a useful technique for testing hypotheses and theories.”⁷⁵

The incorporation of such criticism in the method chosen to investigate the issue of regime change serves to highlight the contentious nature of such a method. However, it should not detract from the importance of selecting to study a single case in detail, as there are also solid reasons for doing so. It follows that this choice can be defended and there are strong reasons for choosing Algeria as the country to examine.

⁷⁴ Harry Eckstein, “Case Study and Theory in Political Science” in Fred Greenstein and Nelson Polsby (eds.) *Handbook of Political Science, Vol.1, Political Science: Scope and Theory* (Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1975).

⁷⁵ King, Keohane and Verba, op. cit., p. 211.

CHAPTER 3 – Models of Transition and the International Dimension

3.1 Introduction

The focus of the chapter is to outline developments within the literature on transition and, specifically, to look at how it has dealt with the issue of the external variables.

According to some, the most important development in the literature on transitions has been that “conceptually, the establishment of a viable democracy in a nation is no longer seen as the product of higher levels of modernisation, illustrated by its wealth, bourgeois class structure, tolerant cultural values, and economic independence from external actors.”¹ This approach has been superseded by a view that democratisation is brought about through strategic arrangements among political elites and this dynamic model marginalises the search for conditions and prerequisites.² This development however is not entirely accepted and there is still work carried out, whose premises are based on pre-conditions.³ Accordingly, one of the main problems of focusing simply on leadership is for instance that “democratic political outcomes are seen to depend upon the choices of particular political elites and specific historical conjunctures. In short, politics is stripped from its social moorings and explained principally in terms of *virtu* and *fortuna*.”⁴ Thus, we have two broadly different schools of thought. Both schools however share one key deficiency: the lack of an appropriate role for the international dimension.

The focus on political elites and personalities involved in the transition excludes to a large extent involvement from both the masses and from external actors. The path-dependent approach makes the transition a game for the selected few to the exclusion of more complex explanations. There are some exceptions to this trend and there is for instance a strand dealing specifically with the role of ‘popular protest.’ A fine example

¹ Doh Chull Shin, “On the Third Wave of Democratization. A Synthesis of Recent Theory and Research”, World Politics, Vol. 47, No. 1, October 1994, p. 138.

² For the foundational work in the scholarship on the prerequisites for democracy, see Seymour Martin Lipset, “Some Social Requisites of Democracy”, American Political Science Review, Vol. 53, March 1959, pp. 69-105.

³ For an overview see Seymour Martin Lipset, “The Social Requisites of Democracy Revisited”, American Sociological Review, Vol. 59, No. 1, February 1994, pp. 1-22. For a specific work see John Londregan and Keith Poole, “Does High Income Promote Democracy?”, World Politics, Vol. 49, No. 1, October 1996, pp. 1-30.

⁴ Karen Remmer, “New Wine or Old Bottlenecks? The Study of Latin American Democracy”, Comparative Politics, Vol. 23, No. 4, July 1991, p. 483.

of a study focussing on the masses is the 1992 study of popular movements in Africa carried out by Bratton and Van de Walle.⁵ More recently the same level of analysis has been utilised to partially explain the process of political liberalisation in the Middle East and North Africa.⁶ However, while the role of the masses has been explored in some detail, the external level of analysis has been largely neglected.

Focus on pre-requisites for democratisation also excludes the external environment, as the socio-economic factors examined are all internal. Furthermore, since the marginalisation of the pre-requisites approach has not been entirely successful another problem emerges, particularly for transitions in the Muslim world. There is still scholarship that resorts to explaining the absence of democracy in the region in terms of lack of proper cultural pre-conditions, accounting for the failed Algerian transition in cultural terms for instance. The target is specifically Islam, as a set of beliefs that are incompatible with liberal democracy and therefore incompatible with any real shift away from authoritarian rule. This specific aspect will be dealt with in Chapter 4. Thus, in spite of developments in the scholarship, the main problem for both approaches remains: domestic actors or domestic factors occupy a central role that they should instead share with external forces.

This focus on the 'domestic' has been maintained despite intuitive evidence pointing to the increasing relevance of the external environment in all its forms, particularly after the collapse of the Soviet Union. A further obstacle prevents a full understanding of regime change. The literature includes explanations that are either actor-led or structure-led, but at times this differentiation is rather confusing and it touches on the issue of the international dimension. Karl argues that international actors are the protagonists of actor-led transitions.⁷ Hawkins on the other hand includes international factors in the structure-led variables he sets out to marginalise in favour of actor-led variables.⁸ This confusion in the terminology should not obscure the fact that both underestimate the importance of international factors in processes of transition.

⁵ Michael Bratton and Nicolas van de Walle, "Popular Protest and Political Reform in Africa", *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 2, No. 4, July 1992, pp. 419-442.

⁶ In this respect, it is worth noting the work of the prolific author Larbi Sadiki. See for instance the recent "Popular Uprisings and Arab Democratization", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 32, No. 1, pp. 71-95.

⁷ Terry Lynn Karl, "Dilemmas of Democratisation in Latin America", *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 23, No. 1, October 1990. Karl actually disagrees on the central role of external influences in favouring transitions, but the methodological point is a very important one, as external actors are listed as the actor-led variables.

⁸ Darren Hawkins, "Democratisation Theory and Nontransitions: Insights from Cuba", *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 34, No. 4, July 2001.

3.2 International variables: a neglected aspect of regime change

There is one important exception to the trend of marginalizing international variables and it is found in international relations theory: dependency theory. Scholars supporting this theoretical approach developed their understanding of transitions through the study of relations between Latin America and the United States. The emphasis was on economic relations, which in turn affected political relations and thus political dependence of the rest of the continent on the will and the interests of the United States. This dependency was the result of structural factors and not the product of autonomous decision-making. This peculiar relation had tremendous repercussions for the issue of political liberalisation across the continent. Karl summarises this approach: “dependency theorists in Latin America and the United States contended that the continent’s particular insertion into the international market made democratisation especially problematic.”⁹ This theoretical approach has been severely criticised and it has a number of shortcomings, but it is nevertheless an important attempt to look at regime change through an international lens.

Through the analysis of non-transitions, which is methodologically important in order to examine all outcomes on the dependent variable, Hawkins comes to the conclusion that the recent developing scholarship on international factors is going in the wrong direction and argues that the discipline should concentrate on domestic politics and domestic factors. While Hawkins makes a very good methodological point and presents interesting evidence from the Cuban case, his conclusion on the lack of usefulness of the international dimension is premature. Hawkins points to the lack of any type of political liberalisation in Cuba over the course of the 1990s to demonstrate the validity of the domestic factors approach. Hawkins’s study is however reliant on only one case and neglects to mention that many reforms have taken place in Cuba that take into account the new pressures of the international system.

There are both compelling theoretical and practical/methodological reasons for the exclusion of international factors. In theoretical terms, it is difficult to clearly define what the international context actually is. Without a specific definition, it then becomes impossible to use the international context as a variable. If it cannot be defined it remains a soft concept, particularly difficult to pin down and utilise for empirical research. The definitional difficulties derive from the number of interpretations that can be attached to ‘international context’. Even if a definition were agreed upon, it would be

⁹ Karl, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

extremely difficult to establish causal mechanisms between the international context variable and the effects it provokes at domestic level. This is because, formally, only domestic actors are in charge of the transition process. It is domestic actors who have the legitimacy to change domestic rules, to negotiate with each other and, eventually, to establish new political and institutional arrangements. Moreover, the pace of change and the uncertainty surrounding the process are very important factors and if domestic actors can barely keep up with these problems and adjust their strategies consequently, it is believed that distant external actors cannot influence, to any considerable degree, the transition at any stage. If domestic actors operate in an extremely unstable environment where information is far from perfect, how can far away actors be better informed about the transitional game?

Practical difficulties also compound the theoretical problems. Even if it were possible to establish a theoretically valid link between a properly defined international context and the actions domestic actors undertake, gathering the evidence would be a very problematic task. If the international context is defined loosely as the forces acting at the international level and pressurising domestic actors into specific choices or behaviour, the evidence for this might not emerge at all. We would not really know how decisions are made and, even through extensive interviews with domestic actors, they might be reluctant to admit that their choices, actions or strategies were not fully autonomous. We could assume that these choices and actions are partly the product of the international context because the domestic actors take this variable on board without fully being aware of it. While this may be a way out of the problem, it is also an overly deterministic assumption based on lack of evidence. If the international context is more narrowly defined as the actions and policies of specific international actors, the problem of causality is reduced, but the gathering of evidence remains a difficult task. Diplomacy takes place mostly out of the public's eye; it is often secret and undocumented. Furthermore, nation-states and their diplomatic actions may not be the only external influence; international relations are not only about what states do or refrain from doing, but involve a multiplicity of actors and levels of exchange. Given that states are not the only actors in the international system the problems are further compounded. Actors such as international financial institutions and transnational movements also have their channels of influence, which may be very informal. Finally, the movement of ideas or technological improvements may also be relevant, but cannot be easily operationalised as causal variables.

Given these obstacles, it follows that the impact of international factors on liberalisation, democratisation and consolidation is not given a central explanatory role in the literature. Successful processes of democratisation as a direct result of military conquest and imposition of a foreign political model are considered to be exceptional. The assumption is that the political developments in post-World War II Germany, Italy and Japan should not inform the theoretical discourse of transitions due to their status as outliers. In fact, over the years, international variables were being interpreted simply as having a facilitating role in cases of successful transition, as having no impact in cases of failed transition or being simply a catalyst to the initiation of the process. Finally, when the international context was brought in more systematically, it was deemed to have a significant impact only during the consolidation period when acceptance of the new regime would increase its legitimacy. The evidence of the treatment of international variables as playing a secondary facilitating role in countries in transition is to be found in the extensive examinations of the democratisation of Southern Europe and South America.

The numerous examinations of these countries conclude that the European Economic Community (EEC) played a role with respect to the Spanish, Portuguese and Greek transitions to democracy, but that it was indirect, marginal and confined to the final phase of the transition: consolidation. The EEC was the external magnet that drew the domestic elites together, providing a framework of legitimacy within which the transition could take place, but it was neither the principal instigator of the transition nor one of the key actors negotiating the outcome. The prospect of admission, which was conditional on the establishment of democratic institutions, provided the necessary impetus for domestic elites to agree on democratic procedures, but conventional wisdom suggested that domestic actors actually played the transition out themselves. Whitehead argues: “the incentives for consolidation provided by the prospect or reality of EC membership have represented a durable and compelling set of inducements to remould the political regimes of Southern Europe.”¹⁰

In addition to the ‘magnetic’ role of the European Community, there is some evidence suggesting that other external actors influenced the democratic changes in Southern Europe. For instance, in the case of Portugal, the American and West German governments facilitated the successful democratisation of the country.

¹⁰ Laurence Whitehead, “Democracy by Convergence: Southern Europe”, in Laurence Whitehead (ed.) *The International Dimensions of Democratization*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 272.

Thanks to a combination of financial inducements and diplomatic pressure they were able to guide the choices and strategies of the domestic actors and facilitate the consolidation of Portuguese democracy. Portugal constitutes an interesting case, because at least two scholars argue quite convincingly that the international dimension drove the whole transition. The case of the Portuguese transition is therefore a precursor for the type of analysis of international variables that this research attempts to carry out. Building on Szulc's account of the US-Portuguese diplomatic relations in the mid 1970's¹¹, Opello argues that "while there is no doubt that the relationship between the international and domestic environments during any transition to democracy is invariably an interactive one, it can be concluded that the international context was the more important of the two in broadly conditioning a democratic outcome."¹² The relevance of Opello's analysis lies in the fact that he does not confine the influence of international forces to the consolidation period and he does not simply use them as facilitating variables. In Opello's work, all the phases of the transition from the initial coup to the victory of the moderates and the consolidation of democratic institutions and politics are to a large extent externally driven. For instance, he argues that the military coup (held to be the dismissal of the authoritarian regime) was "a response to military grievances and frustrations growing out of [Portugal's] efforts to fight a three-front war against insurgents"¹³ in the African colonies. In Opello's words, "here we have a clear-cut case of an external development impacting on regime change."¹⁴ The development of the transition itself saw all the domestic actors being conditioned by a range of external actors, whether foreign governments, international institutions or West European political parties.

The criticism that can be made about Opello's work is that it is overly descriptive and does not have a theoretical framework within which it would be possible to understand the reasons for external actors' involvement. Furthermore, Opello's study does not have a theoretical understanding of the structural pressures derived from the international political and economic system at work. His analysis is nevertheless a very

¹¹ Tad Szulc, "Lisbon and Washington: behind the Portuguese revolution", *Foreign Policy*, Vol. 21, winter 1975-1976, pp. 3-62.

¹² Walter Opello, Jr. "Portugal: A case study of international determinants of regime transition", Geoffrey Pridham (ed.) *Encouraging Democracy. The International Context of Regime Transition in Southern Europe* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1991), p. 100.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

important starting point for any inquiry into the workings of external factors during regime change, because it demonstrates that it is possible to have a different approach and find the necessary evidence to justify it.

Another interesting study, where the international context is seen as central to regime change, has been conducted by Toviás on the Southern European transitions of the mid-1970s.¹⁵ Toviás is mainly preoccupied with the international economic environment at the time preceding the collapse of authoritarian rule. He puts forth the idea that the timing of the collapse is linked to the first oil shock of 1973. Just as the Portuguese, Spanish and Greek regimes had been able to benefit, to different degrees, from the economic boom of the 1960s in order to secure popular legitimacy and therefore stability, the oil shock undermined considerably their position. The inability to deliver economically, coupled with military adventures abroad in the case of Portugal and Greece, triggered the demise of authoritarianism. Thus, Toviás argues that “the international economic context has certainly not facilitated democratic consolidation”¹⁶ at the time of the second oil shock. By then however, the firm links with the European Community and the alliance with the United States outweighed the problems of the economic recession.

The studies on Portugal and Toviás’s work on Southern Europe should not obscure the fact that the vast majority of the literature on transitions still sees domestic explanations as central to understanding regime change. International variables are still largely relegated to the background. In concluding his analysis on the role of the European Community (EC) in Southern Europe, Whitehead states: “the southern European experiences seem to confirm that the unfolding of what appear to be domestic political processes largely accounts for the establishment of new democratic regimes, and also for their consolidation.”¹⁷

The ‘facilitating’ and secondary role has been used again when democratisation occurred in Latin America, Central America and Eastern Europe. In the case of Latin America, a comprehensive study by Remmer points out that the supposed external political impact of International Monetary Fund (IMF) agreements and the shifts in trade and currency patterns in the international economy in general are not linked with regime

¹⁵ Alfred Toviás, “The International Context of Democratic Transition”, *West European Politics*, Vol. 7, 1984, pp. 158-171.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 169.

¹⁷ Whitehead, ‘Democracy by Convergence’, p. 272.

change.¹⁸ Together with a change in attitude by the Reagan administration towards democracy, these factors are often mentioned but usually discarded as secondary. To conclude, it is worth citing how Lowenthal assessed the international dimension's impact in Latin America and Southern Europe: "although international factors may condition the course of transition, the major participants and the dominant influences in every case have been national."¹⁹

What is true for the literature on Latin America is also true for the wave of democratisations in Eastern Europe. The consequences of Gorbachev's liberalising policies, the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the communist ideology are all mentioned to identify the starting point for the regime changes that took place in the late 1980s across the globe. However, scholars studying these new transitions do not concentrate on these elements to explain the development and outcome of democratic transitions and prefer to focus on domestic political aspects. For instance, it has been accepted quite as a matter of fact that the reforms taking place in the Soviet Union liberated domestic actors in Eastern Europe from powerful constraints, but few scholars actually attempted to dwell on the theoretical implications that such an important event could raise about international-national linkages. One of these few scholars is Richard Sakwa, who argues in his analysis of transitions in Eastern Europe: "democratisation in the region is to a large degree a function of international processes and is far from being solely an endogenous process."²⁰ In addition to the fall of the Soviet Union, it was also again underlined how EC policies (particularly for the countries in Eastern Europe) and the co-operation policies implemented by the US government (specifically in Latin and Central America, but also in Eastern Europe) helped the different countries exit from authoritarian rule through financial aid and political support. This policy of incentives and rewards, and the 'hidden' threat of punishment for going in the opposite direction seemingly only acted as a facilitating variable in a largely domestic process. When it comes to African transitions, Bratton and Van de Walle also argue that in their work they consider "external factors [as] precipitating conditions rather than causal ones"²¹

¹⁸ Karen Remmer, "The Politics of Economic Stabilisation. IMF Standby Programs in Latin America, 1954-1984", *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 19, No. 1, October 1986, pp. 1-44.

¹⁹ Abraham Lowenthal as cited in Bratton and Van de Walle, op. cit., p. 420.

²⁰ Richard Sakwa, "Introduction. The Democratic Experience" in Richard Sakwa (ed.) *The Experience of Democratisation in Eastern Europe*, (London: Macmillan Press, 1999), p. 3.

²¹ Bratton and Van de Walle, op. cit., p. 420.

and that “explanation of reform outcomes requires reference to the resources, skills, and styles of leaders and their oppositions.”²²

There is one specific study that attempted to systematise the theoretical work on transitions and it deserves attention for its impact on how to study this phenomenon. This work is rather paradigmatic of a certain way of understanding transitions and the role of the international environment. Samuel Huntington, in his comparative study of democratisation in the twentieth century, grouped all the transitions that took place since 1974 and identified them as belonging to a third wave of democratisation.²³ The starting point of his analysis focuses on the triggers of this wave of transitions. These triggers are events and/or policies and/or people, whose effects have profound consequences worldwide. Huntington postulates that changes in independent variables in the 1960s and in the 1970s produced the dependent variable, namely democracy-oriented regime changes, in the 1980s and 1990s. The list of changes in the independent variables includes five different elements.

The first one is “the deepening legitimacy problems of authoritarian systems in a world where democratic values were widely accepted.”²⁴ This coincides with the Helsinki Accords, which legitimised democratic rule and human rights on an unprecedented international scale. Larbi Sadiki seems to build on this when arguing that “faced with outside pressures - the global diffusion of democracy and human rights as new standards and legitimators in domestic politics - [...], many Arab ruling elites have embarked on previously unthinkable political reforms.”²⁵ The second element is “the unprecedented global economic growth of the 1960s.”²⁶ The economic boom of the 1960s saw a dramatic surge in industrial production worldwide, the expansion of trade and a widespread betterment of living standards. This is connected to the belief that increasing standards of living in authoritarian regimes leads to demands for political liberalisation. Thirdly, “the striking changes in the doctrine and activities of the Catholic Church manifested in the Second Vatican Council”²⁷ began to shift the focus of a very prominent and influential transnational actor on issues of democracy and popular participation. The fourth element is identified in the “changes in the policies of external

²² Ibid., p. 420

²³ Samuel Huntington, *The Third Wave. Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991).

²⁴ Ibid., p. 45.

²⁵ Sadiki, op. cit., p. 71

²⁶ Huntington, op. cit., p. 45.

²⁷ Huntington, op. cit., p.45.

actors”²⁸, particularly the European Community, the US under Carter and Reagan, and the Soviet Union under Gorbachev. The doctrine of democracy-promotion, the conditionality of aid based on a solid human rights record and the political liberalisation coming from within the Soviet Union generated policy changes aimed at rewarding democrats and punishing authoritarian leaders. The final element is “snowballing or demonstration effects enhanced by new means of international communication.”²⁹ It is quite evident that international variables are the source of domestic regime change in Huntington’s theoretical construction. Shin agrees with this analysis and states that: “in propelling the current wave of democratisation, domestic and international factors have been closely connected with the particular mix of these two factors varying from country to country.”³⁰

These changes therefore have deep roots in the realm of international politics and international economics. However, Huntington fails to take his arguments to the logical conclusion when tackling the issue of regime change head on and abandons the influence these international triggers had on the development and outcome of transitions in favour of an approach that privileges the strategies and bargaining of the domestic actors. While international changes may be triggering domestic changes, their role seems to be exclusive to the initiation phase and this is a problem in so far as international factors may be active throughout the whole transition. It is difficult to conceptualise how they would stop ‘working’ at specific moments in time leaving domestic actors dealing with solely internally generated issues. Despite the attention paid to the role of international factors, Shin also concludes: “strategic elites have been a key factor in bringing about a majority of democratic transitions in the current wave.”³¹ For both Shin and Huntington, the proper *locus* of analysis is therefore the domestic sphere and specifically an actor-led explanation of the transition. Hawkins reinforces this point and adds: “scholars who emphasise structural variables must do more to specify the conditions under which structural pressures produce change.”³² The individuation of the domestic sphere as the proper milieu for explaining regime change can be understood in methodological terms, as the models of explanation derived from it are much simpler.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 45.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 46.

³⁰ Shin, op. cit., p. 153.

³¹ Ibid., p. 153.

³² Hawkins, op. cit., p.

However, the problem of logically insisting on this *a priori* assumption remains intact. If the original assumption is that the triggers are of an international nature, how can their role be suddenly halted when the transition begins? This does not mean that attention should not be paid to the domestic *locus*, quite the contrary, but at the very least it should be acknowledged that the international environment, which was important at the origin of the transition, keeps playing a role. The external environment is always present and if it interacts and has an influence at the beginning, it is quite logical that it keeps having an impact throughout all phases of the transition. This is even more the case if a transitional game lasts for a substantial amount of time. One interesting example may be found in Bratton and Van de Walle's assertion that "the collapse of the Berlin Wall - and along with it Leninist one party rule and the bipolar world order - inspired mass protesters and challenged incumbent leaders as never before."³³ If this is true, as many other scholars contend, how can the international effects then simply disappear from the analysis?

As mentioned earlier, a substantial number of studies are influenced by Huntington's work, in terms of both theoretical assumptions and methodology. It follows that the international context is present in most of the analyses on democratisation, but it has a secondary and marginal role. In general terms, the following problems can be identified.

First of all, it is difficult to justify an understanding of transitions simply based on domestic factors, as political and economic changes within societies are never carried out in total isolation. Not only are these changes part of larger trends that can be observed at the international level (structure-led changes), but there are "neighbouring states with an interest in the outcome [as well as] great powers further afield who tend to become involved"³⁴ (actor-led changes). Furthermore, states are not the only actors that may have an interest and a role to play. Actors include multinational companies, political parties, transnational ideological movements, the international civil society in the form of pressures groups and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and a wide range of international organisations. In outlining the work of German and US political foundations, Pinto-Duschinsky clearly states: "political aid aims to exercise a direct

³³ Bratton and Van de Walle, op. Cit., p. 419.

³⁴ Gerald Segal, "International Relations and Democratic Transition" in Geoffrey Pridham (ed.) *Encouraging Democracy. The International Context of Regime Transition in Southern Europe* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1991), p. 31.

influence on the working of politics within a foreign country.”³⁵ Multinational companies and international financial institutions also have considerable power, as countries in transition often need to undertake radical reforms of their economies and cannot do so without turning to the ‘outside world’.

Secondly, transitions influence each other and there are connections that need to be explored in more detail. The international system as such, rather than specific countries, has considerable influence. The regional clustering of transitions or the almost synchronised timing suggests that patterns exist and they should be explored. Whitehead has carried out some work on the topic, but it needs to be systematised.

Finally, focusing on domestic factors fails to deal with the complexities of the modern world, which touches all aspects of societal life and influences political and economic behaviour. While it is certainly true that the inclusion of day-to-day political struggles among domestic actors is essential to any analysis of regime change, it is also important to recognise that these domestic actors are not completely cut off from the international realm, but are aware of its existence and can be influenced by it to a considerable degree. What has been so far unexplored is the degree to which the international context affects the domestic distribution of power and resources among key local actors. In an increasingly interdependent world, international pressures or the lack thereof can affect the cost and benefit calculations of domestic actors and therefore modify their incentive structures, with consequences on the timing, development and outcome of the transition. Previous work was mostly concerned with the beneficial effects international actors may have had on domestic actors by encouraging them to choose a ‘pro-democracy’ course in exchange for future benefits (i.e. foreign aid or membership to the EU), but failed to take into account the fact that these international pressures may have actually triggered the transition and may have had an impact on its ending. Thus far in the literature, international variables are defined as second-order influences, while this study would see them as central explanatory variables.

International pressures do not have to be conscious and direct political moves, but can also be the result of trends of political and social developments or the outcome of specific events with unintended consequences. When it comes to the domestic actors involved in the transition, their choices and strategies constantly adapt to the changing

³⁵ For an example of how non-state actors (Western political parties in this case) can influence transitions see Michael Pinto-Duschinsky, “Foreign Political Aid: the German Political Foundations and the US counterparts”, *International Affairs*, 67, No. 1, January 1991, p. 34.

international circumstances which they also contribute to the creation of. Not only that, but some of the choices they make may actually be forced on them for lack of alternatives.

3.3 The international dimension

The interaction between the domestic and the international realms of politics has been a constant theme throughout the literature of political science, but since the early 1990s it has gathered new pace after a period of decline, following an early interest generated by Keohane and Nye.³⁶ These studies are largely preoccupied with the construction of bridges between international relations and comparative politics and they form the basis from which this work attempts to answer a question about regime change.

Questions concerning the influence of international factors on the domestic political and economic structure of countries, or the impact of domestic variables on the conduct of international politics, have occupied scholars for quite some time. Andrew Hurrell argues: “this contrast between the overall importance of the international context and the relative absence of specific linkages highlights the general difficulty of conceptualising the relationship between the international system and national political systems.”³⁷ It is also claimed that: “relevant approaches in the international affairs literature have nowhere dwelt as such on the question of regime change or transition.”³⁸ This ongoing debate about international-national interactions has a considerable impact in a number of fields of political science, from international relations to foreign policy studies and from development studies to state formation. A number of studies have been conducted on the ways in which domestic politics and policy are shaped by international constraints, but very few studies have dealt with the ways in which international factors impinge on regime change.

Many authors stress the autonomy of domestic actors when attempting to explain processes of regime change, but this approach might be criticised on the grounds of monocausality and a lack of systematic analysis of the external environment. In fact, Schmitter himself admitted that the earliest findings in the literature about the undisputed prominence of domestic actors should today begin to be questioned. In

³⁶ Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye, *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition* (Boston: Little and Brown, 1977).

³⁷ Andrew Hurrell, “The International Dimensions of Democratization in Latin America: The Case of Brazil”, in Laurence Whitehead (ed.) *The International Dimensions of Democratization*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 146.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 146.

Schmitter's words, "one of the most confident assertions in the O'Donnell-Schmitter concluding volume to the *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule* project was that domestic factors play a predominant role in the transition. Not only does this fly in the face of a substantial literature [...], but it also seems to clash with some obvious facts surrounding the more recent transitions that have occurred in Eastern Europe."³⁹

Other fields of inquiry have undergone recently radical transformations thanks to a renewed interest in the study of international variables and the way they affect domestic decision-making. The entire development literature for instance has been to a certain extent revolutionised by the proponents of dependency theory. While the theory itself may today be somewhat discredited, it has certainly contributed to giving a central role to the international dimension. Development in Third World countries was not and is not simply a function of domestic political culture or interactions among domestic players, but is largely influenced by external economic constraints. Today, it is recognised that any analysis of the economic development of a specific country, with all the political consequences that it entails, cannot be fully understood if the larger international economic environment is ignored. According to Kohli, dependency theorists have had the merit of highlighting "world economic conditions as constraints on contemporary developing countries."⁴⁰ Just like the literature on development, other fields in the discipline have been influenced by the shift in focus from the national/domestic to the international/external. At times, the 'internationalisation' of political phenomena and their explanations becomes the main feature of influential schools of thought. In the literature of international relations, for instance, one of the most important issues scholars debate about is the so-called 'problem of the level of analysis.' The role to be assigned to international variable and domestic factors is hotly disputed and pits structuralists such as Waltz⁴¹ against liberals such as Moravcsik⁴².

The main point is that there is a minority tradition that tends to move away from explanation of political phenomena simply in terms of "structure and culture of the underlying society"⁴³ and attempts to find causal links that stress the "impact of

³⁹ Schmitter, 'The Influence of the International context', p. 27.

⁴⁰ Atul Kohli, 'Introduction' in Atul Kohli (ed.), *The State and Development in the Third World*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), p. 15.

⁴¹ Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, (London: Addison-Wesley, 1979).

⁴² Andrew Moravcsik, "Taking Preferences Seriously: a Liberal Theory of International Politics", *International Organization*, Vol. 51, No. 4, 1997.

⁴³ Gabriel Almond, "Review Article: The International-National Connection", *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 19, No. 2, April 1989, p. 238.

international factors on internal political structure and process.”⁴⁴ Thus, some scholars attempt to analyse the international context of regime transition.

The first scholar to examine how international factors could play a role in regime change was Laurence Whitehead. In his contribution to the 1986 study *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule*, Whitehead examines the question of the importance of international factors in processes of democratisation with a specific focus on democracy promotion policies of Western countries. The results of his study indicate that “there can be no universal, timeless answers to such questions”⁴⁵, meaning to the importance of the statements and policies of democracy promotion. This reflects a rather widespread scepticism about the ability of policies of democracy promotion to be really effective. The task of promoting democracy abroad is very difficult and controversial, thus believed to be quite ineffective in really affecting outcomes. This also implies that there can be no model that takes international variables into account. Another major conclusion is that “in peacetime it is the process internal to each country that is most important in determining the success of democratic transitions; external support is of secondary importance.”⁴⁶ Despite this quite categorical assertion, Whitehead admits: “the geopolitical dimension must rank high in any account of the international aspects of democratisation.”⁴⁷ Continuing his work on the international context, Whitehead refined his early assumptions and introduced the notion of ‘democracy through convergence.’ In his 1991 work on Southern Europe, he argues that “the distinction between national forces and external actors is somewhat artificial and incomplete, and that there are a variety of intermediate possibilities between the two extremes of foreign occupation, on the one hand, and domestically-driven transition on the other.”⁴⁸ Subsequently, building on Stepan’s work, he further refined the concept of democracy-by-convergence and argues: “closer examination of southern European experiences indicates that there is

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 238.

⁴⁵ Laurence Whitehead, “International Aspects of Democratization” in Guillermo O’Donnell, Philippe Schmitter and Laurence Whitehead (eds.) *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule. Comparative Perspectives* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), p.3.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 31.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 39.

⁴⁸ Laurence Whitehead, “Democracy by convergence and Southern Europe: a Comparative Politics Perspective”, in Geoffrey Pridham (ed.) *Encouraging Democracy. The International Context of Regime Transition in Southern Europe* (Leicester, Leicester University Press, 1991), p. 45.

often a significant international input, and that the internal-external boundary can be highly permeable.”⁴⁹

The notion of democracy-by-convergence is used to suggest that the processes of democratisation in Southern Europe, while formally domestic, have an international element. This international element, while still subordinate to domestic factors, is found in the fact that democratisation through convergence is “a forceful international route to democratisation.”⁵⁰ With its emphasis on democratic governance, the European Union acts as a powerful constraining framework on domestic actors who wish to join the Union in order to enjoy economic benefits.

The reiteration that these processes are primarily domestic, however, suggests that the international factors Whitehead refers to are largely contingent on the transitions under scrutiny (i.e. Southern Europe) and that a model incorporating international variables is not analytically correct. Furthermore, his analysis of Latin America seems to indicate that the only role for international variables is confined to democracy-by-imposition. These democratisations refer to processes whereby the leading power in the region, namely the US, imposes democracy on other sovereign states. There are “three variants considered: incorporation, invasion, and intimidation.”⁵¹ Aside from these cases, when there is a direct external intervention, Latin and Central American democratic transitions are explained by domestic factors.

There is also a third development in Whitehead’s work, which sees the author introducing three new concepts to deal with the international aspect of regime change: ‘contagion’, ‘control’ and ‘consent’.⁵² While analytically useful, these notions do not fundamentally change the previous argument for the primacy of domestic factors and the secondary role of international factors. The three categories aim at classifying countries and categorise them according to the pattern of democratisation that more closely matches the concepts introduced.

There are a number of shortcomings with Whitehead’s work. The main problem seems to be the theoretical unwillingness to move forward and attempt to construct a

⁴⁹ Whitehead, “Democracy by Convergence”, p. 273.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 266.

⁵¹ Laurence Whitehead, “The Imposition of Democracy: The Caribbean”, in Laurence Whitehead (ed.) *The International Dimensions of Democratization*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 60.

⁵² Laurence Whitehead, ‘Three International Dimensions of Democratization’ in Laurence Whitehead (ed.) *The International Dimensions of Democratization*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 3-25.

model that would really challenge the conventional wisdom of regime change and insert as central the role of international factors. The analysis takes into account a vast number of factors ranging from the role of NATO to the role of non-governmental actors such as German political foundations and parties' international activities, to the constraining presence of the European Community, but there is a lack of an over-arching systemic framework that would contextualise these factors and explain why they work. If these forces are present and work, we should be able to explain how they work.

The timing of their influence seems to be confined to the final stages of the transition, which is a point that Schmitter also subscribes to.⁵³ It follows that a second point of criticism is the dismissal of the relevance of international factors when it comes to the transition's initial phase and development. It is interesting to note here that Whitehead directly contradicts Huntington's position. While Huntington confined the relevance of international factors to triggering transitions, Whitehead confines them to the final phase of consolidation. It follows that the critique of Huntington's work can be also addressed to Whitehead's approach. Whitehead overlooks the theoretical possibility that, aside from military conquest and imposition of democracy, external actors and/or external structural constraints are able to trigger the collapse of an authoritarian regime. Furthermore, such a limited approach overlooks how the international environment may impinge on the development and playing out of the transitional game itself. Finally, and contrary to Whitehead's preferences for explanations based on the actor-led model, there is scope for combining actor-led policies and structural-led constraints in the explanation of regime changes. After all, actors in the international system all have to deal with structural constraints and their policies reflect this to a certain extent. In a recent article surveying the literature, Oliver Schlumberger stated that "the actor versus structure dichotomy has meanwhile given way to a more moderate debate; structures are recognised as constraints to the options of actors, while at the same time the importance of strategic actors within the limits of a given socio-economic context is accepted."⁵⁴

Geoffrey Pridham is another scholar who attempted to bring the international dimension into the understanding of transition processes. In his overview of how the international context can have some relevance to theories about political change or

⁵³ Philippe Schmitter, "The State of the Literature on Transitions to Democracy", lecture delivered at the International Political Science Association World Congress, Quebec City, Quebec, Canada, August 2000.

⁵⁴ Oliver Schlumberger, "The Arab Middle East and the Question of Democratization: Some Critical Remarks", *Democratization*, Vol. 7, No. 4, Winter 2000, p. 126 (the assertion is made in endnote no. 10).

'governmental change', he argues that "relevant approaches in the international affairs literature have nowhere dwelt as such on the question of regime change or transition used in this study."⁵⁵ In order to deal with this problem, Pridham introduced the notion of penetrated systems or systemic penetration. While recognising that the concept is "too loose as a working definition"⁵⁶, Pridham applies it to specific problems and argues that it may have "some bearing on the question of regime change."⁵⁷ The logic behind the application of this notion is that regimes in transition are facing uncertainty and domestic actors may be tempted to seek either legitimacy or support from outside sources. If the country in transition is therefore important due its geo-strategic or geo-economic position, external penetration becomes a "formative influence on the new system."⁵⁸ This notion of systemic penetration is useful, as it is a stronger concept than the normal permeation that affects every political system, but it still suffers from a number of problems. Not only, as underlined by Pridham himself, is the notion rather vague, but it fails to capture how the international context may be a decisive influence throughout the whole transitional period, from its initiation to its conclusion. Once again, a concept introduced to deal with the issue of external variables seems to be working solely at the time of regime consolidation and is unable to deal with pressures that might take place at a different moment in the transition process. Furthermore, the concept of penetration is difficult to pin down in operational terms and is difficult to use when attempting to establish causal mechanisms. There are other concepts in the wider literature on international relations that could be used to more effect.

In his analysis, Pridham takes his argument a bit further than system penetration and admits: "the international economy may acquire an indirect influence both over the pre-transition phase as well as the transition process itself."⁵⁹ Pridham refers to a specific structure of power, indicating that the structure of the international economic system may have an influence on the pre-transition situation, thereby introducing an important novelty in the literature. The international context could begin to be thought of as being influential at certain stages in the transition (collapse of the authoritarian

⁵⁵ Geoffrey Pridham, "International influences and democratic transition: problems of theory and practice in linkage politics" in Geoffrey Pridham (ed.) *Encouraging Democracy. The International Context of Regime Transition in Southern Europe* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1991), p. 10.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

regime and early democratisation) that had been previously neglected. However, he also points out that this influence is at best indirect and there are other variables that are much more crucial. These variables are the policy choices and strategies of the domestic actors. In a subsequent work, following the fall of the Soviet empire and the wave of transitions in Eastern Europe, Pridham does not really expand on the role of the international dimension, but clearly indicates that further research is crucial to understanding and encourages studies dealing with it.

From this, it follows that Pridham can be subjected to the same criticism as most transition scholars, who make domestic variables the only really decisive factor of explanation. His main shortcoming seems to be his inability to theoretically conceive the existence of a link between domestic actors and the international context, which would see the domestic actors 'reacting' to external constraints. For this reason, explanations should be built around concepts and theoretical tools offered by international relations. Thus, we should examine how different international actors and international structural pressures combine to influence domestic politics.

Another significant contribution to this aspect of transitions to democracy has been made by Douglas Chalmers. In his work on Latin America, Chalmers introduced the concept of 'internationally based domestic actors'. This notion implies that political systems are not closed and exclusively domestic, but "include internationally based actors as normal parts of the system, not actors external to it."⁶⁰ These actors fully participate in the political life of the country and make decisions about local issues. This concept underlines the importance of analysing internationally-based actors, which have multiplied over the years thanks to the expansion of global trade and global politics, when accounting for changes of regime. The usefulness of the concept lies in the fact that it considers as international actors a multitude of entities that display autonomous behaviour, and not only nation-states. These actors enjoy both access and influence in the domestic political system and, in the transitional period, use them to shape the pattern of development and the outcome of it. This point is also present in Schmitter who, in his critique of Realism, suggests: "there is reason to suspect that this world beneath and beyond the nation-state has played an especially significant role in the international promotion of democracy."⁶¹

⁶⁰ Douglas Chalmers, "Internationalised Domestic Politics in Latin America, the Institutional Role of Internationally Based Actors", Unpublished paper, Dept. of Political Science, Columbia University, 1993.

⁶¹ Schmitter, "The Influence of the International Context", p. 29.

This notion of internationally-based domestic actors has an advantage: it tends to marginalize the role of domestic actors in that it presents them with a *fait accompli*. It adds to the domestic scene other actors with their own autonomous strategies, who compete/negotiate with the domestic actors. However, there are also shortcomings. The actors referred to by Chalmers are very specific and seem to be the product of economic globalisation. This suggests that they are simply international financial institutions. While international organisations such as the International Monetary Fund or the World Bank should be analysed very closely, this does not exhaust the field of 'the international environment.' By being too specific, there is the risk of losing other very important actors. Also, it leaves aside important notions such as ideas or beliefs spreading worldwide or, again, pressures deriving from the interactions of nation-states that are neither easily identifiable nor measurable. The 'absolute' choice of the actor-led model is still prevalent, to the detriment of the international structure, as introduced by Pridham.

In his work on the Brazilian transition, Andrew Hurrell seems to have come closer to outlining a comprehensive theoretical explanation of transitions, incorporating different international dimensions. Hurrell imagines the existence of four levels of interaction between domestic and international forces. Of these four levels, two can be further broken down in sub-levels, thereby creating a rather complex model of interaction. The first level is "direct external political involvement where specific external actors form close ties with major domestic political players."⁶² At this level, analysts should look for formal ties between core institutional actors within the democratising country and recognisable external actors with a corresponding institutional role.

The second level of interaction would see the existence of "forms of indirect political involvement whereby external actors seek to influence the character and direction of political activity of groups within civil society."⁶³ This type of interaction would see the participation of largely non-state actors in the formation of the preferences and strategies of domestic groups involved in the transition.

The third level of interaction deals with the influences of the international political system on domestic outcomes and is broken down into four different, yet connected, variants. The first one is a "power political and ideological struggle,"⁶⁴ in

⁶² Hurrell, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 147.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 147.

which leading powers compete for their preferred outcome through the offer of their ideological mode of development. The second one is the reverse picture of the first variant, in that the domestic actors in the country in transition attempt to play the dominant actors off each other to gain benefits and domestic legitimacy. The third is the diffusion of democratic values, which influences the thinking and menus of choices for the domestic actors. Finally, there is the legitimisation of democratic rule itself at international level. In order to be accepted in the community of sovereign states, the adoption of democracy becomes vital.

The last level of interaction “arises from the dynamics and constraints of involvement in an increasingly globalised world economy.”⁶⁵ Once again, this level is divided into four categories: a) diminished autonomy of domestic policy-makers; b) internal repercussions of a global economic recession or adverse economic conditions; c) intervention of international organisations to limit domestic choices; and d) narrowing down of development policies.

The usefulness of Hurrell’s model of interaction is two-fold. First of all, it builds on much of the previous literature to include most of the variables that had been previously studied separately. It is a rather complex custom-built explanation, but at the same time it includes all the most important aspects of the international context without being too descriptive. It retains a certain degree of parsimony. The second merit of the model is that it abandons the division between actor-led and structure-led explanations. The last point is particularly important for a fuller understanding of regime change in its international context. Hurrell’s work is a very useful starting point, but the relationship between the categories employed need to be both strengthened and deepened. The model lacks a systematic and more coherent link with the larger literature of international relations, where there exist concepts and theoretical tools that could be brought in to have a better and deeper understanding of how the different forces actually work. The absence of such a connection can be partly responsible for the ‘poor’ results that Hurrell’s model obtained when applied to the case of Brazil. In fact, while finding that “the broader international context has played a much greater role than is often acknowledged”⁶⁶ in the Brazilian case, Hurrell agrees with Linz⁶⁷ in concluding that

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 147.

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 170.

⁶⁷ Larry Diamond and Juan Linz, “Introduction: Politics, Society and Democracy in Latin America”, in Larry Diamond, Juan Linz, and Seymour Martin Lipset (eds.), *Democracy in Developing Countries: Latin America* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner, 1989).

domestic factors are much more central to explanations of regime change in Latin America. This may be in fact due to regional patterns and specificity, and results may be different in other parts of the world.

Another scholar who contributed to the growing literature on the role of the international context is Hakan Yilmaz, who introduced the international relations literature in his analysis. His work is very relevant for a number of reasons. First of all, the major objective of his study is precisely to “construct an open model of democratic change, which accounts for the roles played by international factors in shaping the strategic calculations and policy preferences of the government and opposition actors in their struggles to prevent or promote democratic reforms.”⁶⁸ This objective touches on the most relevant aspect of transition processes, as it attempts to identify how international variables ‘interfere’ with the strategies and choices of the domestic actors, who remain formally in charge of the transition. The second important contribution of Yilmaz’s work is the attempt to use theories of international relations to have a better grasp on the functioning of international variables in the domestic setting. In order to do this, he uses notions drawn from World Systems Theory and argues that the position of states in the international system, divided into periphery, semi-periphery and core, has a decisive influence on how the transition will be played out.

In order to construct an open model, Yilmaz focuses his attention on the issue of repression versus toleration. This is one of the key problems facing countries in transition. At a given point in time, the authoritarian leadership will be inevitably faced with the dilemma of continuing on the road of opening up the political system or reverting to some form of authoritarian rule. Rational actor theory postulates that to make this decision, the actor involved will have to carefully weigh the costs and the benefits of each choice. To arrive at such a decision, the leadership will obviously try to measure the strength of the opposition and the support for it among the population. It will also consider how threatening the opposition’s arrival in power would be for the privileges and interests of the authoritarian leaders, and generally gather information about the costs of repression versus the costs of toleration. This is particularly true in countries where the army, and therefore the commanding officers, may be prosecuted for previous ‘crimes’ against the people. Yilmaz argues that this decision is not simply domestic, but it is also internationally based. Thus, two variables are introduced: the

⁶⁸ Hakan Yilmaz, “External-Internal Linkages in Democratization: Developing an Open Model of Democratic Change”, *Democratization*, Vol. 9, No. 2, Summer 2002, p. 67.

expected external costs of suppression and toleration. These two more variables are functions of the position of the country in the international system and therefore of the attitude of the greater powers in the system. If the leadership expects to be punished through sanctions, exclusion from international organisations, aid cuts or support for the opposition as a result of reverting to authoritarian rule, the costs of tolerating the democratic changes become much lower. As mentioned above, the attitudes of the international actors depend on the position in the system of the country in transition in terms of what strategic relevance it has, what kind of economic actor it is, and what kind of opposition is likely to emerge as the winner of democratic elections.

The role of external actors is therefore decisive when “the regime expects the internal costs of suppression to be lower than the internal costs of toleration”⁶⁹, as the international context may change this equation in favour of toleration.

The model is applied to Spain, Portugal and Turkey in the aftermath of World War II and it seems to produce convincing results. Thus, Yilmaz’s analysis is a very solid building block and the implications of his work should be given great consideration when dealing with processes of regime change. However, there are problems with Yilmaz’s model as well. First of all, there is what could be defined as the ‘timing problem.’ Yilmaz does not really apply his model throughout the whole transitional process and fails to capture the complexity of it by focusing only on the moment in time when the regime has to decide whether to tolerate or suppress the opposition. The transition game is not determined simply at the time of this choice between repression and continuation of reforms, but it has a number of different stages. It follows that international variables may have an influence on the government not only at such a specific point in time, but throughout the whole game.

A second difficulty, linked to the timing, is the ‘issue problem.’ Yilmaz focuses on an aspect that makes the transition seem like a clear-cut decision in the hands of the government once it has determined the effects of its actions with respect to the opposition and the international actors. While there is some truth in the claim that it is a key decision to make, it is not the only one where international actors have an impact. Equally important is, for instance, the initial decision to open up the system and the role international factors may have in ‘forcing’ the regime to do so.

Finally, there is the ‘theory problem.’ Bringing concepts and theoretical tools from theories of international relations into the study of democratic transitions seems to

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 67.

be an excellent analytical strategy. However, World Systems Theory as used by Yilmaz may not be the best choice. The first reason is that he focuses too strongly on nation-states and their actions, disregarding the existence and the likely impact of other international actors such as multinationals, non-governmental organisations and international institutions. Furthermore, World Systems Theory's distinction between peripheral, semi-peripheral, and core states does not capture the complexity of the international system. There are other theories within the literature of international relations that could prove to be more useful and applicable across the board to countries in transition. World Systems Theory does not necessarily exclude the existence of a multitude of actors on the international scene, but Yilmaz seems to concentrate too strongly on nation-states and their policies.

To conclude, it emerges that a number of scholars have greatly contributed to the development of the study of transitions including international variables. Over the course of the years, theoretical developments have taken place within the discipline, which make the understanding of transitions clearer. This study aims at continuing in this tradition.

The most important theoretical development in this strand of studies on democratisations is the need to 'import' some concepts from the literature of international relations. At first, there seemed to be a certain reluctance to 'contaminate' the field of transitology with theories of international relations. The bridge between comparative politics and international relations was not a very appealing prospect. This partly explains why the study of the external environment has not been systematic but rather *ad hoc*, depending on specific geo-strategic characteristics of the country under scrutiny. Whitehead, Pridham, Hurrell and Chalmers all deal with the international environment, but mostly limit their theoretical analysis to the period of consolidation and conclude that the international context cannot be a central explanatory variable. Furthermore, there is little use of concepts drawn from international relations theories.

Yilmaz's approach is rather different and he fully accepts the necessity of drawing from theories and concepts formulated by IR scholars. For example, one of the points emerging from Yilmaz's analysis is the recognition of the erosion of the concept of state sovereignty. His use of concepts from World Systems Theory underpins his analysis of the external-internal links for the Spanish, Portuguese and Turkish transitions. While World Systems Theory is quite convincing in its description and analysis of a world divided into states performing different tasks and occupying

different positions of power on the global stage, it is not immune from strong criticism. Michael Cox criticises Wallerstein for “his metastructural (and highly abstract) output over many years [which meant that] one had no sense that the Cold War [a key event of the 20th century] ever had much meaning at all.”⁷⁰ Furthermore, Wallerstein should be utilised with care due to its ‘prophetic’ aspect. He does not simply offer an explanation of how the current world is a system constructed to privilege core-states exploiting peripheral states and using semi-peripheral states as a buffer zone, a key part of his analysis rests on the belief that there are signs that this system is bound to collapse. By drawing heavily on Marxism, he pits the exploiters against the exploited and argues that eventually this conflict will be solved in favour of those at the bottom of the system. Aside from general criticism about the highly normative nature of his argument, there is the fact that signs of change, and eventual take-over of the periphery, are simply not there; there is no evidence supporting such a claim. Cox, again scathingly, states that Wallerstein’s world-system “had been in some fairly unspecified crisis since the late 1960s, and would presumably remain in crisis until it came to an equally unspecified end 20 or 30 years down the line.”⁷¹ However, Wallerstein reiterated his position in an article challenging conventional wisdom about the US being the sole superpower left.⁷²

Despite the shortcomings of the theory chosen to underpin the model of transition, Yilmaz provides the way forward. Other IR theories could be suggested, but the combination of their own theoretical shortcomings and the inability to capture the complexities of the issues and actors involved in regime change simply highlight the inadequate contribution they would make. Despite its intuitive usefulness, there is not a strong case for a neo-realist understanding of the role of the international environment. While there are aspects of the analysis that point in that direction, particularly in terms of systemic pressures forcing countries to adapt their domestic institutions to the changing international system, there are other and possibly more important aspects pointing in different directions.

There are a number of different factors that would undermine a neo-realist approach, particularly in its understanding of actors on the international stage and in its marginalisation of economic issues. First of all, relations between countries do not

⁷⁰ Michael Cox, “Rebels Without a Cause? Radical Theorists and the World System After the Cold War”, *New Political Economy*, Vol. 3, No. 3, 1998, p. 449-450.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 450.

⁷² Immanuel Wallerstein, “The Eagle Has Crash Landed”, *Foreign Policy*, July/August 2002, pp. 60-68.

follow the traditional or classic patterns of state-to-state relations. This is particularly the case when it comes to relations between a developing country and the former colonial power. Relations in this case have a lot more to do with informal and personal networks on both sides. There is evidence for instance that ties forged in pre-independence Algeria (many Algerian generals used to serve in the French Army) continued to exist throughout the years of independence in all realms.⁷³ From politics to economics to military affairs to cultural exchanges, networks were in place that cut across borders and did not conform to a strictly diplomacy-based vision of international affairs. Thus, it is very difficult to argue that a state is all the time acting as a single rational entity as realists propose. This shortcoming finds a deeper echo in a more general criticism of neo-realism, which is accused of neglecting all that is not statist and therefore omitting decisive actors from the analysis.

Secondly, the same type of relations and networks can be seen in the analysis of economic reforms where links exist between economists, politicians and key civil servants of any given country with executives and officials of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. The presence of such networks seem to point more in the direction of the existence of 'epistemic communities' than to state control over economic affairs. The role of these institutions, and the individuals within these institutions, does not really fit neo-realist theory. Their existence and their actions could be to a certain extent reconciled with Neo-Realism by arguing that they simply are instruments in the hands of the leading nation-states, but this would fail to capture the autonomy of action and decision-making of these bodies. Once created, they have their own strategies, preferences and objectives. This point can also be made regarding the powerful role of ideologies spreading across the world. It seems quite relevant to note the tremendous expansion of political Islam and, at the same time, the impact of the end of socialism on countries worldwide. Neo-realism however does not have very much to say about ideas and ideologies.

Finally, the role of economic variables seems to be very relevant and again this does not fit with the neo-realist focus on military security. Even the economic-oriented analysis by scholars like Robert Gilpin would not be consistent with the evidence pointing to the inherent necessity of international capitalism to expand as a force on its own. There is a powerful case to be made here for analysing very closely how the

⁷³ Hamou Amirouche, "Algeria's Islamist Revolution: The People Versus Democracy?", *Middle East Policy*, Vol. 5, No. 4, January 1994.

expansion of liberal democracy, and its failure in certain cases, is intimately linked to the latest phase of capitalist expansion.

To conclude, there is little doubt that Western powers undertook foreign policy actions that have a clear neo-realist stance, as they aim at preserving/enhancing interests in Algeria and in the region at large, but these policies can be reconciled also with a different theoretical approach. Neo-Realism is only part of the picture.

3.4 Theoretical framework

The main theoretical point generated by taking into account the previously limited studies of international variables is that there are indirect and direct external pressures influencing the decision to liberalise a political system, to move on to the phase of democratisation and then on to the decision to accept or refuse the outcome of the whole process. Thus, domestic actors suffer the influence of external pressures and these affect their strategies and decisions. While this assumption is shared in the wider literature, there are a number of differences in this study. First of all, the influence of international factors does not happen at any specific stage but it is a constant theme throughout the whole transition. Unlike Huntington and Whitehead's views, it is claimed that international factors are active at all stages and not simply limited to any one of them. A second difference is that, unlike in other studies, it is assumed that the international variables that may have triggered the transition can radically change and therefore 'turn' against a positive outcome. International factors cannot only be conceived as being a facilitator of the consolidation of transitions, but should be assumed as being either facilitators or negators according also to the 'interests' that exist at international level. For instance, it should not be assumed that the EU is by definition a 'positive' influence on countries in transition. The EU could also be conceived as playing a different role. This leads to a third difference from previous work, which is a more extensive use of concepts derived from international relations to make sense of how international variables influence domestic actors. This leads then to the building of bridges between disciplines that have been separated too neatly. Finally, it could also be conceived that external constraints are actually more than that and force choices on domestic actors who are left with a one-option menu in terms of choices.

It is widely recognised that the process of democratisation is like a game where different actors have diverging strategies and interests. In criticising the school of thought that focuses on socio-economic pre-requisites to transition, Karl makes the case

for studying “strategic calculations, unfolding processes, and sequential patterns that are involved in moving from one type of political regime to another.”⁷⁴ The domestic actors all have conflicting views about the outcome and attempt to play the game by maximising their gains. With this in mind, their strategies and the results they can obtain depend on the amount of resources and power they can count on; the actor-led model can only work if mediated through the understanding of constraints derived from the structure. There are therefore two parts to this: on the one hand, the game the domestic actors play takes place in an environment where information is not perfect and where mistakes occur, and on the other hand, the players act under the assumption that they know what they want to achieve and that they can adapt their strategies to changing circumstances, including those of an international nature. Karl states that “the dynamics of the transition revolve around strategic interactions and tentative arrangements between actors with uncertain power resources aimed at defining who will be legitimately entitled to play in the political game.”⁷⁵

According to the theory, external pressures can modify the structure of actors’ incentives and the distribution of power and resources among them. Thus, external pressures affect the timing, the development and the outcome of the transition. As discussed earlier in the Chapter, it should be noted that the international dimension can fall into both the category of actors and that of structure depending on which scholar is using the variable. This problem of categorisation can be solved by arguing that the external environment can fall into two categories because it does have elements of both. On the one hand, the external environment is represented by international actors of different natures who act strategically much like domestic actors. On the other hand, it is also a combination of systemic forces that make it more like a structure that generates pressures that all actors (both domestic and international) have to deal with.

The claim that strategic calculations, policy preferences and choices of the domestic actors are affected by this is quite uncontroversial at this stage, and without taking into account the international environment it would be very problematic to arrive at a convincing explanation of what happens during the transition game. The novel elements are in the timing of these influences from outside, the theoretical possibility that international influences can differ in nature at different stages and that international influences could have a negative impact on the process of democratisation. Thus, the

⁷⁴ Karl, *op. cit.* p. 5.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

international element could be the variable that seals the fate of any transition. If the outcome of democratisation is likely to generate a regime that will conform to international expectations, standards and interests, it will have more chance to survive, as it will enjoy external support. If instead the outcome is likely to generate a non-conformist regime, the external environment will be less welcoming and therefore it will encourage some domestic forces to take a different route that will ensure conformity. It should not be forgotten that the decision by which a country enjoys the attribute 'democratic' is made internationally and not only nationally.

If the theoretical framework is valid, it follows that it is possible to analyse transitions by integrating these external pressures. At this point there are two dimensions one should consider that could determine the influence of international factors. It is hypothesised that a country's role and position in the international system have a bearing on its domestic political system. Following and modifying the analysis by George Segal on the relationship between international relations and democratic transitions⁷⁶, these dimensions could be seen as central to the explanation of the Algerian case and eventually applied to other cases. The first dimension is the extent to which the country is integrated in the international economic system and what position it occupies. The level of economic development of a country has been used to analyse at which point in time a country under an authoritarian regime was ready to break with it and undertake a regime change, but it is equally important to stress that the initiation of liberalisation may be due to external forces that pressure the country to conform to an internationally-validated economic system if it is to extract benefits from it. The level of integration into the economic system makes a country more or less prone to being penetrated by outside forces and renders it more or less susceptible to changes taking place in the external environment as a whole or to policy changes occurring within a specific international actor. It is conceivable to assume that countries which are highly anchored to a single international market will be much more sensitive to changes taking place within that market, as it affects the entire domestic economy and the distributive policies of the government.

⁷⁶ George Segal, "International Relations and Democratic Transition", in Geoffrey Pridham (ed.) *Encouraging Democracy. The International Context of Regime Transition in Southern Europe*, (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1991).

The model of the *rentier state* is particularly useful in this context.⁷⁷ Rentier states are the major petroleum-exporting countries and they have the following features according to Brynen: a) they are extremely dependent on the export of one resource; b) rents are derived from exporting petroleum at a very high costs if compared to the real costs of production; c) only a very small proportion of the population is directly engaged in the production of oil wealth, the vast majority is supported by secondary benefits; and d) domestic taxation is irrelevant, as government revenue is externally generated.⁷⁸ When it comes to the ‘political’ dimension of these features, Henry and Springborg state: “oil revenues thus completed the work of colonialism in discouraging the transparency and accountability of government institutions.”⁷⁹

All this contributes to make such a state very dependent on the external environment. If the resources for the state budget tend to come from a single source of revenue, it follows that petroleum-exporting countries are therefore subject to the fluctuations of the market, over which they have little control. This is even more the case in economies where the state is the primary economic actor. Domestic actors are constrained in terms of gathering resources and are dependent on the changes occurring on the international market. There are studies that do not entirely accept this view of the rentier state, but they do not seem to offer a strong alternative explanation for the coincidence of internationally driven economic crisis and the subsequent efforts by the elites to deal politically with an explosive situation.⁸⁰ This discussion will be explored in more detail in Chapter 5.

The second dimension, along which we should determine the extent of the impact of international variables on domestic actors, is the position of the country in the international system in terms of its geopolitical environment. An analysis of the geopolitical surroundings of the country in transition is one of the keys to understand how external actors may be involved, directly or indirectly, in the calculations and strategies of domestic actors. As argued in the previous paragraph, this is not simply

⁷⁷ Hazem Beblawi and Giacomo Luciani, *The Rentier State* (London: Croom Helm, 1987).

⁷⁸ Rex Brynen, “Economic Crisis and Post-Rentier Democratization in the Arab World: the Case of Jordan”, *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 25, No. 1, March 1992, pp. 70-71.

⁷⁹ Clement Henry and Robert Springborg, *Globalisation and the Politics of Development in the Middle East* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 75.

⁸⁰ For a critique of Brynen’s work, see Lise Garon, “Crise économique et consensus en Etat Rentier: le cas de l’Algérie socialiste”, *Etudes Internationales*, Vol. 25, No.1, Mars 1994.

limited to what Yilmaz describes as “the expected external costs of suppression and toleration in a democracy-promotion environment”⁸¹, but involves many levels, such as ideology, culture and perceived threats/benefits from the transition for a range of actors. Different actors in any given region may be affected by changes taking place in a neighbouring country and this leads to a formulation of policies and actions that aim at impinging on the type of changes taking place in order to shape the most preferred outcome.

There are also issues of direct pressure and structural pressure. Direct external pressure has to do with concrete, specific policies that external actors implement to influence the process and the domestic actors. From this, it follows that the issue of access to domestic actors is relevant and treats the international environment as ‘actors’. Structural external pressures also have considerable impact in that they determine the menu of choices available to those formally in charge of the transition. The international system offers a specific model of democratisation and offers a specific role in the system to the country in question. This affects the development and the outcome of the process, as it limits the choices available to domestic actors. Both types of pressure work at the same time and interact with each other.

Explanations taking into account international variables should also include a ‘feedback flow’. Domestic actors are not simply reactive to international variables, but attempt to influence them in order to extract benefits and improve their position. The external-internal links are therefore not unidirectional. But it should be still kept in mind that there are imbalances in the relationship. The more powerful parties have more means to influence other actors and, in the relationships between developed and developing countries or in the relationships between international financial institutions and local bureaucrats, the balance is heavily tipped in favour of the international actors.

3.5 Definitions/Assumptions

Studies of transitions to democracy can count on a number of definitions and assumptions that are now part of the solid literature in the area. Despite some recent criticism⁸², most of these remain valid and will be used throughout this research.

The key definitions within the literature have been largely agreed upon following the study of O’Donnell, Schmitter and Whitehead. There are some minor

⁸¹ Yilmaz, op. cit., p. 67.

⁸² Thomas Carothers, “The end of the transition paradigm”, *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 13, No. 1, 2002.

disagreements and slightly different interpretations⁸³, but overall the stages of democratisation are well established. Their significance lies in the fact that these shared definitions help structure the stages of regime change in a consequential and logical manner. The first term to grasp is transition. Transition is defined as “the interval between a political regime and another.”⁸⁴ A transition is therefore intended to be a period of political uncertainty when the old system begins to change and is transformed into a different one. The use of the word transition does not necessarily imply that the new regime will be a successful democracy. A transition can also lead to the reassertion of authoritarianism. However, even if authoritarian forces gain the upper hand and derail the construction of a democratic system, the new authoritarian regime emerging from a transition period will be substantially different from the authoritarian regime in place prior to the process of change. A transition period entails a number of institutional, cultural, and political changes that will have an effect on the regime emerging from it. Furthermore, society will have changed during the transition and, if authoritarian leaders are returned to power, they will have learnt lessons from it. O’Donnell and Schmitter argue that a transition “is limited, on the one side, by the dissolution of an authoritarian regime and, on the other, by the installation of some form of democracy, the return to some form of authoritarian rule, or the emergence of a revolutionary alternative.”⁸⁵

A second term of importance is liberalisation. At times, the term is used interchangeably with the term democratisation, but the two differ. As recognised first by O’Donnell and Schmitter and reiterated later by Mainwaring, a distinction between the two is of fundamental importance. In Schmitter and O’Donnell, liberalisation refers to “the process of making effective certain rights that protect both individuals and social groups from arbitrary or illegal acts committed by the state or third parties.”⁸⁶ Mainwaring gives a more concise definition and argues that political liberalisation is simply “an easing of repression and extension of civil liberties within an authoritarian regime.”⁸⁷ Both definitions underline the fact that liberalisation occurs within an authoritarian system. It is usually identified as the first step of the regime in the direction

⁸³ For a slightly different categorisation of the stages of democratisations, see Shin, *op. cit.*, p. 143.

⁸⁴ O’Donnell and Schmitter, *Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies*, p. 6.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁸⁷ Scott Mainwaring, “Transitions to Democracy and Democratic Consolidation: Theoretical and Comparative Issues” in Scott Mainwaring, Guillermo O’Donnell and Samuel Valenzuela (eds.), *Issues in Democratic Consolidation* (Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992), p. 298.

of change and it is understood as the result of splits within the ruling elites on the best course of action to solve a specific crisis. It follows that political liberalisation is a concession by the authoritarian regime and does not coincide with democratisation. In fact, it can easily exist without democratising steps being undertaken, as liberalisation can continue for a very long period of time without being transformed into democratisation proper. One important generalisation that is usually drawn from political liberalisation is that “the intention of liberalising must be sufficiently credible to provoke a change in the strategies of other actors.”⁸⁸ For example, underground opposition groups or human rights movements can emerge as ‘public’ actors without fear of repression.

A third term that the literature has defined with some clarity is consolidation. This obviously applies only to a country managing a successful transition to a pluralist regime that in time becomes consolidated. The concept of consolidation is intimately linked with a minimalist or procedural definition of democracy. According to Valenzuela, a consolidated democracy “would be one that does not have perverse elements undermining its basic characteristics.”⁸⁹

Paradoxically, a number of definitional difficulties arise when the term democratisation is used, but, in principle, a shared definition exists and coincides with the procedural definition of democracy. Hudson refers to democratisation as “a process through which the exercise of political power by regime and state becomes less arbitrary, exclusive, and authoritarian.”⁹⁰ There are six features of this process: 1) bargaining as opposed to command defines political relationships; 2) alternative centres of power appear; 3) expression of criticism and opposing views becomes increasingly evident; 4) policy goals may be better achieved by letting social actors operate with autonomy; 5) increased political participation increases legitimacy; and 6) aspirants to power play by the rules.⁹¹ From this, it follows that if a country is setting up the institutions through which procedural democracy works, it is going through a process of

⁸⁸ O’Donnell and Schmitter, *Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies*, p. 10.

⁸⁹ Samuel Valenzuela, “Democratic Consolidation in Post-Transitional Settings: Notion, Process and Facilitating Conditions”, in Scott Mainwaring, Guillermo O’Donnell and Samuel Valenzuela (eds.), *Issues in Democratic Consolidation* (Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992), p. 62.

⁹⁰ Michael Hudson, “Democratisation and the Problem of Legitimacy in Middle East Politics”, *Middle East Studies Association Bulletin*, Vol. 22, No. 2, December 1988, p. 157.

⁹¹ *Ibid.* pp. 157-158.

democratisation. In their 1986 work, Schmitter and O'Donnell simply stressed the need for institutions and issues to be subjected to citizens' participation.

At this point it is important to note that scholars such as Schlumberger argue that the application of the word 'democratisation' to the Middle East is plainly misplaced, "although it is admittedly quite widespread."⁹² He argues that the name democratisation should be only used for processes that are successful and effectively lead to democracy and that therefore Middle East analysts should instead make sure that they only use the concept of liberalisation. While it is true that "liberalisation does not always lead to transition,"⁹³ it would be extremely difficult to conceptualise the post-liberalisation phase without resorting to the use of the concept of democratisation. The failure to set up democracy should not obscure the 'path' that was chosen to dismantle authoritarian rule and establish a democracy. It is precisely the study of this path that is relevant in order to highlight mistakes and problems that occurred. It is also true that liberalisation may indeed be a measure intended to fend off demands for democracy, but this is a feature of most transitions. Very rarely do authoritarian leaders set out to get rid of their rule and install a truly democratic regime. Examining the whole path is central to understanding and this involves the use of all the analytical concepts the literature has to offer.

After their work at the end of the 1980s, Schmitter and Karl offered a clearer 'rough guide' on what democracy is and is not by highlighting the fundamental procedures underpinning the institutions of Western liberal democracy. Samuel Huntington set out even more clearly a definition of democracy that is widely shared by students of democratisation. Huntington's study "defines a twentieth-century political system as democratic to the extent that its most powerful collective decision-makers are selected through fair, honest and periodic elections in which candidates freely compete for votes and in which virtually all the adult population is eligible to vote."⁹⁴ In addition, this definition of democracy "implies the existence of those civil and political freedoms to speak, publish, assemble, and organise."⁹⁵ This conception of democracy leads Huntington to define the process of democratisation as a movement towards a critical point where the government of a country "is selected in a free, open and fair election."⁹⁶

⁹² Schlumberger, op. cit., p. 109.

⁹³ Ibid., p. 108.

⁹⁴ Huntington, *The Third Wave*, p. 7.

⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 7.

⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 9.

As pointed out in Schlumberger, Diamond, Linz and Lipset also offer a rather minimal definition of democracy with three dimensions: 1) “meaningful and extensive competition among individuals and organised groups”; 2) “a highly inclusive level of political participation” and; 3) “a level of civil and political liberties sufficient to ensure the integrity of political competition and participation.”⁹⁷ This means that agreement within the literature is widespread and this should not be overlooked.

This minimal definition of both democracy and democratisation can be contested on normative and theoretical grounds. One important and widespread criticism of the minimal definition is that democracy and therefore democratisation should include substantive properties. While this may be desirable in absolute terms, “approaches that stipulate socio-economic advances for the majority of the population and active involvement by subordinate classes united in autonomous popular organisations as defining conditions intrinsic to democracy are hard pressed to find ‘actual’ democratic regimes to study.”⁹⁸ Karl then puts forth a similar definition to Huntington’s with one important addition. To the dimensions of contestation, accountability and participation, “civilian control over the military”⁹⁹ is added. In countries with a tradition of military interventions in domestic political matters, it is important to reduce the relevance of the military as a political actor. If this last dimension is attached to the procedural definition, we have a definition worth using, which is superior to the one advocating the inclusion of substantive properties. In fact, there are two reasons for selecting it. The first is that its adoption facilitates analysis insofar as adding substantive properties would mean that “such conceptual breadth [would] render the definition of democracy virtually meaningless for practical application.”¹⁰⁰ The importance of operationalisation should be kept in mind. The second reason for using it is linked to the fact that the definition is consistent with the use of it by the vast majority of political actors, both nationally and internationally. As argued in the previous paragraph, this conception of democracy is widely popular among policy-makers, who, particularly at international level, are the ones legitimising the new political regime in any given country.

When it comes to the main assumptions for this study generated in the wider literature, we can identify at least four of them. The first assumption deals with the

⁹⁷ Schlumberger, *op. cit.*, p. 107.

⁹⁸ Karl, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

acceptance that the transitional game is path-dependent and this tends to exclude explanations derived by the requisites school. Despite its continued existence after the harsh criticism it received in the late 1980s and early 1990s, focussing on domestic conditions does not lead to satisfactory explanations and excludes any form of agency. Furthermore, such an explanation is somewhat discredited when looking at developments in the Muslim world. In many cases, particularly if we look at the rich Gulf States, income and social pre-requisites such as education and levels of urbanisation are better than in other parts of the world where democracy has taken a hold, but these polities in the Arabian Peninsula world are even less open than other much poorer societies across the Arab world. The requisites for transition to democracy have been in place for quite some time, but no substantial political changes have occurred and therefore other explanations should be considered.

The second important point has to do with the claim that when analysing transitions we are dealing with periods of high volatility and uncertainty. This is certainly a point that can be easily accepted and factored into the model. Schmitter and O'Donnell point out that during the transition period “actors are likely to undergo significant changes as they try to respond to the changing contexts presented to them by liberalisation and democratisation.”¹⁰¹ Shin adds: “the transition is regarded as a period of great political uncertainty.”¹⁰² If this is correct, it can be argued that actors react not only to changes in their surrounding environment, but to the perceptions of changes as well; strategies are constantly modified to maximise benefits and great unpredictability surrounds the whole process. This point is largely consistent with the contention that these reactions are not limited to perceived or real domestic-level changes, but also to external events, shocks or policy changes by international actors.

A third point that emerges from the literature, that can be accepted, is the assertion that only domestic actors are the ones formally in charge of the process from its initiation to its conclusion, be it a successful transition or a return to some sort of authoritarianism or the establishment of a semi-democracy. The opening up of the system is indeed usually decided and executed following divisions and negotiations within the ruling elite over which course of action should be followed to fend off a crisis. The ruling elites are also formally in charge of negotiating, secretly or openly, with the opposition. The whole game is indeed played at domestic level, but this does

¹⁰¹ O'Donnell and Schmitter, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule. Southern Europe*, p. 4.

¹⁰² Shin, *op. cit.* p. 143.

not exclude the possibility that decisions are made, strategies drawn up and actions taken under the influence and the constraints from an international level. There are scholars such as Pollack who disagree with the insistence on elites and make the case for including mass pressure as the initiating moment of transitions.¹⁰³ As mentioned earlier, some scholars have used the masses as the level of analysis to explain political liberalisation both in the Middle East and in Africa as well. In particular, Pollack argues that in certain cases, the transition does not begin with a split within the ruling elites, but the split is a response to mass pressures. While this may have been the case in East Germany in 1989, it is still the case that moves towards liberalisation are formally dependent on the ruling elites. Moreover, it is quite difficult to know how divided the elites really are before a certain crisis.

A fourth assumption that is not disputed, is that domestic actors do have different levels of power (military, economic, social), preferred outcomes and strategies on how to achieve their goals. However, these do not remain fixed throughout the process and international factors can profoundly affect the distribution of such power, change the preferred outcome and modify the strategies to get there.

The model of the rational actor underpins all of these assumptions and it is widely used in the literature to explain how transition processes work. Given its 'success' in a number of fields in political science, the model of the rational actor will be utilised to analyse the strategies and policies of the international actors under scrutiny.

¹⁰³ Detlef Pollack, "Mass pressures, elite responses - roots of democratization: the case of the GDR", *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, Vol. 35, 2002, pp. 305-324.

CHAPTER 4 – Algeria’s Transition: Alternative Explanations of a Transition to Democracy

4.1 Introduction

Before attempting to construct a theoretical explanation taking into account external factors, it is necessary to outline alternative explanations and then highlight how they have been employed to account for the Algerian transition. By doing so, it is important to point out the shortcomings of such explanations and therefore justify the validity of a new approach.

Geoffrey Pridham argued that there are two main approaches to the study of transition. These two approaches are the functionalist school (structure-led transitions) and the genetic school (actor-led transitions). According to the functionalist analysis, we should look at the state of socio-economic development within the democratising country to understand the transitional process. This entails an in-depth analysis of socio-economic factors that ‘produce’ actions and strategies resulting in a change of the political structure of the country. The genetic school focuses its attention instead on how authoritarian domestic political actors respond to a crisis and then interact with the opposition to change the system. These interactions then produce outcomes that affect the transition process.¹

The first school produces a model of transition that relies heavily on socio-economic indicators that supposedly give some idea of when a country is ready to undergo a regime change. This entails a number of prerequisites or conditions that allow or facilitate the transition and its successful outcome. Conversely, countries fail to democratise successfully when the ‘right’ conditions are absent. The first scholar to put forth this approach is Seymour Martin² who influenced much of the thinking about democratisation until the surprising transitions of Latin America, which seemed to contradict much of the scholarship on conditions for democracy.³ Criticism of the functionalist school relied on the following: a) the failure of the connection between wealth and democracy to account for many cases of democratisation in Latin America;

¹ Geoffrey Pridham, “Democratic Transition and the International Environment” in Geoffrey Pridham (ed.) *Transitions to Democracy* (Aldershot, Dartmouth, 1995).

² Seymour Martin Lipset, “Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy”, *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 53, March 1959, pp. 69-105.

³ For an overview of the criticism laid at the functionalist school, see Terry Lynn Karl, “Dilemmas of Democratisation in Latin America”, *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 23, No. 1, October 1990, pp. 1-21.

b) a political culture often associated with authoritarian rule (Catholicism with its hierarchical and authoritarian tradition) demonstrating its ability to sustain democratisation; and c) no direct or inevitable correlation between the expansion of 'Capital' and authoritarianism as predicted by Cardoso.⁴ Despite the intense criticism it suffered in the early 1980s, the functionalist school did not disappear.⁵ Ian McLean argues for instance that "multiple regression has provided broad support for Lipset's original generalisations"⁶ and that "democracy is [thus] associated with economic liberalisation, high income average, relatively high equality and relatively high levels of education."⁷ In the conclusion of his study he contends: "the important statistical truth is that there is a strong tendency for democracy to be associated with national wealth, and for democratisation to be associated with economic liberalisation."⁸ However, he also recognises that "this [association] has two limitations: it says nothing about causation, and it says nothing about the interesting exceptions."⁹

Another problem compounding the difficulties of the functionalist school is that there are not only cases of 'poor' democracies such as India, but also of rich autocracies, such as the Arab Gulf States and other rentier economies. In fact, Sadiki contradicts many of Lipset's original assumptions by demonstrating rather convincingly that in the Arab world, it is 'poverty' that triggers demands for political change and not an improvement in socio-economic conditions. The former tend in fact to be associated with continued authoritarianism. Sadiki states: "evidence from the Arab world supports the idea that democratic transition can be the result of social disorder triggered by bread riots,"¹⁰ which, in turn, are the result of poor economic performances. In a study dealing with political liberalisation in the Middle East, focusing in particular on reliance by states in the area on external capital, Glasser comes to the interesting conclusion that very rich economies with substantial access to external capital were able to stave off

⁴ Ibid., pp. 3-4.

⁵ Seymour Martin Lipset, "The Social Requisites of Democracy Revisited", American Sociological Review, Vol. 59, No. 1, February 1994, pp. 1-22.

⁶ Ian McLean, "Democratisation and Economic Liberalisation: Which is the Chicken and Which is the Egg?", Democratization, Vol. 1, No. 1, Spring 1994, p. 29.

⁷ Ibid., p. 29.

⁸ Ibid., p. 38.

⁹ Ibid., p. 38.

¹⁰ Larbi Sadiki, "Popular Uprisings and Arab Democratisation", International Journal of Middle East Studies, Vol. 32, No. 1, 2000, p. 84.

reforms while poorer states with less access were forced to reform.¹¹ Despite the existence of such studies, the comeback of the functionalist school influenced some of the work conducted on Algeria.

The second school looks at transitions using the model of the rational actor and analyses the different stages of the transition through the interplay of the domestic actors. This approach marginalizes the socio-economic variables, concentrating instead on the preferences, objectives and strategies of the domestic actors. This school argues that “there may be no single precondition that is sufficient to produce [democratisation]”¹² and that “the preconditions of democracy may be better conceived in the future as the outcome of democracy.”¹³ Attention is placed on actors and their strategic calculations. In the words of Huntington, “transitions were complex political processes involving a variety of groups struggling for power and for and against democracy and for other goals.”¹⁴ The transition is then made ‘path-dependent’, meaning that by examining what different actors did and what kind of power and resources they could mobilise, it was possible to understand how the transition developed and where it would lead. A number of studies based on this approach also deal with the Algerian transition and explain its initiation and its failure.

Both schools of thought, and the works on Algeria deriving from them, contribute to the understanding of transition in a substantial manner. The two approaches have also been combined to offer a more reliable and effective explanation. Thus, we find a number of different accounts for the initiation, development and failure of the transition. At times, these accounts share the same points in terms of key events, interests of actors, strategies and outcomes, but they vary considerably in terms of the emphasis on the key explanatory factors that lead to specific events. Different theoretical frameworks are utilised for the understanding of Algeria and there are numerous studies to account for the Algerian events, but there are also common elements that can be traced to all of these studies.

When it comes to the cause of the initial push for liberalisation in Algeria, there seems to be a consensus that the poor state of the economy and social hardships were at

¹¹ Bradley Glasser, “External Capital and Political Liberalisations: A Typology of Middle Eastern Development in the 1980s and 1990s”, *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 49, No. 1, Summer 1995, pp. 45-73.

¹² Karl, op. cit., p. 5.

¹³ Ibid., p. 5.

¹⁴ Samuel Huntington, “How Countries Democratise”, *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 106, No. 4, 1991-1992, pp. 579-615.

the core of the regime's decision to liberalise. This fits with the liberalising moves made by most Arab regimes at this time. Again Sadiki seems to put it best when arguing: "economic malaise is at the root of both societal pressure and political changes. Nowhere has that societal pressure been more evident than in the phenomenon of *inifādāt al-khbuz* (bread uprisings)."¹⁵ Defusing the tensions was the primary objective of the constitutional changes that allowed for the creation of political parties and the safeguarding of individual liberties. Scholars differ however in the identification of the origin of the economic and social crisis. Some stress the demographic explosion, some point to the shortcomings of the socialist economic system, others point to the inability and the corruption of the leadership to manage the market-oriented reforms and others again point to a combination of all of those factors.¹⁶

When it comes to the actual development of the transition or the so-called transitional game, there is also a consensus on the principal actors playing the game: the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) as the principal opposition movement, the upper-echelons of the military, the government headed by Chadli and the factions within the government, and the other political forces labelled rather incorrectly the 'democratic parties.' The main justification for using this classification of domestic actors is that only "by studying their interests, political resources and strategies"¹⁷ is it possible to explain the Algerian events. This classification does not pose any particular problem *per se* and what is controversial is the interpretation of their actions, strategies, and goals. A number of factors and events are identified that characterise how the game was played, but radical differences emerge when weighting their relevance with respect to the overall explanation. A number of studies exist that support very diverse interpretations:

- There are personal accounts of generals, high-ranking politicians and opposition figures who were personally involved in the events taking place and they focus almost exclusively on the rights of their side and the wrongs of the other actors.
- There are scholars who point to the failure of the institutions set up to force democratic compliance. In particular the electoral system is accused of biasing the results of the 1991 elections and therefore precipitating the conflict.

¹⁵ Sadiki, 'Popular Uprisings', p. 80.

¹⁶ An excellent overview is in Lise Garon, "Crise Economique et Consensus en Etat Rentier: le Cas de l'Algérie Socialiste", *Revue Etudes Internationales*, Vol. 25, No. 1, Mars 1994, pp. 25-45.

¹⁷ Robert Mortimer, "Islamists, Soldiers, and Democrats: the Second Algerian War", *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 50, No. 1, Winter 1996, p. 19.

- There are also those who underline the lack of a pact among all actors as the fundamental mistake in the game. ‘Pacting’ was seen as a necessary instrument in transitions in order to reduce the risk of rules being interpreted in a radically different manner by all actors, as well as to foster closer confidence and build trust.¹⁸
- There are those who see the game of the transition as a plot devised by the military to justify the coup in order not to relinquish power and privileges and those who argue that the FIS would have not respected ‘democracy’ and therefore the whole transition was bound to collapse either way.
- There are those who consider all of the above as relevant factors in almost equal measure.
- Finally, one of the most important elements that need to be dealt with is the connection between Islam and democracy, as this issue is of substantial importance when analysing the Muslim world. In this respect, the strand within the functionalist school that stresses the relevance of political culture enjoys considerable prestige when it comes to explaining failures of democracy in the Muslim world in general and in the Arab world in particular. It is often believed that democracy, individual liberties and Islam are incompatible because Islam cannot be confined to the private sphere and as a system of beliefs it cannot be reconciled with the democratic principle that the people are sovereign.¹⁹ When analysing a transition in a country where the majority of the population is Muslim it becomes inevitable that ‘cultural aspects’ come to forefront. There is a substantial body of literature postulating that liberal democratic reforms are inevitably doomed to fail due to the incompatibility of Islam and democracy unless Islam is pushed into the background in favour of secular beliefs.²⁰ It follows that this line of thought would justify Algeria’s failure in terms of the conflict between the religion of the vast majority of the population and the requirements of democracy. It should also be emphasised that those who see an inherent incompatibility between Islam and democracy are not only found in the

¹⁸ For an analysis on the usefulness of pacts see Giuseppe Di Palma, *To Craft Democracies*, (Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1990).

¹⁹ On this point see a recent article by Bruce Maddy-Weitzman, “Islamism, Moroccan Style: the Ideas of Sheikh Yassine”, *Middle East Quarterly*, Vol. 10, No. 1, Winter 2003. Available on line at <http://www.meforum.org/article/519>.

²⁰ Adam Garfinkle, “The Impossible Imperative? Conjuring Arab Democracy”, *The National Interest*, Fall 2002.

West, but are also numerous among Muslim scholars and politicians. This particular relationship deserves closer attention, particularly after the events of September 11, 2001 when the question of the role of Islam in politics (both international and domestic) has come so dramatically to the fore. This chapter will deal in some detail with this issue.

Thus, there is a substantial amount of work that needs to be explored. The aim of this chapter is to give an overview of the different accounts given about the Algerian transition and select those aspects that should be retained and eliminate the issues that are not entirely convincing. The functionalist school is the one that offers the least help in terms of understanding and the criticism of it in the 1980s, for its inability to explain Latin American democratisations, is still valid today. The genetic school has a number of strengths that should be expanded further such as the path-dependent framework and the focus on strategies and rational calculations of the actors involved in the process. For this reason, there is very little need to create a third school. The point of departure should be the acceptance of the genetic school as the more valid approach to studying transitions, but it should incorporate the international elements that are generally missing from path-dependent explanations.

4.2 The Conditions for Democracy

The idea that countries attempting to transform their political system from authoritarianism to democracy have to rely on a number of pre-existing conditions in order to start their transition and be successful is still quite widespread within the literature. These prerequisites include a vibrant civil society, a certain level of economic development, a democratic political and civic culture, uncontested national unity, and a range of 'proper' social indicators.

The first condition for a successful transition is held to be 'national unity'. In fact, Larbi Sadiki argues that "the conventional wisdom within development and democratisation theory has traditionally insisted on social and political, cultural, ethnic cohesiveness and unity as prerequisites for reproducible stability and democracy."²¹ One of the proponents of the necessity for national cohesion before transitions is Rustow, who claimed that his dynamic model "starts with a single background condition –

²¹ Larbi Sadiki, "The Search for Citizenship in Bin Ali's Tunisia: Democracy versus Unity", *Political Studies*, Vol. 50, No. 2, 2002, pp. 497-498.

national unity.”²² By national unity, Rustow meant: “the vast majority of the citizens in a democracy-to-be must have no doubt or mental reservations as to which political community they belong to.”²³ Others²⁴ have later subscribed to this pre-condition and today “there is broad consensus within democratic theory that homogeneity is far more conducive to democracy than heterogeneity.”²⁵

Algeria, to a large extent, enjoyed this condition of national unity despite the presence of a sizeable and rather vocal Kabyle ethnic and linguistic minority. Modern Algeria was after all forged through a harsh war of liberation against the French with the contribution of the Kabyles as much as the Arab population. The rift between the two communities and, in particular, between the central government and the Kabylie region never escalated to the point of threatening national unity. The Kabyles are Algerian and their difficulties with the central government have to do with language recognition and cultural demands rather than formal political independence. A degree of autonomy for their region was their central political demand in 1980 and again during the 1990s. Islam, moreover, binds the country together. There are of course different interpretations of Islam and how it should be practised within Algeria. While the Kabyles do not subscribe to a very strict interpretation of it, the Faith community remains united.

Sadiki, although using Tunisia as his case study, sets out to explain that in fact, the vital pre-condition of national unity may hamper the possibility of democracy taking root, because national unity is interpreted very strictly in the Arab world. The various authoritarian regimes have used national unity to “engender hegemony and singularity.”²⁶ Thus, far from guaranteeing that democracy would benefit from this pre-condition, the imperative of maintaining national unity makes it possible for the liberalising regimes to see an emerging civil society split across different divides as a threat that needs to be countered rather than an opportunity to build alternative identities. Given the contested notion of nationhood in the Arab world,²⁷ national unity represented

²² Dankwart Rustow, “Transitions to Democracy. Towards a Dynamic Model”, *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 2, No. 3, April 1970, p. 350.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 350.

²⁴ Robert Dahl, *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1971).

²⁵ Sadiki, ‘The Search for Citizenship’, p. 498.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 504.

²⁷ The notion of nation-state is for instance challenged by many Islamic movements, as it seems to oppose the much more important unity of the *umma*, the universal community of believers. For a discussion of this point regarding Algeria, see Hugh Roberts, “Radical Islamism and the Dilemma of Algerian nationalism: The embattled Arians of Algiers”, *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 10, No. 2, April 1988, pp. 556-589. In this article, Roberts

the legitimising 'force' for the post-colonial ruling elites and any challenge to it fundamentally undermines them. Thus, democratic reforms are resisted precisely because of the perceived threat they pose to national unity, which then becomes a pre-condition for the absence of movement away from authoritarianism. The same pattern and the same logic, albeit in a different and even more polarised context, can be seen precisely in Algeria. The requisite of national unity may have been useful and may still be useful, in other geo-graphical and cultural contexts, but it is not so useful in the Arab world. This condition, rather than favouring the setting off of a democratising dynamic, undermines it, as it does not permit the creation of alternative centres of allegiance. This is also because strictly conceived national unity carries international benefits and allows regimes to justify repression in order to maintain international stability, which would be endangered if they were to allow the emergence and expression of different identities.

The absence of national unity in the Algerian context should not be used as the determining factor underlying the failure of democratisation. Quite the opposite, as national unity is determined subjectively and is more of a political instrument than an effective category given that the concept is used politically to defend privileges, foster power and distribute resources. For Benedict Anderson among others²⁸ "nationalist identity is an artifice"²⁹ and, in the Algerian context at least, so is the concept of national unity.

Accepting Rustow's pre-condition of national unity means "that no minimal level of economic development or social differentiation is necessary as a prerequisite to democracy."³⁰ However, precisely these factors have often been associated with the collapse of authoritarian regimes, the timing of the transition, and its chances of success. Seymour Martin Lipset was the first to systematise the relationship between democracy and economic development and used different indicators of economic development to test it. From his work, it emerged that wealth, industrialisation, urbanisation and education were all positively linked to democracy.³¹ The notion that "democracy is

emphasises how radical Islam in Algeria represents a challenge to the nation-state, but he fails to recognise that at the end of the day Islamists in the country still vie for control of power and therefore for the state in the one country.

²⁸ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London, Verso, 1991).

²⁹ Sadiki, 'The Search for Citizenship', p. 500.

³⁰ Rustow, op. cit. 352.

³¹ Seymour Martin Lipset, *Political Man. The Social Bases of Politics* (London: Heinemann 1983).

related to the state of economic development”³² has therefore been used to explore democratising trends in the developing world. It was postulated, for instance, that authoritarian regimes would democratise once the domestic socio-economic indicators reached a specific point in terms of increased wealth, education, urbanisation and industrial development. In a recent study attempting to determine how strong the regularity between democracy and wealth, Londregan and Poole claim: “income has a small but statistically significant democratising effect.”³³ However, such are the limitations of their study in terms of control variables and sampling that the results may not be clear-cut.

This type of analysis applied to Algeria produces considerable insights into how economic and social changes may have affected the timing and pattern of the transition, but carries little explanatory power, as political actions are dependent on actors and are not wholly pre-determined by structural constraints. In fact, Abdelaziz Testas comes to the opposite conclusion from the one drawn by Londregan and Poole when it comes to income and democracy in Algeria. In his study, Testas argues that it is precisely the fall in income that permitted the opening up of the political space³⁴ and Martinez adds that the rising income permitted the ruling elites to strengthen their authoritarian rule over the country.³⁵ In his study of the civil war following the cancellation of elections in 1992, Martinez analyses how improvements in economic and financial conditions permitted the regime not only to fight the war against the insurgents, but also to use some of the redistributive policies that had characterised Algeria prior to the 1988 crisis, thereby gathering political support for its actions.

After independence, all the indicators used by Lipset dramatically increased in Algeria and should have brought about an embryonic move towards democratic politics if this theory is correct. The revenues from the hydrocarbon sector allowed the regime to finance its ambitious social and industrial programmes. At the same time, a drive to literacy increased many-fold the numbers of students in higher education, while new industries were opened giving work to a mass of young men coming from the countryside. Accompanying this industrialisation strategy, there was also a parallel

³² Ibid., p. 31.

³³ John Londregan and Keith Poole, “Does High Income Promote Democracy?” *World Politics*, Vol. 49, No. 1 October 1996, p. 3.

³⁴ Abdelaziz Testas, “Political Repression, Democratization and Civil Conflict in Post-Independence Algeria”, *Democratization*, Vol. 9, No. 4, Winter 2002, pp. 106-121.

³⁵ Luis Martinez, *La Guerre Civile en Algérie*, (Paris: Editions Khartala, 1998), pp. 276-279.

increase in the number of urban dwellers. In an overview of societal changes taking place in the Middle East, Carl Brown defines as ‘dramatic’ the urbanisation pattern in the region.³⁶ He contends: “even for an area which throughout history has had a high percentage of its inhabitants living in cities in comparison with most of the rest of the world, the increase in Middle Eastern urbanisation over the past 40 years (1947-1987) is striking.”³⁷ Algeria in particular stands out, as only Saudi Arabia and Libya experienced a stronger growth, as shown in the table below:

Table 4.1: Urban Population as Percentage of Total Population

	1947	1987
Algeria	25%	67%
Egypt	33%	50%
Iran	20%	50%
Iraq	35%	68%
Jordan	25%	60%
Libya	20%	65%
Saudi Arabia	10%	73%

Note: These figures, adapted from a imprecise mix of census reports, official estimates and scholarly appraisals, should be seen as illustrative only and granted a generous margin of error.³⁸

The developmental policies evolved around the adoption of the ‘industrialising industries’ model with its corollary of urban concentration and, in the mid-late 1970s, Algeria looked very different from the country that had emerged from the war of independence when its population was largely illiterate and rural. Due to all these dramatic changes, Zoubir claims: “it is possible to argue that a genuine opportunity for democratisation was missed in 1976.”³⁹ In fact, President Boumediene seemed to attempt at the time to inject some form of democratic legitimacy into the system in order to meet the aspirations of many sectors of society, but true reforms never took place. Zoubir’s claim is a rather interesting one, but it is not explained why the opportunity to democratise was missed. The failure to democratise at this very favourable time is in fact probably due to the bias against change that exists within every authoritarian regime

³⁶ Carl Brown, “The Middle East: Patterns of Change 1947-1987”, *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 41, No. 1, Winter 1987, pp. 26-39.

³⁷ Ibid. p. 28.

³⁸ Ibid., note 27.

³⁹ Yahia Zoubir, “Stalled Democratization of an Authoritarian Regime: The Case of Algeria”, *Democratization*, Vol. 2, No. 2, Summer 1995, p. 113.

when things are going well. In the words of O'Donnell and Schmitter, "risk[ing] the achievements of the regime for the sake of fuzzy long-term advantages" at a time when the regime enjoyed both legitimacy and support from large sectors of the population was out of the question. Once again, this reinforces the crucial role of actors.

Paradoxically, the democratising efforts of the ruling elites came at a point in time when the indicators of economic development were rather negative. In 1987, "for the first time after independence, economic growth halts completely."⁴⁰ The unexpected fall in oil and gas revenues had a negative impact on the funds spent on education, job creation, investments and subsidisation. The same factors contributed to a widespread impoverishment of the population. This seems to suggest that to a large extent the worsening economic situation was the trigger for political reforms, which had been dismissed as unnecessary when the economy was faring rather well. This entirely contradicts the deterministic argument about the positive relationship between increasing wealth and democracy. Sadiki argues that it is precisely the collapse of the *dīmuqrāṭyyat al-khbuz* (democracy of bread) that leads to political opening and not the improvement of socio-economic conditions. The democracy of bread is close to the notion of democratic bargaining and "its chief premise is that post-independence Arab rulers have been paid political deference by their peoples in return for the provision of publicly subsidised services-education, health care and a state commitment to secure employment."⁴¹ Once this tacit pact collapses, political deference disappears. For this pact to collapse what is needed is a severe economic crisis. This constitutes a paradox in the theory Lipset offers.

Quandt examines a number of different social and economic changes, focusing in particular on the demographic explosion and re-stratification of society following independence. Firstly, Quandt explains how state-society relations were centred on a radical transformation of previous social relationships, whereby Algeria witnessed "the emergence of a new elite of privilege, power and wealth."⁴² This re-stratification of society together with the formal ideology of egalitarian socialism created a system where "those at the pinnacle of the pyramid of power had little idea of what was going on at the base"⁴³, while those at the base were fed slogans of egalitarianism and solidarity. It follows that an egalitarian social structure with a strong state generates intense political competition because all sections of society feel entitled to utilise the state to redirect

⁴⁰ Garon, op. cit., p. 31.

⁴¹ Sadiki, 'Popular Uprisings', p. 79.

⁴² William Quandt, *Between Ballots and Bullets* (Washington DC, Brookings Institution Press, 1998), p. 110.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 111.

resources towards their interest group without reaching any sort of compromise with its counterparts. At the same time, increasing birth rates provoked a dramatic increase in the population tripling it in less than 40 years. All these factors combined “help explain the emergence of the unitary populist state, with its claim to represent all people; the clannishness and factionalism of Algerian politics as a by-product of extreme egalitarianism within a society.”⁴⁴ The move away from authoritarianism was destined to fail because of these structural constraints on domestic actors.

The main problem with these types of explanations, as recognised by Quandt himself, is the sense that events are conditioned by social and economic factors beyond any type of control or input from actors. While these factors may well constrain the choices available to decision-makers, they cannot be the only explanatory variable to rely on. So-called ‘agents’ have a role to play and they can also influence the workings of these deeper structures. The idea is to find a balance where social and economic forces work as explanatory variables alongside human agency. Furthermore, if any analysis based on these broad social and economic factors is to be fully representative, outside forces have to enter the equation. Domestic social and economic developments are, to a degree, part of a larger external trend.

The focus of some studies is purely on conditions that do not really help explain either why the authoritarian regime collapsed or what were the causal mechanisms that triggered its demise and the subsequent attempt to liberalise the system. Focusing on requisites may help explain *ex-post facto* the reasons behind the failure of democratisation to consolidate or may give a broader understanding of the country’s social and economic situation, but these types of explanation are not firmly established, as the variance of their real impact is rather large. It turns out, for instance, that some conditions held as essential could turn out to be detrimental in different contexts, as the discussion on the issue of national unity seems to demonstrate. While it is important to analyse the explanatory variables that the functionalist school has to offer, Karl may be correct when he points out that “patterns of economic growth and more equitable income distribution, higher levels of literacy and education, and increases in social communication and media exposure may be better treated as the products of stable democratic processes rather than as prerequisites of its existence”⁴⁵ and, it may be added, its genesis.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 122.

⁴⁵ Karl, op. cit. , p. 5.

4.3 The Domestic Actors Model

Most studies of transitions focus on the so-called stages of the process of change, which seems to be the same across a vast number of case studies. When analysing the move from one regime to another, the focus should not be on conditions and overly deterministic structural constraints, but on actors who will actually make political choices. Democratisation should be understood as a historical process, where “a variety of actors with different followings, preferences, calculations, resources and time horizons come to the fore during [its different] stages.”⁴⁶

In general, it can be argued that “there is no transition whose beginning is not the consequence of important divisions within the authoritarian regime itself, principally along the fluctuating cleavage between hard-liners and soft-liners.”⁴⁷ This split among the ruling elites is the centre of attention at the early stage of the transition, as the game played out will determine if the country will simply witness liberalisation or a stronger push towards democratisation. Pollack argues that this interpretation is not valid for all transitions and examines the case of the German Democratic Republic to make the case in favour of mass pressures.⁴⁸ He states that “the agency of the demonstrating population played a much more decisive role, [as] the masses mobilised before the split of the elite occurred.”⁴⁹ However, Pollack simply focuses on one transitional process and also disregards the extent to which the elite understood the crisis of the system. By the time the mass pressures began, it had become already quite clear that the whole Soviet ‘empire’ was crumbling and that elite legitimacy across Eastern Europe was at a very low point. Pollack’s analysis of the masses’ central role is however important because it has been applied to Algeria as well. The riots of 1988 can be seen as the event when the masses took charge of their destiny and obtained political change by forcing the elites to recognise that the system could not go on as usual. While the role played by the masses in the October 1988 riots should not be dismissed, it should also be recognised that the necessity of changing the system had already been previously recognised by sectors within the elites. In particular, the President had stated that drastic economic changes were needed to move away from socialism towards market orientated reforms and this

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 5.

⁴⁷ Guillermo O’Donnell and Philippe Schmitter, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule. Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies* (Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), p. 19.

⁴⁸ Detlef Pollack, “Mass Pressures, elite responses - roots of democratization: the case of the GDR”, *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, Vol. 35, 2002, pp. 305-324.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 321.

had provoked a split within the ruling party. Moreover, there had also been small steps in the political realm as well. This does not mean that the October 1988 riots did not represent a watershed in Algerian history, but the ruling elites were always in control of the process.⁵⁰

Huntington, among many others, recognises the crucial role played by the interaction between “reformers and standpatters in the governing coalition.”⁵¹ The decision to open up the system implies the recognition that the country is in a state of crisis and that some action is necessary to solve it. The means are a matter of dispute because they vary according to the interpretation that is given to the crisis and according to the privileges and interests that may be affected. Usually, “authoritarian regimes that had been relatively successful and hence encountered a less active and aggressive opposition opted for the transition with a higher degree of self-confidence.”⁵² It follows that the sharp distinction between hard-liners and soft-liners may be in fact blurred when there seems to be a consensus that they will all survive, given that the regime has not performed poorly over the course of the years. In contrast, the hard-liners versus soft-liners conflict may be much harsher if the opposition is in a strong position and is able to make demands on the regime. How to deal with this opposition is then a strong matter for contention among the ruling elites, particularly if the regime has been performing poorly. O’Donnell and Schmitter draw two general points “from the regime-confident, self-initiated scenario”⁵³ with respect to the opposition-induced one: a) “the sequence, rhythm, and scope of liberalisation and democratisation tend to remain more firmly in the hands of the incumbents”⁵⁴ and b) “the social and political forces which supported the authoritarian regime stand a better chance of playing a significant role in the subsequent regime.”⁵⁵

Algeria fits the category of countries where the transition was initiated by a confident regime, which hoped to survive the economic and social crisis. In fact, following the riots of October 1988, the President announced the introduction of far-reaching political reforms including multi-partism and competitive elections. The regime’s confidence rested on a number of factors. First of all, it was believed that the

⁵⁰ The control of the elites over the process seems to be even stronger if the view that the riots had been organized from the top to unsettle Chadli is accepted.

⁵¹ Huntington, *op. cit.*, p. 590.

⁵² O’Donnell and Schmitter, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

regime still enjoyed considerable legitimacy derived from the victory against the French and Algerian nationalism had not even been tainted by the defeat of the Arab cause in the 1960s and by the loss of appeal of the Pan-Arabism ideology of the 1970s and 1980s. Quite the opposite was the case; according to Roberts: “the Arab defeat was used to stimulate and reinforce Algerian nationalism.”⁵⁶ Secondly, the real wielders of power were not divided and presented a united front. Although criss-crossed by clannish divisions when it came to reaping the benefits of their position in terms of privileges, the army was still ‘the backbone’ of the country and it did not believe it could be challenged politically or militarily from within. Finally, it was believed that the economic crisis would be over by the time political liberalisation would be completed, as it was forecast that oil and gas prices would rise substantially again. Thus, the regime would benefit from improving economic conditions at a key political juncture.

The game between hard-liners and soft-liners at this stage of the process has been detailed in a number of studies and there is a consensus that the President liberalised the system with the silent blessing of the Army, but with the opposition of some party bosses. For instance, Mohand Salah Tahi puts President Chadli at the centre of his analysis of the transition.⁵⁷ Tahi argues that the 1988 riots showed to Chadli how discredited the FLN really was in the eyes of the majority of the population. He attempted at first to reform the party, but when the task revealed itself to be too difficult, Chadli decided to ‘ditch’ the FLN and allowed the formation of new political parties. ‘Ditching’ the FLN and opening up the political arena to competition was part of a twofold strategy: “to enlarge the basis of support for government policies by bringing in the parties into an alliance with the authorities and to create a rival but limited source of power that would neutralise FLN opponents of the President.”⁵⁸ From the opening up onwards, a dynamic of change was unleashed and different sections of the establishment began to reposition themselves according to this changed reality. They had different strategies and there are numerous accounts of the internal battles over the issue of what path should be followed and which moves enacted. Tahi accounts for the development of transition by focusing on the clash within the FLN and the inner politics of the party. In particular, attention is placed on the split between Hamrouche, who hoped to reform the

⁵⁶ Roberts, op. cit. p. 562.

⁵⁷ Mohand Salah Tahi, “The Arduous Democratisation Process in Algeria”, The Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 30, No. 3, 1992, pp. 497-419.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 398.

party and lead his government to successfully reform the economy, and Ghozali, who instead wanted to weaken the FLN in order to gather support for his own career.⁵⁹

Many other accounts are based on personal experiences of former ministers, generals and actors with decision-making power. They tend to be centred on subjective views and recollection of events. While this greatly contributes important insights, it also obscures and relegates to the background facts that may be crucial but not under the direct control or grasp of the person 'telling the story.' One such example is Ghazi Hidouci's work.⁶⁰ Hidouci held a key post in the Hamrouche government that tried to reform the economy and steer the country towards democratic politics at the same time. Hidouci's account focuses entirely on domestic factors and identifies internal divisions among the ruling elites as the key variable that explains the whole process of transition. In particular, he details the power struggle between the Hamrouche government, supported by President Chadli, and the Army. According to Hidouci, the transition process cannot be understood except in the context of this constant power struggle. When the country faced its worst crisis since independence, in 1988, the elites agreed that some sort of political liberalisation was needed if the country was not to collapse. However, and perhaps more importantly, there was widespread agreement that the problems the country was facing were mostly economic and therefore intervention was needed to reform the economy.

The Hamrouche government, staffed with neo-liberal minded reformers, set out to guide the country out of a planned economy towards a market economy. Hidouci argues that at this point the principal actors within the regime fell out, as the reforms were beginning to tackle the privileges of the generals and those associated with them, who had profited from their position for years by extracting substantial economic benefits. For many of them, the real enemy was not the FIS, but the Hamrouche government and the president. The transition then becomes the terrain where the battle was fought. The FIS was also opposed in public to the radical reforms implemented by Hamrouche, as they hurt the already impoverished masses. Hidouci argues that the Army manipulated the FIS and the other political parties opposed to the reforms. In order to protect its privileges, the Army used the elections to get rid of the government and then used the coup to get rid of the FIS. The key moment is the general strike of the summer of 1991 organised by the FIS.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 404.

⁶⁰ Ghazi Hidouci, *Algérie: la libération inachevée* (Paris, La Découverte, 1995).

Hidouci argues that the strike was manipulated by the Army to put pressure on the government to resign, leaving a power vacuum to be filled by the winner of the parliamentary elections. Hidouci claims that “it is evident that the strike was manipulated and that the FIS leadership had been taken in.”⁶¹ Hamrouche did indeed resign and when the FIS won the elections a few months later, the military intervention took care of eliminating it. The transition and its failure are therefore explained as the result of the power struggle internal to the ruling elites, where even the opposition forces are manipulated. Hidouci’s analysis gives us very detailed and important insights into the inner politics of the Algerian ruling elites, but, by framing the transition simply in terms of the conflict between the reformist government and the Army, he risks missing out on the bigger picture. Focusing on the actions of the government and describing the internal power struggles is rather limited, as there seems to be no larger context. This shortcoming is probably due to the fact that Hidouci himself was a protagonist in these events.

Hidouci presents himself and the government he belonged to as the real democratic actor and the only one that had the fate of the country at heart. His focus on the importance of economic reforms highlights the claim that these were the real reason behind the military intervention. The democratic reforms accompanying the economic changes were thus utilised to bring the government down and to restore the privileges of those who has plundered Algeria’s riches for decades. In these simple terms, the FIS and the opposition parties become unwilling instruments of the Army in achieving its objectives, as they helped in the task of discrediting the Hamrouche government and its policies. This is quite hard to believe as it presupposes a degree of control over other actors that does not reflect reality. Finally, Hidouci may be mistaken with respect to the FIS position on the content of economic reforms. While publicly the FIS was worried about the falling living standards of ordinary Algerians, they also drew ‘benefits’ from it in terms of support and were ideologically close to the reforms. Henry and Springborg claim: “the Algerian reformers had one tremendous potential source of support. They enjoyed the tacit blessings of the FIS.”⁶² The FIS had an economic doctrine that called for market reforms very similar to the ones that Hidouci was attempting to implement.⁶³

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 255.

⁶² Clement Henry and Robert Springborg, *Globalisation and the Politics of Development in the Middle East*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 115.

⁶³ M. Al-Ahnaf, Bernard Botiveau and Frank Fregosi, *L’Algérie par ses Islamistes*, (Paris, Khartala, 1991), pp. 179-187.

General Khaled Nezzar, mastermind and executor of the military coup of January 1992, gives an entirely different personal account of the transition, contradicting most of Hidouci's points.⁶⁴ Nezzar had been in agreement with Chadli over the necessity to reform the state, particularly after the Army he commanded had been used to put down the riots in October 1988. However, according to the general, the opening up of the political system had allowed an *obscurantiste* movement to become a powerful force in Algerian politics. Thanks to a combination of real economic and social difficulties with a calculated political manoeuvre on the part of the Chadli presidency to strengthen the FIS for his own benefit, Nezzar argued, the new political system had been hijacked. The main point of Nezzar's argument concerning the transition is that the Army was the only democratic institution in the country, or at least the only institution that acted according to the Constitution. The military intervention was therefore the necessary means of preserving the democratic liberties of the previous years from the diabolical pact between Chadli, the Hamrouche government and the FIS. Unlike Hidouci, who saw a link between the Army and the opposition parties to boycott the economic reforms, Nezzar argues that the FIS leadership had been willingly shored up in order to make it a powerful ally of the presidency. In this respect, the ideological convergence on the content of the market-orientated reforms is an argument which Nezzar utilises to accuse Hamrouche, Chadli and the FIS of colluding to achieve a power-sharing agreement whereby the FIS would be allowed to implement obscurantist social measures to the detriment of the entire Algerian society, while Chadli would remain in power and Hamrouche would run the economy. In his book of memoirs, Nezzar introduces the chapter on the necessity for military intervention to disrupt the elections with the following rhetorical question and answer: "What held Chadli, his Prime Minister and the Islamic movement represented by the FIS of Abassi and Belhadj together? Power-sharing."⁶⁵ In order to save the country from this, the Army had to intervene.

Just like Hidouci, Nezzar points to a very specific episode to underpin the validity of his analysis. The 1989 Constitution prohibited the formation of political parties or movements along ethnic or religious lines, but the FIS was legalised and became a formally recognised political party. The recognition of the FIS was in total contradiction of the article stipulating that Islam would not be used for political objectives. Nezzar argues that Chadli and the government dismissed this contradiction

⁶⁴ Khaled Nezzar, *Mémoires du Général* (Alger, Chihab Editions, 1999).

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 173.

because they were already negotiating with the FIS leadership on how to share power and eliminate all other forms of opposition.

Both Nezzar and Hidouci give a detailed account of their version of the story and provide significant insights, but there is an overall failure to contextualise the transition process in both cases. Furthermore, their analysis is biased by both their ideological position and their interests and role in the development of events. Their accounts seem to justify the approach of those who see the transition as a game where interests, strategies and perceptions are immutable and therefore all moves can be explained.

More balanced accounts exist, and although they focus on the same interplay between domestic actors, they provide a wider picture. Each study obviously privileges one specific point of view or one interpretation, but taken together they offer a considerable amount of information. One of the best studies of the transition is by William Quandt. The thrust of his argument is that decision-making by leaders is what drives a transition process: “without accepting the notion that individual volition is everything, one still needs to be wary of over-determined explanations of politics that ignore human choice.”⁶⁶ Following the argument put forth by O’Donnell and Schmitter, he focuses on the role of human agency and identifies both actors and processes of interaction. While it is true that decisions taken by leaders may not necessarily be autonomous and may well be the product of a limited menu of choices, human agency pre-empts the problem of over-determinism. There is a considerable amount of work supporting the hypothesis that individual choices may in fact be the product of pressures, forces and constraints, which guide the decision into a specific direction somewhat independently from the free will of individuals, but human agency should be the ultimate decider.

Robert Mortimer, who claims that the current violence in Algeria “is the result of a flawed transition from single-party to democratic politics”⁶⁷, adopts the same approach. He focuses his attention on three sets of actors: the Army, the FIS and the democratic parties. Mortimer highlights how the lack of a pact among these forces, and the perceptions of the regime with regard to the viability of the electoral law chosen for the parliamentary elections, wrecked the process of democratisation. Aside from relying too heavily on the lack of a pact as the key explanation for the failure of the transition, there is also a problem in the selection of the actors involved. While it is true that the three

⁶⁶ Quandt, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

⁶⁷ Mortimer, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

were indeed the principal forces in the process, it should be highlighted that their labels imply a strong bias, which derives from an inability to see the Algerian events in their international context. From the onset of the liberalisation, non-Islamist parties were called ‘democratic parties’. Mortimer calls these parties an “endangered third force in search of an opening in the direction of genuinely democratic practices and institutions.”⁶⁸

This definition is derived from the French media’s coverage of the events and from the interpretation of diplomats and scholars who attempted to ‘interfere’ with the ongoing transition. This definition excludes the FIS from the camp of the democratic parties and implies that their lack of democratic credentials, coupled with their supposed authoritarian tendencies, were the main factors behind the failure of the transition. The problem is that this ‘labelling’ is anchored to an interpretation that comes from the outside and has an impact on how political resources are then distributed among the domestic actors. In Mortimer’s analysis, there is no room for the possibility that the FIS might have been just as ‘democratic’ as the other parties. After all, they participated in elections, they administered local municipalities and councils through their elected representatives, they did not boycott the legislative elections and most of all they enjoyed electoral support. The FIS played the democratic game, but the negative depiction of their party by outside sources undermined their chances of being understood outside Algeria, while at the same time increasing the legitimacy and the resources of other actors. Mortimer concludes that “a large segment of the population was not offended by the annulment of the election”⁶⁹, implying that the Army was therefore defending the true democrats: those citizens who did not vote for the FIS. Mortimer claims that the FIS was “a party that denied the basic pluralism of Algerian society.”⁷⁰

William Zartman reaches the same conclusion on the turnout: “since in Algeria the radical Islamic option was rejected by over three-quarters of the voting age population – those who did not vote for the FIS – it is inappropriate to maintain that the Islamist experiment should be nonetheless be tried.”⁷¹ Furthermore, he argues that since “the principles of democracy may be used by political religionists to win democratically

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 24.

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 24.

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 25.

⁷¹ William Zartman, “Islam, the State and Democracy: the Contradictions”, in Charles Butterworth and William Zartman (eds.) *Between the State and Islam* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 238.

and end democracy”⁷², the long-term effects of the coup may be favourable to democratic development. The evidence of the matter remains contradictory, and speculation about the FIS’s intentions and their behaviour could go in numerous different directions.

By not going to the polls, Algerian citizens may indeed have signalled that they were profoundly disturbed by the lack of choices they had in terms of political parties. In particular, they may have looked with discomfort at a process that legitimised radical parties such as the FIS. But their not turning out could be attributed to other causes as well. They might have, for instance, believed that the second round would have been more important to determine the final result and therefore neglected to vote in the first round. It is usually expected that the first legislative elections in democratising countries would draw an enormous amount of interest and participation that would be reflected in very high turnouts, but this expectation is not always borne out in practice.⁷³ Furthermore, there is then the question of why the rights of those who actually turned out and voted were trampled on. It seems that many analysts hold the FIS to account simply for its ability to mobilise the impoverished masses through ideological messages and practical assistance.

Another important study of the failure of Algeria to democratise is Yahia Zoubir’s account.⁷⁴ Zoubir summarises, in a very effective manner, all the main tenets of the ‘domestic model’ of transition and points to very specific reasons why the transition was initiated and why it failed. There are three aspects to the initiation of the transition that Zoubir underlines. First of all, the process of liberalisation was the product of the October riots. Secondly, the reforms became central to the power struggle within the regime. Lastly, “the reforms were intended to provide a ‘democratic’ façade for the old state...and were not meant to usher in a new genuinely democratic one.”⁷⁵ Once again, the dynamics unleashed by the liberalisation of the political system are then analysed as part of the power struggle within the regime and Zoubir identifies the key moment as being the legalisation of the FIS. The legalisation of the FIS was the pinnacle of the internal dispute among the ruling elites, which all hoped they would be able to ‘use’ the FIS for their own ends. The whole process is then interpreted as an internal dispute where numerous actors participated and which ultimately failed to deliver because

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 243.

⁷³ In recent free and fair presidential elections in Senegal, turnout was only 62 percent. See www.electionworld.org

⁷⁴ Yahia Zoubir, *op. cit.*

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 117.

“democratisation was initiated in an undemocratic fashion and because of the absence of a democratic political culture at all levels.”⁷⁶ Zoubir combines the domestic model that explains how and why liberalising reforms were initiated, and how the different domestic actors played the game with a lack of proper democratic requisites within Algerian society, to explain the failure. It follows that the lack of a democratic culture influenced how the game was played out. The problem with this particular analysis is that it neglects the fact that very few authoritarian rulers initiate a transition because they are true believers in democracy. Rather, democratisation is seen as the best strategy to maintain power or at least to survive politically in a new system rather than being thrown out of power. Looking at many other cases it is rather difficult to find committed democrats starting the game of regime change.⁷⁷

One of the most important elements in transitions is the negotiation that takes place among the domestic actors, which generally leads to the adoption of a formal pact by all participants. This pact becomes the rulebook for the transition and deals specifically with the concerns of all actors in order to ensure a positive outcome, or at least an arrangement they can all live with. According to Hamann, “pacts are prone to facilitate the introduction of democratic rules because they limit the stakes for select elite actors by guaranteeing them a role in future arrangements through consensus or compromise agreements.”⁷⁸ Both Zoubir and Tahi have blamed the lack of such a pact in the Algerian transition for its failure and Salamé argues that the “absence of such an understanding has sometimes proven fatal to a new experiment: the Algerian case is there to demonstrate that the electoral process is easily reversible when viewed as irremediably detrimental to some significant social or political [actor].”⁷⁹ In fact, in Algeria the actors were never formally negotiating with one another the rules that would govern the interim period and this led to radicalisation of positions, miscommunication and breakdown. Additionally, while pacts are useful instruments whereby domestic actors can come together and draw up a plan of action that is mutually satisfactory, the

⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 134.

⁷⁷ The case of Chile’s return to democracy in 1989 is paradigmatic in this sense. The referendum Pinochet called was meant to confirm his status as President and not usher in democratic reforms.

⁷⁸ Kerstin Hamann, “The Pacted Transition to Democracy and Labour Politics in Spain”, *South European Society and Politics*, Vol. 2, No. 2, Autumn 1997, p. 110.

⁷⁹ Ghassan Salamé, “Introduction: Where are the Democrats?”, in Ghassan Salamé (ed.) *Democracy without Democrats? The Renewal of Politics in the Muslim World* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1994), p. 2.

very existence of a pact does not automatically lead to democratic outcomes.⁸⁰ In the Algerian context, it is often noted that while President Chadli and the FIS actually had an understanding about their future roles and the possibility of power sharing, the real wielder of power had been left out, as the military was never involved in any bargaining. Furthermore, key generals feared for their privileges and their status. The events of October 1988 also left them exposed to the possibility of criminal prosecution for having fired upon unarmed civilians.

Traditionally, transitions in countries where the military occupies a privileged position have to provide this institution with assurances. This had not been done in the Algerian case and, it is argued, the whole process paid the price. The absence or presence of a pact may not in fact have had such an overwhelming importance. Pacts can be reneged on if one of the actors has sufficient resources to do so. The case of Tunisia is quite instructive, as the government later reneged on a pact subscribed to by all political forces. The pact had served the short-term interests of the new president, to solidify his position, and, once firmly in control of the political process, he failed to implement what had been agreed. In a recent overview of the literature on democratisation, Valerie Bunce, citing the work of Pauline Jones Luong, emphasises that “the transitions in the post-communist region that combined pacting with demobilised publics were precisely the transitions that were most likely to continue authoritarian rule in the post-communist region.”⁸¹

From this analysis of how Algeria has been studied, it emerges that the focus on individual choices is rather limited, as it partly derives from biased interpretation of strategies and interests and from definitions that, instead of being objective, are used in the political arena itself. It follows that focusing on reasons, such as the choice of a specific electoral law, and speculating as to why it was chosen, provide unsatisfactory explanations. While it is extremely important to analyse in detail the strategies and the choices of the domestic constituencies involved in the transition, it is also worth remembering that their preferences were not fixed nor were their strategies for action. In fact the dynamics unleashed by political liberalisation have to take into account external events and factors.

⁸⁰ Lisa Anderson, “Political Pacts, Liberalism and Democracy: the Tunisian National Pact of 1988”, *Government and Opposition*, Vol. 26, No. 2, Spring 1991.

⁸¹ Valerie Bunce, “Rethinking Recent Democratisation. Lessons from the Post-Communist Experience”, *World Politics*, Vol. 55, No. 1, January 2003, p. 173.

In conclusion, the genetic school has generally much more to offer, in methodological terms, than the method of inquiry relying on domestic conditions for democracy. The identification of the relevant domestic actors and their interactions, together with an analysis of both goals and strategies to achieve those goals, solves the problem of over-determinism and puts human agency centre stage. Despite these considerable strengths, there are weaknesses in the approach, and it is precisely to address them that it is necessary to make a number of additions. Firstly, actors should not be isolated from their external environment. Focusing on their actions is significant only if these actions take into account how external variables influence their strategies, objectives and, more importantly, the distribution of resources. Secondly, the analysis of domestic actors should avoid the trap of mono-causality. This is a problem in those studies focusing on one single element and conflating it with the sole explanatory variable, be it the absence of a pact or the poor choice of electoral system. Thirdly, scepticism should surround all personal accounts, on the basis that those involved may tend to see their actions as overly relevant. Finally, it is important not to concentrate only on the failure of the transition itself and the factors that brought it about. A path-dependent democratisation needs to take into account all the phases of its development.

Pollack agrees with the problems one would encounter by relying too strongly on the functionalist school. He argues: “the structural framework influencing the decisions actors make must also be taken into consideration, since the actors are notably influenced by this framework and cannot be understood without it. However, if the transition of political, economic, judicial and social structures is to be explained, it again becomes clear that a mere structural explanation is also insufficient and that a recourse to the actions of actors and agencies is also unavoidable.”⁸²

4.4 Islam and Democracy

One of the deepest held beliefs among policy-makers, academics and the general public is that the practice of the democracy is alien to Islam. Many derive this postulate by pointing out that the latter is absent in most of the countries where Muslims are the majority. Even Turkey and Lebanon, two of the Muslim countries coming closer to fulfilling the minimal definition of democracy, fail to satisfy the criteria and the requirements of a truly democratic polity. In a recent overview of political conditions in the Muslim world, Esposito underlines how “most Muslim countries remain security

⁸² Pollack, *op. cit.*, p. 306.

(*mukhabarat*) states”⁸³ and how “the modern Muslim experience supports the impression that Islam and democracy are incompatible.”⁸⁴ This so-called Islamic exception, in terms of the lack of democratic polities, is often explained through cultural variables. As Crystal puts it, “the conventional wisdom [is] that authoritarianism is the necessary outgrowth of Arab or Islamic traditions.”⁸⁵ To prove her point she cites specifically the work of Elie Kedourie and David Pryce-Jones, “who link authoritarianism to unchanging Arab and Islamic cultural norms.”⁸⁶

This perceived inability of Islam to come to terms with liberal-democracy is often associated with the absence of secularism. Bernard Lewis argues, for instance, that “secularism in the modern political meaning - the idea that religion and political authority, church and state are different, and can or should be separated - is, in a profound sense, Christian.”⁸⁷ It follows that where state and religion cannot be separated, some form of authoritarian rule will prevail because religious authority will inevitably prevail since it is derived from an infallible God. This view is quite widespread and leads many to explain the exceptional Muslim countries through culture rather than politics.

If we take the minimalist or procedural definition of democracy, a number of institutional and legal points emerge as fundamental. In fact, democracy has to be accompanied by liberal rights. There is a widespread belief that Islam is incapable of dealing with them. Scholars such as Bernard Lewis argue that the failure of Islam to come to terms with modernity, and therefore the inability to ‘secularise’ politics, has the effect of impeding true democratic developments. The real problem is not so much the inability to secularise *per se*, but more fundamentally the fact that espousing Islam means surrendering to the will of God, while democracy means to surrender to the will of the people. There is therefore an inherent and ‘natural’ undemocratic element within Islam that does not allow democracy to take root. A religion that has not been dissected by the Enlightenment is unable to question itself and remains authoritarian in its outlook and in its conception of how a society should be run. Furthermore, Islam is deeply political. Other major religions are very much concerned with individual salvation and

⁸³ John Esposito, *Unholy War. Terror in the Name of Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002). p. 143.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 143.

⁸⁵ Jill Crystal, “Authoritarianism and its Adversaries in the Arab World”, *World Politics*, Vol. 46, No. 2, January 1994, p. 277.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 278.

⁸⁷ Bernard Lewis, *What Went Wrong? Western Impact and Middle Eastern Response*, (London: Phoenix Press, 2002), p. 107.

the after-life and are not 'interested' in the political wellbeing of the faithful.⁸⁸ Islam, on the contrary, 'sacralises' history and "the political wellbeing of the Muslim community is a matter of supreme importance."⁸⁹ Given the extreme politicisation of Islam, religious teachings become central for political organisation. It follows, according to Lewis, that the inability to see the will of the people as supreme, because only God is supreme, undermines the very foundation of a democratic polity. More recently, the cultural argument has resurfaced to explain the absence of democracy in terms of the absence of women's liberation.⁹⁰

The scepticism surrounding the relationship between Islam and democracy, which is reflected in the ideology of Islamic parties, has been summarised by looking at three different aspects: 1) "there seems to be an inherent contradiction between the absolutist nature of Islamist ideology and the relativist character of democracy"; 2) "even when an Islamist party endorses democracy, it will not have the same value for them as it has for a liberal secularist" and; 3) by subscribing to the primacy of Islamic law (*shari'a*) "it follows that the Islamist ideology and the ideology of democracy are inherently incompatible."⁹¹

In an overview of the reasons for the lack of democracy in the Arab world, Gambill is critical of the argument about cultural norms conditioning state-society relations.⁹² Gambill admits: "in scholarship on Middle East politics, the contention that political culture is an inherent obstacle to democratisation has long enjoyed pride of place over other explanations."⁹³ He identifies two key independent variables: Islam as a system of beliefs, and primordialism. According to the first variable, the belief system of Islam impedes democracy because it promotes political quietism, in the sense that political obedience is due to rulers as a religious duty. When the question of political quietism was resolved in practice by the rise of radical revolutionary Islamic groups contesting the legitimacy of current rulers, it was argued that Islam views no government

⁸⁸ Karen Armstrong, *Islam. A Short History* (London, Phoenix Press, 2001), p. xi

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. xi.

⁹⁰ Fadia Faqir, "Engendering democracy and Islam in the Arab world", *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 18, No. 1, 1997, pp. 165-174.

⁹¹ See Azza Karam, "Islamist Parties in the Arab World: Ambiguities, Contradictions and Perseverance", *Democratization*, Vol. 4, No. 4, Winter 1997, p. 163 who summarises the approach of Sidhamed and Ehteshami.

⁹² Gary Gambill, "Explaining the Arab Democracy Deficit: Part I", *Middle East Intelligence Bulletin*, Vol. 5, No. 2, February-March 2003 (on-line version)

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

as legitimate, given that supreme and legitimate authority can only be ascribed to God.⁹⁴ Explanations through Islam as a system of beliefs are inconsistent therefore because they are adapted to radically contradictory circumstances.

According to the second variable, democracy is impossible to achieve in the Arab world because of primordial links to the tribe and the clan. Given this, the goal of obtaining power and the objective of governance are simply to reward those from your clan. The argument of primordialism can be quite easily rejected through the use of Barakat's analysis of the phenomenon. He argues that: "most Arab governments have deliberately cultivated religious, sectarian, and tribal orientations in order to legitimise their authority."⁹⁵ Furthermore, it is also plausible to argue that economic failure has reinforced primordial ties. Gambill again quotes Bassam Tibi when he states: "since the Arab state has not met the challenge of economic development, society has resorted to its prenatal ties to find a solution."⁹⁶ Thus, we should reject both Islam and primordialism as explanatory variables for the absence of democracy in the Muslim world.

However, in order to support the point about Islam and its incompatibility with democracy, many refer also to the work of radical Islamic thinkers to justify their understanding of the relationship between Islam and democracy. There are indeed Muslim thinkers and Islamic political movements that deny the universality of democracy. There is, in their ideology, a very strong anti-democratic strand. These scholars argue that democracy is not only incompatible with the main tenets of Islam, but that it is the very opposite of what Islam stands for. The focus on these radical thinkers however obscures a more varied and conflicting reality, which informs many more moderate Islamic movements and parties. The main problem seems to be for those in the West and in the Muslim world who argue against the coming together of Islam and democracy, that they see Islam as a monolith and completely disregard the extreme variance that exists within it, in terms of both practices and beliefs. It follows that many radical Islamic thinkers make the same mistake of looking at Islam as a unified bloc.

Gilles Kepel identifies three modern radical Islamic thinkers who have been outspoken critics of democracy and who have thereby confirmed in the eyes of many Western intellectuals the validity of the statement that Islam is incompatible with Islam.⁹⁷ They are Sayyid Qutb, Abu'l'A'la Mawdudi and Khomeini.

⁹⁴ This argument is found in Daniel Pipes, *Slave Soldiers and Islam: The Genesis of a Military System* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981).

⁹⁵ Halim Barakat as cited in Gambill, op. cit.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Gilles Kepel, *Jihad: Ascesa e Declino* (Roma, Carrocci Edizioni, 2000).

Sayyid Qutb is probably the most influential Islamic thinker of the twentieth century and he is the intellectual point of reference for many Islamic movements, although “Qutb's significance is defined less in terms of originality than of impact. He has stepped onto a stage largely constructed by the intellectual and political work of others.”⁹⁸ His militant opposition to the Nasser regime, and his efforts to build an organised opposition inspired by the teachings of Islam, led to his execution by Nasser. Qutb’s hanging elevated him to the status of martyr⁹⁹ and was, in the long term, a counterproductive move. In his writings, it clearly emerges that democracy has very negative connotations. The reason for Qutb’s opposition to democracy is the fact that democracy puts forth the “idea of the sovereignty of the people, a philosophical foundation which according to Qutb diametrically opposes the philosophy of Islam, which is based on the concept of *hakimiyyat allah* (the sovereignty of God).”¹⁰⁰ Qutb’s views on democracy are very clear and are rooted in his “wider antipathy towards the West and towards secularism in particular.”¹⁰¹ His interpretation of democracy and his solution to the problems of Muslim states are very much connected with the reality Qutb was living and contributed to his radicalism, but the philosophical basis for this radicalism are nevertheless well grounded. According to Qutb, the objective of Muslims is clear: to get rid of the current political and social institutions and revert to the original experience of the Prophet and his companions. The Prophet did not govern through democratic principles, but through his surrendering to God. Furthermore, he argues that “there is one immutable version of Islam, and the prototype lies in the actions and events of Muhammad's mission in Mecca and Medina.”¹⁰² This vision of a monolithic Islam, excluding any other form of authority that is not divine, characterises Qutb's ideology and informs his thinking about democracy, which becomes an illegitimate form of rule.

A second scholar who is often cited as being anti-democratic is the influential Pakistani thinker Mawdudi.¹⁰³ While not “displaying the same degree of venom towards

⁹⁸ Roxanne Euben, *Enemy in the Mirror: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Limits of Modern Rationalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), p. 54

⁹⁹ Esposito and Piscatori labelled Qutb “the martyr of the Islamic revival.” See John Esposito and James Piscatori, “Democratization and Islam”, *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 45, No. 3, Summer 1991, p. 436.

¹⁰⁰ Hugh Goddard, “Islam and Democracy”, *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 73, No. 1, January-March 2002, p. 4.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

¹⁰² Euben, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

¹⁰³ A good collection of his writing is Sayyid Abul a'la Mawdudi, *Let Us Be Muslims* (New Delhi: Markazi Maktaba Islami Publishers, 2000), pp. 1-311.

it”¹⁰⁴, Mawdudi believed in the inherent incompatibility of democracy and Islam. Mawdudi uses Islam as a political ideology that would mobilise all Muslims towards the creation of the perfect Islamic state. However, the concept of democracy is not entirely dismissed and is not used in absolute opposition to Islam as in Qutb’s writings. Nevertheless, Mawdudi never thinks positively of democracy as understood in the West. For Mawdudi, the use of political Islam should lead to a “theo-democracy, a kind of democracy under God”¹⁰⁵ where, through the principle of *shura* (consultation), “the rulers still rule, but the requirement that they consult produces a special kind of Islamic democracy.”¹⁰⁶

The third, and probably best-known, Islamic scholar to highlight the evils of democracy is Ayatollah Khomeini. His negative views on democracy stem more from a fear of secularism and liberalism than from the procedural aspects of democracy as a form of government. Furthermore, Western support for the Shah of Iran and his authoritarian regime convinced Khomeini that democratic states were not necessarily ‘good citizens’ on the international scene. Khomeini’s position on democracy is in fact not as negative as Qutb’s in institutional terms given the fact that Iran after the Revolution displayed an interesting constitutional order where theocratic elements coexisted with more democratic ones. This does not mean that revolutionary Iran was ever a democracy, but it simply allows the possibility for democratic institutions to co-exist along religiously based ones.

The three scholars represent only select views of democracy and cannot be cited as representative of the entire Islamic culture and philosophical production about democracy. In fact, there are many other thinkers in the Muslim world who argue that democracy and Islam are not only compatible, but even inseparable. The very same religion and the very same sacred texts are cited to arrive at radically different conclusions. These scholars and ideologues point out that Islam is far from being a monolith and that it can accommodate many different perspectives and, more importantly, is open to multiple interpretations with the passing of time and the changing of society.

Egypt is not only the place of birth and terrain of political action of the late Sayyid Qutb, but it is also the home of very different intellectuals who have a much more positive view of democracy. For instance Abbas Mahmud Al’-Aqqad, a

¹⁰⁴ Goddard., op. cit., p.5.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 6.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 6

contemporary of Qutb, makes a rather convincing argument about the compatibility of Islam and democracy. Islam has a very strong tradition of consensus, which is the third foundation of Islamic law. This concept of *ijma* (a principle whereby if the Islamic community agrees on a particular point of law this becomes legally binding for all Muslims) is used in Al'-Aqqad's thinking as "the perfect justification or precedent in Islam for elective democracy: the community decides who is to be the ruler – by consensus."¹⁰⁷ A second concept that allows for the compatibility of democracy and Islam is *bay'a*, which could be translated as a pledge of allegiance by the ruler to his subjects. In more modern times, this concept should be transformed into some sort of "contract between ruler and ruled [to] underpin and validate the electoral process."¹⁰⁸ There are of course problems with both concepts and their adaptability to modern times, but their very use to legitimise democratic rule by Islamic thinkers shows that there are different ways to relate democracy and Islam.

Thanks to a more constructive engagement with Western scholarship and the rediscovery of past Islamic history, there is today a rather strong tradition that argues that Islam demands democracy. Democracy and democratisation cannot only be justified in 'religious' terms, but are absolutely necessary as the foundational element for the well-being of the Muslim community worldwide. The main point, made for instance by Bassam Tibi, is that Islamic civilisation needs democracy to survive both culturally and as a political entity. This does not mean that Western-style democracy should be adopted and enforced, but it simply means that Islam should build on Islamic rationalism to justify respect for human rights and democratic procedures. One very important figure in the Muslim world when it comes to the issue of Islam and democracy is the Iranian philosopher Abdul Karim Soroush. He was an early supporter of the Iranian Revolution and "his participation had helped to provide the Islamic republic with an intellectual dimension."¹⁰⁹ Today, he has become one of the leading dissidents in Iran and he strongly campaigns for a true democratisation of the country within an Islamic framework. His thinking is based on the fact that it is a duty of Muslims to actually reinterpret texts and adapt them to new situations because "any fixed version would effectively smother religion."¹¹⁰ Soroush focuses on the necessity for an Islamic state to respect human rights and, since he enjoys both revolutionary legitimacy (he was a

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 7.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 7.

¹⁰⁹ Robin Wright, *The Last Great Revolution. Turmoil and Transformation in Iran* (New York: Vintage Books, 2000), p. 34.

¹¹⁰ Soroush in an interview with Robing Wright, op. cit. , p. 42.

supporter of it) and religious legitimacy (he is a believer), he represents a new breed of intellectuals attempting to combine Islam and democracy. Esposito and Voll also highlight the existence of other 'Muslim voices of dialogue' among those Muslim intellectuals attempting to come to grips with these issues.¹¹¹

Despite the variety of Islamic scholarship in the field of democratic theory, it seems that this is frequently dismissed in favour of a one-dimensional view that accepts as mainstream those scholars who are associated with the most radical of Islamic views. From this, it derives that a constant association is made between Islam and an aversion for democracy. It is, for instance, widely assumed that Islamic movements are the same throughout the Muslim world and that their differences are minimal. 'There are no moderate Islamists' is a phrase often repeated to justify support for authoritarian regimes that harshly deal with Islamic oppositions and to lump together all Islamic movements under the term fundamentalists. According to this line of thinking, all sorts of representatives of Islamic groups are the new enemy despite their enormous differences in terms of strategy and beliefs. For instance, Judith Miller argues: "Western governments should be concerned about these movements and, more important, should oppose them."¹¹²

This type of analysis is detrimental to understanding and obscures the fact that "various Islamic movements called 'fundamentalists' in the West are in fact not fundamentalist in their agenda."¹¹³ Moreover, fundamentalism has a heterogeneous nature. As Milton-Edwards convincingly states, "the Islam which serves as the backbone of the Saudi Arabian order is the same as that used by al-Gama Islamiyya to promote the overthrow of the government of Hosni Mubarak."¹¹⁴ It is used to legitimise power in one case and oppose the government in another. On top of this, this particular brand of fundamentalism differs substantially from other forms propagated by other actors, as the more moderate Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt demonstrates. Thinking about political Islam simply in terms of fundamentalism, and in terms of cultural incompatibility with Western values, hides the varied and multi-faceted interpretations of religious teachings and the enormous differences within Islam in terms of ethnicity, local traditions and local

¹¹¹ John Esposito and John Voll, "Islam and the West: Muslim Voices of Dialogue", *Millenium: Journal of International Studies*, Vol. 29, No. 3, 2000, pp. 613-639.

¹¹² Judith Miller, "The Challenge of Radical Islam", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 72, No. 3, Spring 1993, p. 45.

¹¹³ Ali Abootalebi, "Islam, Islamists, and Democracy", *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 3, No. 1, March 1999.

¹¹⁴ Beverly Milton-Edwards, *Islamic Politics in Palestine*, (London, I.B. Tauris, 1996), p. 3.

conditions. Esposito is correct when pointing out that “Islam continues today to lend itself to multiple interpretations of government; it is used to support limited democracy and dictatorship, republicanism and monarchy.”¹¹⁵ There is no reason why it could not support a fully-fledged democracy.

Thus, the absence of democracy in the Muslim world should be examined by looking at other factors that seem to have more of an impact. Furthermore, the same criteria that are utilised to judge the degree of democracy and civil freedoms should perhaps be revised to take into account that Islamic democracy may look different from Western liberal democracy, but still fulfil the same minimal requirements. The very fact that within the Islamic world there is an ongoing debate on “how to reconcile the tenets of Islam with the modern notions of democracy, liberty, justice and gender equality”¹¹⁶ testifies to the vitality of a civilisation that cannot be reduced simply to barbarism and fanaticism. The problem is that, as long as Islamic groups of all tendencies are considered to be the enemy, Western policy-makers may not be able to see the differences between them and therefore dismiss their efforts to have intellectual reconciliation between democracy and Islamic tenets. Judith Miller tells us that “despite their rhetorical commitment to democracy and pluralism, virtually all militant Islamists oppose both”¹¹⁷ and argues that this is so because of “Arab and Islamic history.”¹¹⁸ Her argument is widely accepted and it fosters the belief that there is an inherent historical and cultural bias against democracy within Islam.

While it is true that Islam did not go through a process of secularisation as the West did, secularisation needs not occur at all costs, as Rachid Ghannouchi (former leader of the Tunisian Islamic Party *Renaissance*) points out in his writings. Ghannouchi advocates “an Islamic system that features majority rule, free elections, a free press, protection of minorities, equality of all secular and religious parties, and full women’s rights...Islam’s role is to provide the system with moral values.”¹¹⁹ Furthermore, by adopting Miller’s position, there is the risk of never having a dialogue with Islamic movements because if they argue quite plainly against democracy they should be opposed for doing so, and if they argue in favour of it they should not be believed. Esposito rightly states that “experts and policymakers who worry that Islamic

¹¹⁵ Esposito, 'Unholy War', p. 144.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Miller, p. 45.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., p. 47

¹¹⁹ Robin Wright, “Two Visions of Reformism”, *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 7, No. 2, April 1996, p. 73.

movements will use electoral politics to highjack democracy often fail to show equal concern that few current leaders in the region have been democratically elected and that many who speak of democracy only believe in 'risk-free' democracy.”¹²⁰

When it comes to passing judgement on Islamic movements and parties, it should also be kept in mind that the philosophical and ideological influences they have are varied and sometimes contradictory. Furthermore, their Islamic claims such as the return to the type of society that the Prophet governed, have to be understood in the context of the social and political reality these actors experience. The resurgence of Islamic radicalism in contemporary times is the product of political, social and economic factors and not simply the end product of a culture unable to deal with modernisation and secularism. In some states, such as Egypt, Islamic resurgence in contemporary times coincides with the failure of Arab nationalism to fulfil its promises of Arab unity and development. In other states, such as Algeria, it also coincides with the failure of post-colonial regimes to temper their authoritarianism in favour of political developments that would open participation to the religious bourgeoisie and to the urban poor. In the case of Algeria, Islam had been a powerful mobilising force in the struggle against the French, but its role after the revolution was limited. The ruling elites used the message of social justice from the Quran to justify the socialist ideology they embraced, but never seriously used Islam in political terms. In more general terms Tibi argues convincingly that “the crisis of the sovereign state provided the grounds for the political revival of religion.”¹²¹

It is interesting to note that some American analysts encouraged the Clinton administration to take a softer approach towards the Algerian Islamists after the military coup because there was a widespread belief that the junta would fail in quelling dissent and impose its rule. Robin Wright asserted: “the junta is unlikely to survive”¹²² and added that “the junta is most likely to fail because it has given new legitimacy to the very force it sought to suppress - Islam.”¹²³ In fact, the junta looked rather stable from the beginning and once the repressive apparatus was reformed and made more efficient, the widespread rebellion was largely quelled. At the same time, the regime embarked in a long-term operation destined to whip up consensus for the post-coup government among

¹²⁰ Esposito, 'Unholy War', p. 144.

¹²¹ Bassam Tibi, “Post-Bipolar Order in Crisis: The Challenge of Politicised Islam”, *Millenium: Journal of International Studies*, Vol. 29, No. 3, p. 847.

¹²² Robin Wright, “Islam, Democracy and the West”, *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 71, No. 3, Summer 1992, p. 136.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, p.136.

the population. External resources were made available for this operation and the regime was able to separate the religious middle-classes from the urban poor and therefore defeat the movement by providing resources to a sector of society that had previously believed in the Islamic project.

This seems to confirm that the terrain for conflict is not simply cultural but has to do with material resources and access to political influence. The defeat of the regime ultimately does not materialise because the conflict is not really about Islam, but about resources and power.

CHAPTER 5 – Explaining Algeria’s Transition: the International Connection

5.1 Introduction

This chapter has three main objectives. First of all it aims to construct a framework of transitions that includes international variables, using theoretical assumptions drawn from international relations theories. Specifically, the focus is away from structural economic explanations, as in Yilmaz,¹ and is instead on path-dependent approaches. Those who have attempted to bring international relations theory into the study of transitions have so far relied heavily on economics-oriented theories and have tried to explain domestic outcomes in the light of structural pressures emanating from the international system.

The second objective is to specify the components of this framework. In particular, it will focus on outlining the two fundamental dimensions on which it is constructed. The two dimensions along which countries should be categorised take into account both the economic and political aspects of the international system.

Finally, the chapter will illustrate the hypotheses generated and outline the observable implications that derive from them. The set of hypotheses will be examined in some detail and it will be specified what evidence is needed to support or to falsify them.

As mentioned above, the chapter will explore in detail two different dimensions that should be taken into consideration to determine the extent of the impact of the international context on democratisation: the level of integration in the international economy of the country and its geopolitical position. One of the major problems in the literature on democratisation, and its use of international relations theory to explain such phenomenon, is its over-reliance on one of the two dimensions, with a specific bias in favour of structural economics.² What should be analysed instead are the international economic and the geo-strategic dimensions. While the more structure-oriented models allow scholars to apply the same theoretical tools of analysis across a wide range of

¹ Hakan Yilmaz, “External-Internal Linkages in Democratisation: Developing an Open Model of Democratic Change”, Democratization, Vol. 9, No. 2, summer 2002.

² For specific studies dealing with democratisation and structural economics, see Mustafa Hamarneh, “Democratisation in the Mashreq: the Role of External Factors”, Mediterranean Politics, Vol. 5, No. 1, 2000, pp. 77-95; and Abdellatif Moutadayene, “Economic Crisis and Democratisation”, Journal of North African Studies, Vol. 6, No. 3, Autumn 2001, pp. 70-82.

cases, this obscures the important dimensions of geo-strategic position and also, from a methodological point of view, the decision-making processes of international actors. While structure does constrain choices, intentionality of action in order to produce results has also to be factored in. Thus, here the focus is on the interaction between structural factors and path-dependent decision-making, which means taking tools of analysis from different theories of international relations and relating them to processes of regime change. In fact, it is important to emphasise here again that, just as domestic factors do not work in total isolation and autonomy, neither does the international context. The external and the internal are connected at a number of different levels and through a network of actors that renders it almost impossible to explain regime change by referring to only one of the two.

A general discussion of these two dimensions and how they interact will be followed by a discussion of how Algeria fares in these respects. Attention will be paid to the type of state Algeria is in the international environment because analysing the type of state in its international context can help explain how transitions are initiated, how they develop, and how they conclude. From the two dimensions, it is possible to derive a tentative typology of the variables at play that should be looked at. Each country is obviously different and has very specific traits that do not apply anywhere else in terms of political culture, geographic features, and history, but these differences should not obscure overarching similarities derived from the fact that all countries are part of the same international environment. Both differences and similarities are included here to explain the Algerian case.

Again, structural elements do emerge in the analysis and they should not be discounted, but these international forces are not solely the product of structure. There are international actors that, through their decisions and actions, contribute to the creation of certain structures and therefore this has to be analysed as well. Specific domestic characteristics are nevertheless also relevant because they temper in different ways the impact of international changes and it is precisely from the interplay of external-internal linkages that processes of change originate. In general terms, it means that it is important to know where a country fits in the international economic and political system and this depends on the type of state that is involved, what functions it has in the international economy and where it is strategically and diplomatically placed. Determining where the country is inserted in the international system is vital to

understanding how domestic actors and institutions are conditioned in their strategies and their decision-making abilities.

5.2 The Two Dimensions

The first dimension that should be considered is the extent to which the country is integrated in the international economic system and what position it occupies within it. This does not necessarily mean that Immanuel Wallerstein's approach based on the identification of core, semi-peripheral, and peripheral states is correct.³ In fact, identifying the way in which states are configured within the world economy does not imply the acceptance of the existence of a world system with a defined division of labour among states. It simply calls for the recognition of the way in which states have different resources and economic models and they participate in the world economy according to their capacities, abilities and, more relevantly, resources. It is widely recognised for instance that "Middle East and North Africa's (MENA) states vary considerably in their political capacities [...], the ability of a regime to mobilise public resources and to use them efficiently and effectively."⁴ This leaves considerable room for agents to utilise these capacities

In a highly interdependent economic system, it is very difficult for any country to be isolated from the global economy and be able to pursue policies in tension with the 'rules' of the international economic system without suffering consequences. In an overview of the Middle Eastern states' responses to decreasing economic performances over the course of the last two decades of the 20th Century, Sadiki argues that "governments almost everywhere have in varying degrees succumbed to the new economic correctness, or the so-called Washington consensus."⁵ This move towards the acceptance of the neo-liberal economic agenda is just the latest step in a long march that has seen many different national economies becoming increasingly similar. As recognised by Sadiki, "the populous and poorer Arab states whose economies are fairly integrated into the international economy are highly dependent on the Breton Woods system."⁶ The seemingly neutral notion of interdependence captures today the relations

³ Immanuel Wallerstein, "The Inter-State Structure of the Modern World System", in S. Smith, K. Booth and M. Zalewski (eds.), *International Theory: Positivism and Beyond*, Cambridge University Press, 1996, pp. 87-107.

⁴ Clement Hnery and Robert Springborg, *Globalisation and the Politics of Development in the Middle East* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 74.

⁵ Larbi Sadiki, "Popular Uprisings and Arab Democratisation", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 32, No. 1, 2000, p. 73.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

that have been formed over the course of centuries among nation-states in the economic realm. The concept of interdependence is particularly interesting because it clarifies how events originating outside a country's borders may have a deep impact on it. The problem with the concept is that it presupposes a degree of equality in the relationships it creates. While it is fair to assume this exists between the European Union and the United States when it comes to trade, it is hardly the case in the relations between developed and developing countries. In the latter case, it is probably better to utilise the concept of dependence. This is a particular problem that liberal theories face when attempting to explain international economics. In theory, the elimination of trade barriers, the opening up of markets and the possibility to freely move goods and capital should bring about widespread prosperity, as each country specialises in some aspect of this integrated producing and trading network. The law of comparative advantages is the building block upon which policies are devised to push for further liberalisation. In the long term all countries should benefit from the effects of this 'law'.

There are however two very significant problems with this approach. The first is that the theory assumes that the playing field is level (enter the economics notion of *ceteris paribus*), while this is obviously not the case. The playing field is not and it is unlikely to ever become level because this economic theory excludes politics from its assumptions. Countries that push the hardest for opening up trade and for further liberalisation are the countries that have to most to gain from it, precisely because they are sufficiently powerful to protect their own economies and markets. It follows that poorer countries, with wide open markets and little political influence, find themselves competing with much stronger protected economies. The second problem is that the theory of comparative advantages postulates that every country has 'something' to offer and can specialise into doing so, but this defies reality. In many cases, countries have similar 'advantages' to offer and by competing against each other, they inevitably drive down their costs of production. By doing so they attempt to undercut the competition in a race towards the bottom that leaves them vulnerable and further impoverished. Far from producing widespread wealth, increased liberalism seems to be expanding the gap between rich and poor countries and, at the same time, widening the gap between rich and poor in every society.⁷

⁷ For a critique of mainstream economic thought on globalisation, see Bruce Scott, "The Great Divide in the Global Village", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 80, No. 1, pp. 160-177.

Furthermore, the existence of international financial institutions, with their own agendas and their interests, compounds the unequal economic relations in the modern economy. Institutions like the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank have a primary role in attempting to further integrate the economies of developing countries into the international system, and their actions have significant domestic impact. When such institutions intervene in developing countries to condition economic development, they do not respond to and are not accountable to these countries. It follows that their actions seem to respond more to the needs of the developed world, because it is developed countries that control such institutions thanks to very detailed internal regulations allocating voting rights.⁸ A developing country can ignore the policy recommendations of these institutions or can attempt to stall reforms, but it does so at the risk of being excluded from the few benefits of the international trading system. To compound problems, acceptance of adjustment programmes could spell the end of a regime.

Finally, the role of multinationals should not be overlooked, as they can be richer and more powerful than most developing countries. Susan Strange pioneered the study of relations between states and firms. She argued in 1992: “there has been a fundamental change in the nature of diplomacy. Governments must now bargain not only with other governments, but also with firms or enterprises, while firms now bargain both with governments and with one another.”⁹ From this, it follows that firms have the resources and the ability to influence transnational relations and to exercise pressure from without. In her piece, Strange is particularly interested in looking at how the bargaining power of firms forces states, particularly developing countries, to compete against one another by submitting to increasingly favourable conditions for firms deciding whether to re-locate on their territory. There is one lesson that can be drawn from her study: the transnational firm, by virtue of its economic might, is by all accounts a new powerful player on the international scene. This type of actor has its own interests to defend and promote, and it has its own ‘weapons’ available to ensure that it is, at the very least, listened to.¹⁰

⁸ For a review of how the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund see Ngaire Woods, “IMF and World Bank: questions of accountability”, *International Affairs*, Vol. 77, No. 1, January 2001.

⁹ Susan Strange, “States, Firms and Diplomacy”, *International Affairs*, Vol. 68, No. 1, 1992, p. 1.

¹⁰ For an example of transnational corporations and their impact on issues of global politics, see Ian Rowlands, “Transnational Corporations and Global Environmental Politics” in Daphné Josselin and William Wallace (eds.) *Non-State Actors in World Politics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 133-149.

All this points in the direction of external forces having a substantial role to play on the domestic scene through generating constraints, incentives and disincentives for particular choices. The international economic system consigns countries to perform certain economic functions within it, and this internationally-sanctioned economic position has a constraining influence on the domestic decision-making process, which is far from being fully autonomous. Sadiki again in his analysis of Middle Eastern states argues: “at least in the foreseeable future, there seem to be no answers among the policy-makers in these states to the question of how to resist [the] International Monetary Fund or the World Bank.”¹¹

The above discussion does not mean that Cardoso's dependency theory is entirely correct. His work on Latin America emphasises that “the continent's position on the international market made democratisation especially problematic at more advanced stages of import-substituting capitalist development and even enhanced the necessity for authoritarian rule under specific circumstances.”¹² There are three main problems with the approach of dependency theory.

First of all, it is overly deterministic and seems to indicate that the only important factor for explaining the lack of democratic reforms has to do with the set-up of the international economy, which is biased against developing countries. While there is little doubt that international economic rules reflect the distribution of power of the international political system, it is difficult to accept that the fate of a country is determined solely by one factor.

Secondly, dependency theory may explain specific patterns in Latin America, but may not be as useful for other parts of the world. For instance, there have been cases of countries that were able to break away from a subordinate position in the international economic system and become important economic actors. The experience of Japan and, even more convincingly, of the other ‘Asian tigers’ seem to indicate that it is possible to move away from economic underdevelopment and subordination to become integral part of the economic global elite. This was achieved through a mixture of political authoritarianism and economic planning aimed at using savings to finance the creation of industries for export. However, these success stories cannot be separated from the political and geo-strategic element given that many of these countries benefited from the protection of the United States in military and economic terms.

¹¹ Sadiki, ‘Popular Uprisings’, p. 73

¹² Terry Lynn Karl, “Dilemmas of Democratization in Latin America”, Comparative Politics, Vol. 23, No. 1, October 1990, p. 4.

Finally, dependency theorists focus almost exclusively on the economic position of a country, while just as much importance should be given to the political dimension. In this respect, Neo-Realism is quite useful in its emphasis on the strategic aspects of relations among states. Countries are not linked to the international system simply through economics, but they also have numerous political links. These links are the product of power-relationships, which have an impact on the domestic structure. What is relevant in the end is the position of a country in terms of its economic system and in terms of its geopolitical environment. There are thus two dimensions that should be considered and not only one.

Leaving aside for a moment the geo-strategic dimension, it can be concluded that the level of integration into the economic system makes a country more or less prone to be penetrated by outside forces and renders it more or less susceptible to changes taking place in the external environment as a whole or to policy changes implemented by specific international actors.

It follows that once the economic position is determined, it becomes clearer which country is more or less prone to feel the effects of changes at the international level. It is precisely for this reason that it is crucial that any explanation of transition first 'economically locates' the type of country under examination. The assumption here is that countries that are highly anchored to a single international market and that are highly dependent on the export of one commodity will be particularly sensitive to shifts taking place within that market. The result will be that international changes will have dramatic effects on the entire domestic economy: distributive policies and expenditures of the government are greatly affected. Since most single-export developing countries have very little control over international rules of trade and over market fluctuations, they will be much more prone to be penetrated than more developed economies.

It should be highlighted that the choice of concentrating exports on one commodity (generally a natural resource) is formally made through domestic decision-making processes and it is argued that the problems deriving from this choice are due to internal mismanagement or poor economic policy-making. While there is some substance to this argument, it should be noted that most developing countries are former colonies and that their economic and commercial patterns had been set to serve the needs of a colonial power. This implies that even after formal independence, it was extremely difficult to break with past economic practices and, in trade terms, independence did not mean economic autonomy. Thus, single-export countries were and still are the subject of

domestic economic mismanagement, but the so-called strategic choice of only exporting one commodity reflects the weight of past experiences and the maintenance of patterns of trade that still favour the more powerful actors in the system. This is true even for the one natural resource that seemed to be able to bind together many developing nations across the world: oil. Despite the creation of the Organisation of Petrol Exporting Countries (OPEC) and the embargo of 1973, Hartshorn states “how much more effective an oil embargo imposed by importing governments could be than anything exporting governments could try.”¹³

This does not mean that oil and gas exporting countries did not reap huge benefits from having oil, but it also testifies to the extreme volatility of the market and the inability of these countries to break away from a developing model focussed only on the exploitation of a single natural resource with only one very powerful market (the developed world), that also needs imported technology and expertise to survive. For the MENA region, “mineral fuels constitute two thirds of the region’s exports”¹⁴ and according to an analysis by El-Erian, “in terms of trade, [these mineral fuels] are fifteen times more volatile than those of the entire set of developing countries.”¹⁵

When looking at countries in transition, it should be of primary importance to identify which type of state we are examining in economic terms in order to establish the links that it has with the international economic system, which incentives or disincentives it may be subjected to and which constraints affect domestic policy-making.

The second dimension along which we should determine the extent of the impact of international variables on domestic actors is the position of the country in terms of its geopolitical environment. An analysis of the geo-political and geo-strategic surroundings of a country is the key to understanding how external actors may be involved, directly or indirectly, in the calculations and strategies of domestic actors, as regime change may have spill-over effects on the region. This is particularly important because regime change does not simply affect domestic politics. Radical regime change has profound consequences internationally, as a new government in power may behave very differently from the previous one and therefore impinging on the interests of its neighbours and of a range of international actors. The most obvious type of radical

¹³ J.E. Hartshorn, *Oil Trade: Policies and Prospects* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 6

¹⁴ Henry and Springborg, p. 40.

¹⁵ Mohammed El-Erian, “Middle Eastern Economies’ External Environment: What Lies Ahead?”, *Middle East Policy*, Vol. 53, March 1996, p. 141.

regime change is through revolution and the most recent one in the Islamic world (Iran in 1979) had tremendous repercussions throughout the whole region and the world as well. The assumption here is that the position of a country in the international political system has considerable impact on the perceptions and interests of external actors, which in turn will have an interest in any type of political and governmental change that might occur. The more a country occupies a prominent strategic position, the stronger the interest in it will be, as numerous actors will want to influence the country towards their most preferred outcome.

The analysis should not simply be limited to what Yilmaz describes as “the expected external costs of suppression and toleration in a democracy-promotion environment.”¹⁶ One of the constant themes within the literature on transition is the so-called 'democracy-facilitation or enhancing' environment. This presupposes the existence of an environment where the leading actors, state and non-state, promote democracy in the system. A number of studies outline the democracy-promotion policies of the United States and the European Union.¹⁷ While this may appear at first convincing, it should also be highlighted that democracy-promotion is context-dependent.¹⁸

Democratic principles have been on the rise in the international environment at the very least since the Helsinki Conference in 1975. The theory that inspired that agreement, liberal internationalism, seems to have been vindicated in its emphasis on democracy and free trade as the basis for international peace, particularly after the collapse of the Soviet Union. According to liberal internationalists, both democratic rule and free trade are the building blocks of international peace and their expansion is central to the goal of world peace. It is argued that states that are democratic and economically integrated are not going to go to war with each other. On the one hand, elected leaders will not find support for a war against a country that also has democratically elected representatives; a peaceful solution to a conflictual situation will be found. On the other, tight economic links will generate a high cost for disrupting the smooth running of economic exchanges and therefore no actor has any interest in jeopardising these mutual benefits.

¹⁶ Yilmaz, op. cit., p. 67.

¹⁷ For an analysis of the EU democracy promotion strategies in Eastern Europe, please see Diane Ethier, “Is Democracy Promotion Effective? Comparing Conditionality and Incentives”, *Democratization*, Vol. 10, N. 1, Spring 2003, pp. 99-120.

¹⁸ Francesco Cavatorta, “Geopolitical challenges to the success of democracy in North Africa: Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco”, *Democratization* Vol. 8, No. 4, Winter 2001, pp. 175-194.

An expansion of democracy to undemocratic countries, and their participation to the world economy, will ensure that this type of peaceful relations will be extended further. It follows from this that it becomes almost a necessity to promote democracy abroad in order to have international peace. However, these theoretical tenets are not entirely convincing because they tend to hide profound inequalities in state-to-state relations and to overemphasise the role of economics. On the first count it can be argued that democratic governance does not ensure against war taking place. Going to war depends more on opportunities, perceived benefits and material power than on regime type. On the second count, it can be just as easily argued that close links are bound to generate conflict particularly if the perceived benefits to one side outnumber the benefits to the partner.

When it comes to the specific policy promotion of democracy, this tends to hide the fact that national interests, the quest for security, the exploitative nature of the international economic system, and the rise of non-state actors are still of primary importance in international politics. The promotion of democracy by western governments, by international organisations and even by multinationals has always to contend with the geopolitical reality within which all these actors operate. Geopolitics is an important dimension of democratisation and helps explain the reasons behind some of the contradictory policies deriving from democracy promotion. The geographical position of a country determines the environment within which it will trade; its demography will have a bearing on economic and social development, and the natural resources it possesses or lacks will have an effect on its pattern of economic development. This in turn has consequences for the policies that will be undertaken, and at the same time it has profound consequences for how external actors will behave. It follows that any analysis of regime change should take into account the geopolitical environment and should not assume that a democracy-enhancing environment is in operation without seriously considering that democracy promotion can take the back seat when other considerations have more importance.

A useful analytical tool in this respect is the concept of 'pivotal' state, which is an old notion that has seen a revival after the end of the Cold War. A pivotal state is defined as "a hot spot that could not only determine the fate of its region but also affect international stability."¹⁹ The concept is used to denote the importance of certain nation-

¹⁹ Robert Chase, Emily Hill and Paul Kennedy, "Pivotal States and US Strategy", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 75, No. 1, January/February 1996, p. 33.

states across the globe with respect to the dominant actors in the system and their interests. A recent use of the concept has been in conjunction with ideas put forth in policy-making circles on how to better protect US national interests. A pivotal state is not pivotal in absolute terms, but in the eyes of the beholder and the beholder in world politics is the United States. This does not mean that the concept loses usefulness, indeed the opposite may hold true because it is the more powerful actors in the system that tend to dictate how the system itself is run.

Dramatic changes within a pivotal state are therefore monitored with much greater attention and attempts are made to influence the outcome of domestic struggles for control of the government. It follows that there are nation-states that are more important than others for their potential capacity to affect regional and international stability. This geo-strategic dimension is very much state-centred and US-orientated, but it is possible to argue that leading European countries (and the EU as an autonomous actor) also have pivotal states in mind. The launch of the Euro-Mediterranean is an example of such a strategy aimed at dealing with instability at the periphery of Europe.²⁰ In addition, not only states can use that concept to formulate their own preferred policies.

After having analysed separately both the economic and geo-strategic dimensions, it is now possible to collapse them together. The combination of the two dimensions (economic and political) should be the focus of the analysis. It should be at the centre of an open framework of democratisation that does not simplistically assume that the external environment is about the promotion of democracy simply because the leading actors state that it is the case, but in a more nuanced environment. In this environment, other priorities also exist such as regional and international stability, which can be guaranteed at times by an authoritarian regime rather than by a democratic one. The other point that should be emphasised is that this interaction forces choices onto domestic actors. While the latter remain formally in charge, the conditions under which they operate are not entirely of their own making.

5.3 The Rentier State

The model of the rentier-state, put forth by Luciani and Beblawi,²¹ is particularly useful in this type of analysis. In very simple terms, “a rentier state is defined as any

²⁰ Jon Marks, “High Hopes and Low Motives: the New Euro-Mediterranean Partnership Initiative”, *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 1, No. 1, Summer 1996, pp. 1-24.

²¹ Hazem Beblawi and Giacomo Luciani (eds.), *The Rentier State* (London, Croom Helm, 1987)

state that receives a substantial portion of its income in the form of external rents.”²² Okruhlik recognises that “today, the term refers most often to the oil states whose income is derived from the international sale of petroleum,”²³ although significant external rents are also considered to be remittances from migrant workers and foreign aid. The presence of such alternative rents does not challenge the assumption that it is the central government that is in charge of distributing them domestically.

According to Brynen, rentier-states have very specific characteristics that distinguish them from other developing countries.²⁴ First of all, “they are extremely dependent on the export of a single resource, far more so than the general dependence of third-world economies on primary products and exports.”²⁵ Second, the rent that is derived depends on “the vast gap between the cost of production and the price of oil on international markets.”²⁶ This obviously means that when the price on the international market is high, the rents are massive and vice-versa. Thirdly, “only a very small proportion of the population is directly engaged in the production or distribution of this wealth”²⁷ and the rest is really supported through the earnings of this industry, which the government distributes. Finally, “the financial resources required for government allocation are not generated primarily by domestic taxation but rather are directly acquired from externally generated rents.”²⁸ To these four features, it can be added that most rentier-states depend on the technology and the expertise of oil multinationals, which bring to bear considerable pressure on these states and which are very much involved in the politics of their regimes.

These features have numerous implications in the economic, political and social spheres and they help understand and explain state-society relations in many petroleum-exporting states. Luciani summarises his findings by stating that “a state whose government derives most or a substantial part of its revenue from rents accruing from the outside world (rentier state) will display a political dynamic different from that of states in which the government is sustained through taxation of domestic economic activity

²² Hootan Shambayati, “The Rentier State, Interest Groups and the Paradox of Autonomy”, *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 28, No. 2, April 1994, p. 308.

²³ Gwenn Okruhlik, “Rentier Wealth, Unruly Law, and the Rise of Opposition”, *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 31, No. 3, April 1999, p. 295.

²⁴ Rex Brynen, “Economic Crisis and Post-Rentier Democratization in the Arab World: the case of Jordan”, *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 25, No. 1, March 1992, pp. 69-97.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 70.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 71.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 71.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 71.

(production states).”²⁹ Thus, the rents derived from the production and the sale of mineral fuels on international markets shape the political, economic and social structures of the countries benefiting from these rents and Algeria fits well into this category.

Of the features outlined, the most important ones for the first dimension are the extent of the dependency and the changing prices. The result of inclusion in the international economic system is that the country in question is usually destined to fulfil only the role of oil and gas supplier without being able or being permitted to diversify its production and therefore its exports. One clear example is the production and export of agricultural products. Some rentier states such as Algeria or semi-rentier states such as Tunisia and Jordan were able to export agricultural products to other countries. This changed dramatically over the course of their recent economic history and the sharp drop in their export of agricultural products together with the import of massive amounts of them particularly from Europe and the United States runs parallel to the growth in the export of oil. While the reduction in the production of agricultural goods is partly a function of the domestic changes taking place such as urbanisation, industrialisation financed with oil rents and demographic increase, it nevertheless reflects the world trading patterns. Due to the extremely restrictive protectionist regimes in operation in both Europe and the United States, agricultural goods cannot be freely exported and therefore there is little incentive to promote that aspect of the economy. This does not mean that the local elites and policy-makers are not partly responsible for the choices they made regarding agricultural policies, but international conditions were a constraining force with which they had to contend.

Table 5.1: Algeria's Agricultural Trade Balance (Millions of Dinars)

	1967-69	1970-73	1975	1978	1983	1985
<i>Export</i>	717	736	687	589	178	178
<i>Import</i>	731	925	4436	5029	9209	10990
<i>Needs Covered</i>	98%	80%	15%	12%	2%	2.6%

Source: *Annuaire du Commerce Extérieur* (Direction Generale des Douanes, Algiers), *Annuaire Statistique, L'Algerie/Profil Agro-Alimentaire* cited in Lise Garon (see note 9)³⁰

²⁹ Giacomo Luciani, “The Oil Rent, Fiscal Crisis of the State and Democratization”, in Ghassan Salamé (ed.) *Democracy Without Democrats? The Renewal of Politics in the Muslim World* (London, I.B. Tauris, 1994), p. 131.

The dependency on the international market of oil renders rentier states very susceptible to market fluctuations. Rentier states have very little control over prices and these fluctuations strongly influence the amount of revenues available to the government. In turn, the revenues from hydrocarbons have a profound impact on society in general, as their distribution is a key political instrument used by the state.

It is opportune at this stage to briefly outline what general propositions can be made if the model of the rentier- state is accepted. These propositions relate to how rentier-states are able to avoid a democratic transformation and postpone it until an international crisis in the market they depend on forces them to undertake political reforms in order to avoid widespread popular dissatisfaction.

First of all, there is the powerful argument about rentier states not needing popular mobilisation for economic production. Developing states in general need to mobilise the population around an official discourse in order to motivate the people to take part in the developmental effort. For rentier states the type of mobilisation is quite different and it means that the elites controlling the state are less sensitive to political pressures coming from below thanks to their financial autonomy.

Second, a rentier state owes its legitimacy to an informal pact with the population, whereby economic advantages are provided in exchange for popular acquiescence. In the Middle East and North Africa this informal pact is known as the democracy of bread (*dīmuqrāṭiyyat al-khubz*).³¹ According to Luciani, “whenever a state is in a position to buy consensus by distributing goods, services and income in exchange for little or nothing, it does not need democratic legitimation.”³²

Thirdly, the patronage system that is instituted to distribute the rents is detrimental to the development of an autonomous civil society. Given that the only real economic activity in the country is inextricably linked to oil production and sale, there is very little room for an independent and vocal civil society to develop and it goes without saying that those who control the distribution of the rent discourage it.

Finally, there is the problem of ‘no taxation, no representation.’ One of the main forces behind the demand for democratic control of government had, historically, to do with the demand for control on how the taxes levied on the general population were allocated by the central authority. No proper state building can take place without a fiscal

³⁰ Lise Garon, *Crise Economique et Consensus en Etat Rentier. Le cas de l'Algérie Socialiste*, *Etudes Internationales*, Vol. 25, No. 1, Mars 1994.

³¹ Larbi Sadiki, “Towards Arab Liberal Governance: from the Democracy of Bread to the Democracy of the Vote”, *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 18, No. 1, 1997, pp. 127-148.

³² Luciani, 'The Oil Rent', p. 132.

policy and ultimately it is this policy that generates pressures from below for control of the revenues raised through taxes. The famous slogan of the American Revolution 'no taxation without representation' has been modified in rentier states to highlight the fact that since taxes are either very low or non-existent, representation at the political level is not necessary. The great bulk of the activities that most modern states carry out is financed through taxation, but in rentier states this is not the case, as government spending is almost entirely financed through external rents. Superficially, it may seem that the levels of taxation in rentier states is similar to the one found in other countries, but on closer inspection it emerges that "whereas direct taxes on individual incomes are typically some 10 per cent of GDP in Europe, in the MENA they tend to be much less."³³ This means that demands for accountability are not particularly strong, as it is direct taxation that generates more resistance and more demands for control.

Thus, the political realm is to a large extent the 'product' of these economic arrangements and Beblawi states convincingly: "public goods and private favours have thus gone together in defining the role of the [rentier] state. With virtually no taxes, citizens are far less demanding in terms of political participation. The history of the democracy owes its beginnings... to some fiscal association."³⁴ Given this, it is easier for both the elites in power and the general population to accept the status quo. Larbi Sadiki emphasises that "petrodollars have endowed the Arab state with an independent resource to cement and reproduce itself"³⁵ and that "petrodollars have enabled power holders to assert their authority by expanding state involvement in all socio-economic spheres."³⁶

These domestic consequences are not always accepted in the literature on the rentier-state and they have been criticised for being too general and simplistic. The main point of criticism is that not all rentier states are the same and that variation is too wide for these propositions to be valid. In a study on Algeria, Garon deconstructs each of them and argues that they do not apply at all to the Algeria case. She explains that far from not needing popular mobilisation, the elites in power held a profoundly important mobilising discourse, particularly in the socialist era. She argues that, in fact, the state was "desperately calling the population to mobilise in the 'Battle for Development'"³⁷ through

³³ Henry and Springborg, op. cit., p. 78.

³⁴ Hazem Beblawi, "The rentier state in the Arab world", in Hazem Beblawi and Giacomo Luciani (eds.), *The Rentier State* (London, Croom Helm, 1987), p. 53.

³⁵ Sadiki, 'Towards Arab liberal governance', p. 134.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 134.

³⁷ Garon., p. 34.

the constant use of slogans calling on Algerians to be responsible and vigilant, to work hard for the future and to denounce laxity.

On the point about the exchange of economic advantages for political legitimacy, Garon highlights that this was not really the case in Algeria either. The social development programmes the State put in place were not really used to further political consensus and buy off contestation, but were part of the path towards the construction of a socialist society. In Algeria, the legitimacy of the ruling elites depended very simply from having won the war of independence against France. Garon concludes on this point that “the discourse of legitimacy of the Algerian rentier-state was built on the symbolism of sacrifice and not on images of economic prosperity.”³⁸

On the point about patronage and control of distribution of the rent discouraging the emergence of an autonomous civil society, Garon simply points out that the historical record does not support the hypothesis. Rather, there were powerful examples of civil society demanding more autonomy such as the cultural movement in Kabylie or the movement for human rights, and they were suppressed because Algeria was a totalitarian state. More than being a rentier-state, Algeria was totalitarian and the “autonomy of civil society is impossible because of the artificial vacuum maintained by political unanimity within the ruling party.”³⁹

On the point of 'no taxation, no representation', Garon argues that while Algeria had a low level of taxation, indirect taxation in the form of austerity measures was particularly strong. In conclusion, Garon attempts to demonstrate that the link between rentierism, domestic political consequences and international markets does not help explain political choices. Garon's work reflects a strain in the rentierism literature that strongly argues that “no necessary link exists between the accumulation of wealth and a particular social outcome.”⁴⁰ According to this literature, it is therefore not true that rentierism promotes political quietism and sustains the continued absence of democracy.⁴¹

While the arguments put forth by critics of the rentier-state model are important reminders that experiences may differ from rentier-state to rentier-state and that some of

³⁸ Ibid., p. 36.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 37.

⁴⁰ Okruhlik, op. cit., p. 295.

⁴¹ For a general discussion of this point and for findings regarding the statistical relationship between rentierism and authoritarianism, see Michael Herb, “Does Rentierism Prevent Democracy?”, paper presented at the 2002 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, August 29 - September 1, 2002, pp. 1-36.

the earlier findings may have been too quickly accepted, they fail to be entirely convincing. To defend the general principles of the model of the rentier-state, Okruhlik argues that the emergence of an opposition in rentier states is indeed likely particularly when rents diminish. Furthermore, much as in Okruhlik's argument, Luciani recognises that a fiscal crisis in the rentier state quickly generates pressures for political change, as the informal pact has been broken. It follows that, contrary to Garon's argument, the emergence of opposition in Kabilye against the central government in the early 1980s could be the product of diminishing resources to be distributed to 'buy ' acquiescence. Finally, in Garon's case, some of the evidence she presents to support her arguments is contradictory. While it is for instance true that popular mobilisation was central to the regime's official discourse in Algeria, it should also be underlined that very few actually believed in it and while stability was a product of authoritarianism, it was also due to significant social and economic progress for the vast majority of the population.

This discussion about the rentier-state is particularly important for the Algerian transition, as rentierism has often been associated with the absence of democracy. As mentioned earlier, a corollary of this holds that when the rents decrease, political pressure swiftly follows and popular demands for change dramatically increase. Once a regime has built most of its political legitimacy around the provision of social and economic goods, it is very difficult for it to remain legitimate if these benefits fail to continue. From this it can be postulated that the position of a country in the international economic system is of primary importance if we are to understand how the external environment can have an impact on its domestic political decision-making. When it comes to the Arab world, the internal-external linkage is quite evident, as "the strength and relative domestic autonomy of the Arab state stems from dependence on external oil revenue."⁴²

The hypothesis that derives from the economic dimension is that a sharp fall in revenues for rentier states means that the domestic political system will be greatly affected. If the fall is sufficiently sharp a popular reaction will be triggered that facilitates democratic concessions from the power holders in order to fend off revolutionary threats. If correct, this hypothesis would point to international causes being one of the primary factors leading to democratic reforms.

⁴² Sadiki, p. 134. The same point is made by S.K. Farsoun, "Oil, state and social structure in the Middle East", *Arab Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 10, No. 2, 1988, p. 166.

5.4 The Geopolitics of the Mediterranean

The second dimension of a framework looking at countries in transition and how they should be classified is preoccupied with identifying their geo-political and geo-strategic environment. Geopolitics, as a sub-field of international relations, has been on the wane for some time, but it can provide useful insights into how the surrounding environment stimulates, perceives and treats changes taking place in neighbouring countries. Any country is subject to geopolitical constraints and “location, distance, and the distribution of resources have significant influences on international relations.”⁴³ This does not mean that states are the only protagonists of international politics and so the interests of non-state actors will also be examined in this study of the geopolitical context. However, it does indicate that states’ foreign policies need to be analysed to see how they may influence how a transition is played out. In the case of Algeria, the focus should be on the Mediterranean.

The single greatest factor in determining the regional foreign policies of Mediterranean countries is the realisation that the Mediterranean represents a fracture zone. Anderson and French argue that countries in the region accept “the existence of a global North-South fracture zone, which is perhaps most clearly demarcated as a boundary down the centre of the Mediterranean.”⁴⁴ The differences in demography, governance, resources, and level of economic development between the two sides of the Mediterranean are much starker today than in the past, but the developmental gap has been substantial for quite some time and colonisation from the West was a witness to that.

This geographic divide has multiple dimensions, which in turn impinge on the policies to be implemented. Thus, geopolitical factors are relevant in narrowing the policy options open to the states in the area. In the case of the Mediterranean, there is no doubt that its “strategic location as a funnel for major oil routes”⁴⁵ made the area a region of vital importance for numerous countries. Furthermore, the many dimensions of the North-South divide strengthen the perception that the region is on a major dividing line. The following are some of the dimensions dividing the Mediterranean:

⁴³ Kathleen Braden and Fred Shelley, *Engaging Geopolitics* (Harlow, Pearson Education, 2000), p. 5.

⁴⁴ Ewan Anderson and Dominic French, “New Dimensions in Mediterranean Security”, in Richard Gillespie (ed.), *Mediterranean Politics*, (London: Pinter, 1994), p. 9.

⁴⁵ Russell King, “The Mediterranean: Europe’s Rio Grande”, in Malcom Anderson and Eberhard Bort (eds.), *The Frontiers of Europe*, (London: Pinter, 1998), p. 118.

- The strategic importance of the region in terms of energy resources gains even more relevance when the economic development of beneficiaries is compared to the poor domestic economic situation of the exporting states. This is particularly true for the Maghreb countries, with the possible exception of Libya. Tunisia and Algeria satisfy a significant share of Western Europe's gas needs, with Algeria also contributing with the provision of crude oil.
- Maghreb countries are also physically constrained to look to southern Europe for trade, migration opportunities and political recognition, as the rest of "Africa remains isolated from North African affairs by the geographic barrier of the Sahara desert."⁴⁶ This geography renders these countries heavily dependent on the west and there is considerable evidence to show that the foreign policies are geared towards having stronger ties to Europe.
- Demographic data reinforce the economic divide. As the population of southern Europe decreases, Maghreb demography is a time bomb. Birth rates are high and the population is very young. At the same time prospects are bleak due to harsh economic difficulties. With scarce employment opportunities, for many migration is the only way out of a desperate economic situation. Those who stay behind increasingly appear to be attracted by the Islamic political project.⁴⁷
- The Mediterranean also represents a profound cultural divide due to the presence of Islam, Christianity and Secularism. There are deeply rooted fears about a Western cultural take-over in Muslim countries and this fear is reciprocated in the West where Islam is often misrepresented and equated with intolerant practices and religious fundamentalism. The fear of Islamic movements coming to power in the region has been a preoccupation for Western policy-makers since the Iranian revolution of 1979, although the United States in particular had a tradition of cooperation with and support of some of these movements.⁴⁸

The geopolitics of the region has therefore had a considerable impact on how the Mediterranean states think about their security and on how they attempt to pursue their

⁴⁶ George Joffe', "The European Union and the Maghreb", in Richard Gillespie (ed.), *Mediterranean Politics*, London: Pinter, 1994, p.22.

⁴⁷ For evidence of this in Morocco see for example Dominique Lagarde, "Le Maroc face à l'Islam d'en bas", *L'Express International*, No. 2723, 11-17 Septembre, 2003, pp. 42-46.

⁴⁸ Michel Faure, "Washington-Islamistes. Liaisons Dangereuses", *L'Express*, 20 Septembre, 2002, pp. 88-94.

national interests. On the one hand, the countries of southern Europe and the United States have a very conservative vision of what security is and implement policies that coincide with this interpretation. On the other hand, there are poor, populous countries ruled by authoritarian rulers who attempt to exploit this Western quest for stability and who, at the same time, have to deal with domestic challenges to their position. When it comes to the European Union, it should be highlighted that “the creation of the EEC and its gradual political development posed a particular threat to the countries of the Maghreb.”⁴⁹ Its further expansion to the East increasingly complicates the issue of EU-Maghreb relations, although the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership attempted to address some regional issues.

When it comes to the United States, the area has always represented a primary interest because of its strategic location in terms of access to natural resources and more recently for the role that radical Islam plays in it. It is not a coincidence that Algeria has been defined as pivotal state, whose fate is or should be of extreme relevance to US policy-makers.⁵⁰ Quandt recognises that “compared to other candidates, it is small in population and the United States only has a modest presence in the country.”⁵¹ However, he is very quick to add that “Algeria does count as a significant source of energy; Europe is deeply concerned about its future; and neighbouring countries in North Africa and further afield in the Middle East could be affected by what happens there.”⁵² The conclusion is therefore that “it seems fair to consider Algeria as at least a marginal member of the pivotal group.”⁵³ This is made explicit today and can be considered valid also before the whole notion of the ‘pivotal state’ came back into fashion, although the rise of the FIS through democratic procedures was probably the factor that made Algeria special. The situation has not changed much over the last fifteen years and when the Algerian transition actually began and played itself out, many of the aspects of the dividing line were already in place, as were the external interests in the country. However, it should be once again highlighted that the status of ‘pivotal state’ was conferred on Algeria after the military coup took place and the civil war broke out, as its outcome had widespread repercussions for the entire region. It is necessary to point this

⁴⁹ Margaret Blunden, “Insecurity on Europe's Southern Flank”, *Survival*, Vol. 36, No. 2, p. 135.

⁵⁰ William Quandt, “Algeria: How Pivotal is It? And Why?”, in Robert Chase, Emily Hill and Paul Kennedy (eds.) *The Pivotal States: A New Framework for US Policy in the Developing World* (New York, Norton, 1998), pp. 195-214.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 195.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 195.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 195.

out because at the time of the transition proper all international actors devoted more attention to Eastern Europe. In conclusion, Algeria had geo-strategic relevance, but did not figure among the top priorities for policy-makers at the turn of the 1980s.

In more general terms, this discussion points to the existence of a 'differentiation' among nation-states in terms of their international importance, at least in the eyes of the leading actors in the system. It follows that domestic developments in these countries will be paid attention to more carefully than events developing in countries with little strategic significance. This type of attention seems to generate policies that require influencing these domestic developments in order to attempt to arrive at an outcome that is satisfactory to these external actors. While this may be simply restating the obvious, it is a point that can often be lost.

While the preceding discussion points to the predominance of state actors as the primary players in geo-strategy, this does not deny that non-state actors may play the same type of game. The Mediterranean is a 'priority' for many hydrocarbon multinationals given the access route it represents and given the amount of resources present in many of the countries on the southern bank. Specifically, Algeria has large areas of territory that have not been thoroughly explored and that could yield massive discoveries of oil and gas reserves, as recent exploration work conducted by British Petroleum (BP) demonstrated.⁵⁴ As highlighted by John Imle Jr., "global energy companies tend to be among the first foreign investors in a country or region"⁵⁵ and this is certainly the case in the Mediterranean. Algeria and Libya are very attractive to these companies and their political developments have an impact on such investments. Thus, a range of different actors plays the geo-strategic game.

What is true for multinationals could also be true for other non-state actors and movements and the attention Algeria drew in the Islamic world is testimony of that. The southern bank of the Mediterranean, with the exception of Egypt, had never been considered a hotbed of fundamentalism, but the penetration of radical Islam in Algeria, and subsequently in Morocco and Tunisia, changed this perception. Radical Islam is, to a

⁵⁴ In a recent overview of the oil and gas sector conducted by the UK government, it emerges that "Algeria has been identified as a high priority market for the oil and gas sector" in terms of investment. See

www.tradepartners.gov.uk/oilandgas/algeria/profile/overview/shtml

⁵⁵ John Imle Jr., "Multinationals and the New World of Energy Development: a Corporate Perspective", *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 53, No. 1, Fall 1999, p. 266.

certain degree, an international ideological movement that crosses traditional state boundaries.

5.5 Typology of variables

Having outlined the reasons why the international economic and the geopolitical dimensions should be taken into account and having placed them at the centre of the explanation, it should be detailed which specific variables are at play in such a framework. The model identifies three types of variables. Within each variable, there is then a sub-set of more specific propositions.

The first type of variable is 'external shocks', meaning fortuitous events that take place at international level and that influence the domestic actors by forcing them to re-evaluate where they stand and what they stand for. While the process is explained through path-dependency and the focus is on agents, agency cannot be entirely separated from structure, as the two are in dynamic equilibrium. External shocks are the 'context' within which decision-making takes place. Such shocks are beyond the control of the country under scrutiny and can be seen as triggers of choices and strategies that would have not been undertaken without their occurrence. These events may take place along one of the two dimensions previously outlined.

The second variable is 'direct active policies' by outside actors that have an interest in the country and, specifically, an interest in the regime and policies that the country adopts. These external actors are not only other states, but a multiplicity of actors. The point is that there are non-state actors operating on the international stage and that they are both autonomous and independent from state actors.

The third variable is 'larger trends' in the international system, which constrain the timing and the type of development of political changes. Some have labelled this the *zeitgeist* or the spirit of the times, which is quite difficult to operationalise. In spite of this problem, it is possible to identify trends in international politics that at different moments in time seem to privilege one ideology over the other.

We can look at these factors as concentric circles of pressure. Larger trends are long-term and remain reasonably constant and therefore difficult to avoid. However, this does not mean that the fate of a transition is determined by these structural trends, as external shocks can lead the country in a different direction. In the end it is actors (domestic or international), as opposed to 'unobservable' structural pressures, who are in charge of the process. It is for this reason that the traditional conceptual categories of

Neo-Realism and liberalism are not sufficient on their own to understand how the process develops. Neo-realism treats the state as a black box and does not deem domestic factors to have any impact on the formation of structures and policies, which are determined solely by external pressures. It follows that the role of actors is not particularly significant because as rational actors they will choose the course dictated by these external forces. Liberalism has also shortcomings in this respect because of its biased normative position. While paying more attention to the domestic structure of the state and its internal characteristics, it assumes that the external environment embodies 'positive' pro-democracy norms. In fact, this assumption cannot be made and the external environment could include pro-democratic and anti-democratic factors, as there are many other interests that can come into conflict with the desire to promote democracy abroad. It follows that access to domestic actors, and the pressures exercised, do not really depend on the norms which liberalism puts forth.

Within each variable, there are sub-variables that will be outlined. In the final paragraph, hypotheses will be derived for what this all means in the Algerian case.

5.5.1 External Shocks

Looking at the category 'external shocks' it emerges that there were four separate events that were beyond the control of countries across the globe in the years of the transition, and that therefore had an impact on Algeria as well. One of these events was the massive decrease of the price of oil and gas on international markets in 1985/1986 accompanied by drastic changes in the value of the US dollar. This event, coupled with the debt crisis of many developing countries in the late 1980s, had very profound repercussions on the international economic system. It suffices for now to outline that, when it came to Algeria, "after 1986, the situation worsened rapidly as oil and gas revenues collapsed under the twin assault of a Saudi-inspired collapse in world oil prices and a dramatic decline in the value of the dollar, the currency in which world energy trade was transacted."⁵⁶

The consequences of this economic crisis at the global level touched a number of realms. First of all, it triggered a massive reduction in revenues for all petroleum-exporting countries across the globe. Just as the increase in the price of oil in the 1970s had radically modified the domestic structure of society in these countries, leading to

⁵⁶ George Joffe, "The Role of Violence within the Algerian Economy", *The Journal of North African Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 1, Spring 2002, p. 32.

rapid economic modernisation, the decrease in oil revenues affected their distributive capabilities.

Secondly, the problem of the external debt, which originated in the late 1970s, was a serious addendum to an already difficult situation. The problem of the debt did not immediately touch oil-exporting countries and, according to Walton and Seddon, “while the OPEC producers and Newly Industrialised Countries surged ahead during the latter part of the 1970s, most other developing countries began to experience growing indebtedness, declining terms of trade and increased balance of payments problems.”⁵⁷ It followed that countries that were not oil-exporting defaulted on their debt repayments and had to re-negotiate their debt with international financial institutions. The case of Morocco is a good example of this, as the world recession forced the government to call for the aid of international financial institutions. Since 1983, the Moroccan economy has been transformed in accordance with the policies devised by the IMF and the World Bank. However, the crisis soon caught up with the oil-exporting countries as well and by the mid-1980s rentier-states were experiencing the full severity of the downturn.

At the time, the international community of donors believed that the way forward for developing economies was to adopt the laissez-faire policies that the United States and the United Kingdom were implementing at home. This “developmental paradigm stressing economic liberalisation, especially free trade and privatisation, began to be asserted by Western theorists and policy-makers.”⁵⁸ Accordingly, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund launched a policy of structural adjustment programs (SAPs). Walton and Seddon state: “structural adjustment came to be synonymous with economic reform during the 1980s and became the only acceptable strategy of development according to the international financial institutions that were to dominate the economic policy of the developing world.”⁵⁹ The idea behind this vast programme of SAPs was that “market forces and economic efficiency were the best way to achieve the kind of growth which is the best antidote to poverty.”⁶⁰ This neo-liberal path to development became known as the Washington Consensus and the impact of these programmes on developing countries was substantial.

⁵⁷ John Walton and David Seddon, *Free Markets and Food Riots. The Politics of Global Adjustment* (Oxford: Blackwell Press, 1994), p. 11.

⁵⁸ Tom Najem, “Privatisation and the State in Morocco: Nominal Objectives and Problematic Realities”, *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 6, No. 2, Summer 2001, p. 51.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

⁶⁰ Barber Conable, former President of the World Bank.

This external shock is at the root of many of the domestic changes that were implemented in the late 1980s and in the early 1990s with the significant involvement of international financial institutions. The political implications of adjustment programmes are far-reaching and, in particular, it is accepted that the most fundamental consequence of austerity measure was the explosion of widespread, violent protest riots. In a 1990 quantitative study, Walton and Ragin were able to show that the occurrence and severity of riots depend on two factors: over-urbanisation and the extent of international involvement in the domestic economy.⁶¹ At a more general level, “the world-wide promotion of neo-liberal economic policies, particularly during the 1980s and 1990s, by global governance institutions has been accompanied by increasing inequalities within and between states.”⁶² These inequalities have resulted in widespread social upheaval.

Another important event that marked the 1980s was the victory of the Afghan guerrillas in their war of liberation against the Soviet Army. In Western countries, the withdrawal of the Soviets from Afghanistan was represented as a victory of the American and British policy of supporting the Afghan guerrilla fighters and it was identified as one of the key victories that allowed the West to ‘win’ the Cold War. Through economic and military aid to various guerrilla groups, the United States and the British had been able to fight a war by proxy against the Soviet Union and accelerate its fall. Zbigniew Brzezinski freely admitted this in an interview to a French magazine in 1998 when he stated that the aim of American covert involvement in Afghanistan was to give the Soviet Union its own Vietnam.⁶³ The support for the Afghani fighters consisted in military training, financial aid and supply of weaponry. Parenti argues: “from 1979 to 1992 the US channelled a minimally estimated three billion dollars to the various Mujaideen factions fighting the Soviets [...]. The Saudi dynasty sent an equal amount while additional aid flowed from China, Iran, assorted Islamic charities, drug-running operations, privatised CIA funding sources and various Arab millionaires.”⁶⁴

⁶¹ John Walton and C. Ragin, “Global and national sources of political protest: Third World responses to debt crisis”, *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 55, No. 4, December 1990, pp. 876-890.

⁶² Caroline Thomas, “Poverty, Development and Hunger” in John Baylis and Steve Smith (eds.) *The Globalisation of World Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 560.

⁶³ “Zbigniew Brzezinski: How Jimmy Carter and I started the Mujahidden”, *Le Nouvel Observateur*, January 15-21, 1998.

⁶⁴ Christian Parenti, “America's Jihad: A History of Origins”, in Phil Scraton (ed.) *Beyond September 11*, (London: Pluto Press, 2002), p. 11.

One of the side effects of the victory of the guerrillas against the Soviets was the increasing confidence of the radical Islamic movement about its cause. In fact, the war in Afghanistan represented a massive turning point for the radical Islamic movement in a number of ways. First of all, the Afghan cause understood in terms of *jihad* had raised passions and it provided a boost for Islam-based political action at a time when other ideologies, imported from the West, had failed. The mobilising ideology behind the war against the Soviets was not in fact simply Islam as a system of common beliefs. The ideology was a rather radical version of Islam, which led many of the fighters, particularly the ones from outside Afghanistan, to believe that they were the avant-garde that the radical thinker Sayyid Qutb thought would finally transform all Muslim societies into 'real' Islamic ones.⁶⁵

The tribes fighting the Soviets were very different from one another and held quite distinct beliefs and traditions, but they had Islam in common. From very early on, the war was therefore transformed into a defensive *jihad*, which would become attractive to radical Islamic militants across the Muslim world. The United States and Britain, together with their Arab allies in the region, were keen on exploiting the Islamic card, as they rightly believed that it would be a popular mobilising force. Parenti claims that this tactic of recruiting foreign radicals vastly increased in 1986 when "the CIA gave direct support to the Pakistani Secret Services's ongoing project of recruiting mercenaries and religiously motivated volunteers from around the world."⁶⁶ One of the reasons why the war was internationalised was obviously strategic and had to do with attempting to hurt the Soviet Union. Muslim states also had a compelling reason for sponsoring the Afghans and playing up the Islamic card. Within their territory they were facing increasing political opposition to their rule by Islamic militants and they were happy to provide them with an outlet for dissent by sending them to Afghanistan to fight.⁶⁷ Their contribution would also be a testimony to their Islamic character.

These radical militants formed a sort of international brigade and they became increasingly politicised. It is on these international militants that the attention should be focused, as some would become the protagonists of radical Islam in the 1990s.

⁶⁵ An excellent overview of Qutb's political ideology and use of Islam for political purposes, see Roxanne Euben, *Enemy in the Mirror. Islamic Fundamentalism and the Limits of Modern Rationalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999) pp. 49-92.

⁶⁶ Parenti, op. cit., p. 12.

⁶⁷ Egypt became the recruiting centre for radical Islamists wanting to fight in Afghanistan. See Jonh Cooley, *Unholy Wars. Afghanistan, America and International Terrorism*, (London: Pluto Press, 2002).

According to Ahmed Rashid, “with the active encouragement of the CIA and Pakistani's ISI (Secret Services) [...], 35,000 Muslim radicals from 40 Islamic countries joined Afghanistan's fight between 1982 and 1992. Tens of thousands more came to study in Pakistani *madrasahs* (Koranic schools). Eventually more than 100,000 foreign Muslim radicals were directly influenced by the Afghan Jihad.”⁶⁸ Their interpretation of the victory against the Red Army was very different from the Western one. Instead of seeing the defeat of the Soviets as the final nail in the coffin of Communism, they believed it was the stepping-stone for a truly international Islamic movement that would spread across the Muslim world and change it profoundly. Once finished in Afghanistan, most of them returned to their home countries and began to militate once more against their own rulers. The domestic political consequences in Muslim countries of the victory in Afghanistan had not been greatly analysed before the attacks on New York and Washington DC in 2001, but they are quite considerable. Attention should be precisely on the domestic consequences of the return of many radical fighters. Not only did the political project of radical Islam seem victorious, but individuals involved in the victory were the living proof that change was possible in their home countries as well.

A third external event that impinged on world affairs in the early 1990s was the invasion of Kuwait and the subsequent UN-sanctioned and US-led intervention against Iraq. This event had repercussions at a number of levels. First of all, it seemed to confirm that a new era in international politics had been entered, whereby the international community would be finally capable of applying in practice the concept of collective security. The war gave the impression that the United Nations could become the regulatory authority in international affairs.

Secondly, it demonstrated that the collapse of the Soviet Union had emboldened the United States. Despite showing a willingness to work through multilateral institutions, the Gulf War of 1991 showed that the United States was the only credible superpower. The importance of these two repercussions is that they seemed paradoxically to confirm both the validity of neo-liberal institutionalism and the ‘timeless wisdom of realism’ At the time this obscured the problematic consequences of the war in the wider Muslim world. Far from seeing the war as the legitimate means to re-establish the inviolability of the principle of sovereignty, the vast majority of Muslims and in particular of Arabs did not subscribe to the war with the same enthusiasm. By and

⁶⁸ Ahmed Rashid, “The Taliban: Exporting Extremism”, *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 78, No. 6, November-December 1999, pp. 25-35.

large they were extremely critical of what they perceived as Western 'imperial' intervention. There are a number of reasons for this attitude. First of all, the notion of state sovereignty does not enjoy the same legitimacy in the Muslim world due to the fact that the unity of the *umma* (community of believers) transcends national borders. Furthermore, the majority of Muslim countries were a post-colonial creation and often borders did not represent anything more than a jot of the Western pen that drew them on a map. The rulers of many of these countries were also the creation of the colonial powers retreating from the region and enjoyed very little legitimacy. This was the case of the Kuwaiti rulers who were forced to leave after Saddam's invasion.

Thirdly, very few across the Muslim world actually sympathised with the plight of the Kuwaiti rulers. They were perceived as being uncaring and too worried about having a Westernised lifestyle. This critical stance undermined to a large extent the participation of some Arab countries to the war effort. While popular participation in Western countries (in terms of both opposition to the war and support for it) was quite tame and took place mainly in living rooms, popular mobilisation in the Arab world was very strong. Both power-holders and opposition movements in the region felt very deeply the shock waves of the preparation for the conflict and the conflict itself.

Finally, the last event that needs to be taken into account is the end of the Cold War itself. While it is quite difficult to point exactly to a date or a moment when the Cold War ended, the end is generally associated with the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989. Despite the symbolic value of the date, it should be highlighted that the end of the Cold War was more of a continuous process rather than a specific moment in time.

When it comes to discussing the Middle East, Ehteshami argues: "it was the sudden disruption of the bipolar Cold War international system which proved to be the biggest dislocating force for regional systems in general and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region in particular."⁶⁹ Scholars such as Efraim Karsh disagree on the importance that is generally reserved to the end of the Cold War and outlined the reasons why "the end of the Cold War is bound to have only a limited impact on the international politics of the Middle East."⁷⁰ In spite of the validity of some of the reasons advanced in Karsh's study regarding the over-emphasis placed on the effects of the end of the cold War, it should be highlighted that the 'real' effects are not as important as the 'perceived'

⁶⁹ Anoushiravan Ehteshami, "Reform from above: the politics of participation in oil monarchies", *International Affairs*, Vol. 79, No. 1, 2003, p. 54.

⁷⁰ Efraim Karsh, "Cold War, post-Cold War: does it make a difference for the Middle East?", *Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 23, No. 2, 1997, p. 271.

effects. This means simply that while the end of the Cold War may have been over-emphasised, it should also be clearly stated that actors felt as if the changes were massive and acted accordingly. Ehteshami again points out that: “up to that point [the end of the Cold War] all regional actors had customarily set their national and international clocks by the Cold War; now, virtually overnight, that point of reference had disappeared.”⁷¹ It is probably true that the shock waves of the end of the Cold War did not produce changes of the same degree in all countries in the region, but it emerges that all actors had to readjust their policies and strategies after 1989.

The fact that the effects of the end of the Cold War did not lead to positive developments in political and socio-economic terms does not mean that there were no effects. Blunden recognises this and claims: “the collapse of the Soviet Union and the ending of the Cold War was not even the mixed blessing in North Africa that it appeared to be in much of Europe.”⁷² Thus, it emerges quite clearly that such an event did not go unnoticed in the region and there is some evidence to suggest that some countries were preparing for this massive change.

5.5.2 Direct Active Policies

There are numerous actors active on the international stage and they all attempt to influence outcomes in order to achieve their objectives. The first relevant policy that emerged from the period leading up to and including the end of the Cold War is the promotion of democracy by the governments of the United States and European countries.

The active promotion of democracy had been one of the most important instruments of foreign policy for Western countries since President Carter's emphasis on the importance of human rights in international politics. As highlighted by Huntington however, it is the Reagan years that coincided with the elevation of democracy promotion to the top of the American foreign policy agenda. It was believed that democratic governance in developing countries would ultimately be in the interest of the United States. The policy was certainly riddled with contradictions and problems,⁷³ but it also put pressure on authoritarian regimes. It can certainly be argued that the promotion of democracy was nothing but a classic instrument of foreign policy designed to defend

⁷¹ Ehteshami, op. cit., p. 54.

⁷² Blunden, op. cit., p. 134.

⁷³ Such contradictions emerged quite strongly in Central America for example. See Noam Chomsky, *Les Dessous de la Politique de l'Oncle Sam*, (Montreal: les Editions Ecosociete, 1996).

and promote interests rather than a principled policy, but it nevertheless had the effect of delegitimising authoritarian rule.⁷⁴ Some even argue that far from being a force for the promotion of democracy, the United States were deterring real democracy in the developing world and this may indeed have been the case⁷⁵, but at ideological level the notion of democracy as the best form of government took on and acquired widespread validity.

The corollary of this policy was that democratising countries would receive aid from the US, while those continuing to remain authoritarian would not be included. This put a tremendous amount of pressure on leaderships around the globe, particularly after the end of the Cold War where there was no other pole to turn to in order to counter US dominance of world affairs. Allison and Beschel put forth the argument that “the evidence suggests that in fact the United States has promoted democracy and is promoting democracy.”⁷⁶ While this statement is rather controversial, it should be highlighted that the topic of democracy promotion has been at the top of the foreign policy in the United States for some time, because democracy began to be seen as the best insurance policy against external threats. More and more studies were showing that democracies tended to solve their conflicts peacefully and therefore never went to war against each other. In this context, the spreading of democratic ideals began to be a policy destined to rival the ideological appeal of communism.

A second active policy promoted to a great extent during the 1980s and the 1990s was the use of Islam as a tool for political struggle. As mentioned in the previous section, the war in Afghanistan had shown how important the use of the Islamic religion was for mobilisation in the Muslim world. Its use as an effective mobilising ideology was the product of active policies undertaken by a number of actors. The use of Islam for political power had always been a feature of many countries in the Muslim world and it was widely used as an element of unification in the colonial struggle. After independence, Western-style nationalism became more prominent, but some countries combined nationalist legitimacy with religious. Saudi Arabian leaders for instance were (and still are to a certain extent) able to justify their rule on the basis of political legitimacy granted by religious leaders.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ Huntington, ‘The Third Wave’, op. cit.

⁷⁵ See Noam Chomsky, *Deterring Democracy*, (London: Vintage, 1992).

⁷⁶ Graham Allison and Robert Beschel, “Can the United States Promote Democracy?”, *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 197, No. 1, 1992, p. 82.

⁷⁷ George Joffé, “Saudi Arabia after 9/11”, *Transatlantic Internationale Politik*, Vol. 3, No. 2, Summer 2002, p. 51-64.

The political use of Islam came dramatically to the fore during the Iranian Revolution of 1979. The victory of Shi'ah Muslims in Iran was feared in the Sunni world, particularly in the rich Gulf States. Thanks to their petrodollars, they put in place a vast and efficient network to counter Iranian influence and sponsor movements across the Muslim world that would be closer to their interpretation of Islam and would not be attracted by Khomeini's revolutionary zeal. This policy of promoting Saudi-style Islam reached its peak during the 1980s when the Gulf States paid for the war against the Soviets in Afghanistan and, at the same time, were financing all sorts of political and charitable movements across the Arab world. As mentioned, the use of Islam in politics was not a novelty, but with the failure of nationalism and socialism in the region, Islam became, for many, the dominant ideology to turn to. Furthermore, Islam is particularly suited to internationalisation and 'travels' quite well given its origins and its theological tenets. In fact, the primary allegiance and the historical experience of Muslims are tightly connected to the concept of *umma*; ethnicity, nationality and linguistic differences take the back seat and are superseded by the religious creed. Nationalism was a colonial import and therefore Islam is the overarching element in common. This does not mean that Islam is a unified and solid 'block'. There are many divisions within it, but it nevertheless remains a strong base on which identity can be built and used for political purposes. This is particularly true in the Arab world.

Under the heading of direct active policies, it emerges that there are two different, but linked types of actors involved in the promotion of political Islam.⁷⁸ On the one level, there is a strong and well-organised transnational movement that promotes political Islam as an ideological project across the Middle East. This movement is far from being unified and it comprises many different strands, which use very diverse means in order to promote political Islam. Some of them are very moderate groups, others are much more inclined to use violence. What is relevant here is the fact that this transnational movement operates across boundaries and influences national politics. It is recognised that "most connections between Islamist movements across state boundaries are of a cultural, social and political nature"⁷⁹ and these connections contribute to the growth of these movements. In a recent study of transnational religious activity with

⁷⁸ The definition of political Islam I am using is 'the ideology that aims to reform society and politics along religious lines given in the Koran and Islamic legal and cultural traditions' and is taken from Katerina Dalacoura, "Islamist Movements as Non-state Actors and their Relevance to International Relations" in Daphne Josselin and William Wallace (eds.) *Non-State Actors in World Politics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), p. 235.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 238.

specific references to Islam, Haynes argues that “global networks of religious activists exist who communicate with each other, feed off each other's ideas, collectively develop religious ideologies with political significance, perhaps aid each other with funds and, in effect, form transnational groups whose main intellectual referent derives from religious dogma.”⁸⁰

On another level, the promotion of political Islam does not seem to be an entirely autonomous transnational phenomenon and “we can observe that the transnational Islamist movement often becomes the tool of Islamist states, especially Iran and Saudi Arabia.”⁸¹ These two levels point to the varied nature of international politics and seem to confirm that states are not the only actors on the world stage. In fact, despite the claim that the Islamic movement can be reduced to being an instrument of traditional state-led foreign policy, it emerges that these transnational groups have both independence and autonomy of action. Fred Halliday argues that “despite their professed ideology, the Islamists in each country seek to take over power in their own states” and this interpretation is convincing.⁸² However, this objective does not clash with the fact that in order to do so they use a vast network of transnational links that is independent from state control.

First of all, transnational movements that are believed to be simply an instrument of state foreign policy can gain a sphere of autonomy and a state can quickly lose control over a movement once it is created.⁸³ Secondly, the acceptance of state boundaries by Islamic movements does not insulate them from the external environment. If building links with foreign movements can help their cause, it is more than likely that they will do so.

While some Western countries played a role in promoting radical Islamic Sunni ideology to counter the ideological appeal of Iran and to mobilise the Muslim world against the Soviet Union and the Socialist/Communist ideology, it should also be pointed out that they began to realise that the long-term consequences of this supportive policy could be negative for the West. One specific episode shows this. Omar Abdel-Rahman, an Egyptian cleric and radical Islamic militant, was granted a visa for the United States

⁸⁰ Jeff Haynes, “Transnational Religious Actors and International Politics”, *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 22, No. 2, 2001, p. 157.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 240.

⁸² Fred Halliday, *Islam and the Myth of Confrontation: Religion and Politics in the Middle East* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1996), p. 119.

⁸³ For a review of how the Saudi government lost control of some of the organisations it financed throughout the Muslim world, see Federico Romero and Renzo Guolo, *America/Islam. E Adesso?* (Roma, Donzelli, 2003), pp. 69-80.

because of his role during the Afghanistan recruitment campaign. His radical militantism did not seem to disturb the American authorities until it was revealed that he had been the mastermind behind the first bombing of the World Trade Centre in 1993.⁸⁴

When the Soviet Union collapsed and the threat of Communism was removed, radical Islam had taken the place of the old enemy. By the time Samuel Huntington published his famous piece *The Clash of Civilisations*,⁸⁵ the danger of political Islam had already been recognised. The very term 'clash of civilisations' had already been used by Bernard Lewis in a 1990 article predicting a collision between Islam and the West.⁸⁶ The policy against organised political Islam was justified, particularly in the United States, through the doctrine of protecting key friendly Muslim pivotal states from falling in the hands of Islamic movements.⁸⁷

It follows that, far from accepting the legitimacy and the role of Islamic movements, the US and European countries began to see them as a threat to their own interests. In an article reviewing the different policy approaches to political Islam, Salla puts its rise in the context of the end of the Cold War and Western foreign policies. He states that: "the rise of political Islam as a force in global politics has led to numerous depictions of it as a threat to the continued dominance of Western liberal democratic norms in shaping the political, economic, social and cultural life in vast regions of the planet."⁸⁸ From this he concludes that the foreign policies of Western powers in the 1990s are informed by this perception of political Islam as a threat, leading them to 'contain' it everywhere. The strategy adopted is based on the assumption that "the economic resilience of the USA and its Western allies will finally drive their 'ideological' opponents into economic exhaustion and final collapse."⁸⁹

It is also important to examine the actions of transnational companies (TNCs). Their political and economic role is particularly relevant in developing countries. It is therefore important to analyse how transnational companies try to defend or increase

⁸⁴ The Middle East Times recently revisited the Sheikh's life in a long interview with his son. The text is available at: <http://www.metimes.com/issue26/eg/5abdelrahman.htm>

⁸⁵ Samuel Huntington, "The Clash of Civilisations?", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 72, Summer 1993, pp. 22-49.

⁸⁶ Bernard Lewis, "The Roots of Muslim Rage", *The Atlantic Monthly* February 1990.

⁸⁷ Robert Chase, Emily Hill and Paul Kennedy, "Pivotal states and US Strategy", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 75, No. 1, January/February 1996, pp. 3-51.

⁸⁸ Micahel Salla, "Political Islam and the West: a new Cold War or convergence?", *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 18, No. 4, p.729.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 734.

their privileges in the domestic structure of countries through the pressure they put on domestic policy-makers. In oil-rich countries, their role is all the more relevant.

Finally, there are international financial institutions' policies and their effects on domestic politics. These actors have their own agendas, preferences and interests. Institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund all implement policies directed at serving their own interests and the effects of the policies they implement are substantial. Furthermore, these organisations are not simply instruments in the hands of stronger states, although it should be accepted that stronger states in the system have more policy input. These institutions are to a large extent autonomous. During the 1980s and early 1990s they have been responsible for the implementation of many structural adjustments programmes and the overseeing of measures destined to profoundly transform the economies of developing countries, but they also have had a more political role. The type and degree of access these organisations have to domestic policy-makers, the power they have over the domestic economy and the political conditions they are able to attach to or detach from rescue packages point in the direction of the relevant role that they have in shaping domestic outcomes.

5.5.3 Larger Trends

The most important and influential trend of the last two decades has been the wane of socialism as an alternative model of political, economic and social organisation. For a substantial number of years, the socialist model of economic and social development provided a powerful and attractive alternative to the capitalist liberal-democratic model of government and economic organisation. This was not only due to the presence of the Soviet Union as a pole of political influence on world affairs, and its status as a military superpower, but it also had to do with the inherent appeal of socialist ideology. For many former colonies, the adoption of socialism, with the usual concessions to local customs and traditions, held out the promise of economic advancement while permitting the new ruling elites to control the country from a centralised authority.

Algeria was not different in this respect and it proceeded to enshrine socialist principles in its Constitution after independence. These were adapted to local circumstances and given an Islamic makeover in order to make this acceptable to the general population who had fought in the name of Islam. By the mid-1980s however, socialism ceased to be appealing due to its inability to deliver economically and socially.

Increasingly, socialism had become associated with authoritarian rule and, in particular, with the authoritarian rule of a tiny elite that reminded certain sectors of the population of their subjugation to colonial rule. Furthermore, socialist economic policies, which had been able to ensure rapid growth and rapid industrialisation, were proving to be an impediment to further economic development.

Socialist ideology was very much on the wane across the globe, as the profound political and economic reforms taking place within the Soviet Union itself were proving. The other major global actor in the socialist world, the People's Republic of China, had been changing as well. On the economic front, since the late 1970s, it increasingly adopted market-oriented reforms in order to ensure growth. On the political front, the Maoist socialist ideology was increasingly giving way to a nationalist discourse. In the liberal-democratic world as well, profound changes were affecting socialist and communist parties. In fact, by the end of the 1980s, many of these parties dropped some fundamental aspects of socialist ideology in favour of more liberal stances. The transformation of the Italian Communist party into a social-democratic political movement with a heavy emphasis on liberal rights and free market economics is just one example of the wider transformation of leftist politics within established democracies.

The global repercussions of this trend were substantial for the developing countries that had adopted socialism as their guiding principle. The decreasing appeal of socialism as a mobilising ideology and the poor economic results it generated meant that liberal-democracy with capitalism was only game in town. This 'victory' was symbolised through the demise of the Soviet Union, but the defeat of socialism had also taken place at the much more volatile level of ideas. The collapse of the Soviet Union was simply an indicator of the profound crisis of an ideology that had attracted a huge following throughout the years with the promise of equality, justice and real 'democracy'.

This does not necessarily mean that Fukuyama's end of history argument is validated and the post-Cold War triumphalism of liberal democracy and capitalism as the only 'natural' political, economic and social order is fully justified. However, it indicates that for many policy-makers during the 1980s and 1990s, the menu of policy options was restricted from two alternatives to simply one choice. The fall of the Soviet Union paradoxically liberated socialism as intellectual debates raged on about new avenues through which the socialist project could be revived now that it had lost its negative association with an authoritarian and non-performing regime, but the reality was different. Socialism does not hold much sway any longer in most developing countries

and did not hold it for some time. The collapse of socialism as an ideological project provides the much wider framework to processes of democratisation and acts as a restraining force on the options that political and economic actors can take at times of regime change. It is very problematic to capture this variable in specific terms, but it is nevertheless important to underline that the spirit of time restricted the ability of democratising countries to explore alternatives when there was only one.

5.6 Hypotheses

For each of the sub-variables outlined in the previous sections it is possible to formulate hypotheses to be tested in the Algerian case.

The first hypothesis relates to the massive decrease in the price of oil and gas, which, together with the changes in the value of the dollar, triggered a very substantial reduction in government revenues. The hypothesis is that this decrease in revenues forced the government to democratise in response to the riots that the economic crisis triggered. The scale and the timing of the rioting coincide with the period of most dramatic economic difficulties in the history of the country. Past crises were managed successfully without having to resort to democratisation strategies and it was the severity of this particular moment that forced the ruling elites to choose the path of political democratisation. Without such a crisis or, more specifically, without such severe effects, the power holders would have chosen a different strategy and coped with the increasing social unrest in a different manner. The hypothesis is therefore that radical shifts in the world market of oil and gas have a direct impact on the decision to attempt to change the political system. In order to support this hypothesis, it will be necessary to compare the effects of this oil counter-shock in countries similarly dependent on oil revenues and account for the transformation they did or did not experience.

The second hypothesis derives from the consequences of the war in Afghanistan and it has two different dimensions. The first dimension is political and the second is organisational. On the first dimension it is legitimate to hypothesise that the victory against the Soviet invasion gave a tremendous political and ideological boost to the Islamic cause. Although political Islam had been on the rise for some time in the region, the victory in Afghanistan provided the necessary evidence that the organisation of society according to Islam was indeed possible and within reach. This event had consequences in Algeria where the Islamic movement was beginning to make its first steps after being legalised. Its ideological stance and its call to Islam as the solution to all

problems had a winning model to look at. On the organisational dimension, it should be highlighted that among the 'international' combatants in Afghanistan some were Algerian.⁹⁰ They had gone back to their home country and begun proselytising among the unemployed youth. Their organisational abilities and their example were one of the reasons behind the success of the Islamic Front and provided an international connection to the movement. Without the victory in Afghanistan, the Islamic movement might have not received the boost it did and might have not spread so quickly given that the only other successful contemporary *jihad* had been carried out in Shi'ia Iran. This hypothesis would be confirmed if there were sufficient evidence to show that the Islamic Front in Algeria did refer to the victorious war in Afghanistan to gather electoral support and if some of its cadres were veterans of the war.

The third hypothesis is concerned with the effects of the Gulf crisis, spanning from the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait to the liberation of it and the defeat of the Iraqi army. During this time, the shock waves of the crisis in the world had a significant impact on a wide range of actors. It is assumed that for Algerian politics this impact was equally strong and had a considerable influence in changing the distribution of power and resources, and therefore the objectives and strategies, of those involved in the game of transition. When the Gulf crisis broke out, the process of democratisation had already begun, the local elections of June 1990 had been won by the Islamic Front and the power holders had already sensed their political delegitimation. The hypothesis is that the Gulf War had a number of effects on three distinct actors in the game of the transition. First of all, it accelerated the process of delegitimation of the power holders because the ruling elites were unable to successfully carve out a position that would satisfy both the US-led coalition and the Algerian masses, which were largely against the war. Secondly, it is assumed that the crisis strengthened the power and convictions of the Islamic Front following the massive spontaneous popular support for Iraq. Thanks to the crisis, FIS found itself even more convinced that the Islamic card and anti-Western sentiment were assets that could now be increasingly used to demand more concessions from the regime. Finally and crucially, the crisis had a profound impact on Western policy-makers, who became even more worried about a FIS electoral take-over in Algeria due to its perceived anti-Western agenda.

The fourth hypothesis postulates that the end of the Cold War was very significant in leading the ruling elites to abandon socialist economics, to look for a new

⁹⁰ Details follow in Chapter 7.

relationship with the United States and ultimately to re-model the domestic political and economic structures to satisfy the New World Order. At the same time, the end of the Cold War had an impact on the Islamic galaxy, confirming to the leaders of these movements that socialism had been a tragic mistake all along and that the real answer to the country's difficulties was in following the straight path of Islam. In order to confirm this hypothesis, it is necessary to gather evidence pointing to market-oriented economic reforms during the period of Soviet decline and pointing to strategic changes in the relations of Algeria with the Soviet Union and the United States. Furthermore, evidence is needed to show that the end of the Cold War confirmed the ideological correctness of the Algerian Islamic position.

Looking at Western countries' democracy-promotion policy, the hypothesis is that such a stance influenced the power holders in their decision to democratise. While a process of liberalisation is usually started in order to preserve power rather than instigated to promote real change, part of this effort to preserve the regime through a re-legitimising phase involving popular consent is necessary to adapt to international pressures. Survival depends as much on the ability to guide the opening up of the political system as it depends on the need to find international support in order to gain the country a new position in a changing system where democracy is a foreign policy priority for the most powerful actors in the system.

Regarding the hypothesis deriving from the expansion of political Islam as an instrument of foreign policy, it is necessary to find evidence that links the Islamic Front to external sources of influence. If this link can be made, it means that a key domestic actor's strength may be the result of an external action. The focus should be in particular on financial aid and training of cadres and Islamic scholars.

The assumption behind the necessity for Western countries to oppose the expansion of political Islam and the fear of seeing Islamic movements coming to power leads to the hypothesis that in the case of Algeria they attempted to stop the FIS coming to power by supporting the domestic actors who had the most to lose from the victory of the FIS. The analysis should focus on the most important actors in the region: the United States and France.

If states have interests and objectives they want to achieve, so do other international actors. Both transnational companies and international financial institutions have goals and strategies. The hypothesis is that through the access they enjoy, they were able convey their most preferred outcomes to the ruling elites before and throughout the

whole transition. On the one hand, international organisations may have provided policy-makers with a framework of necessary economic reforms that had a strong although indirect impact on the direction the country was taking. In this context, it is important to highlight that economic choices have an impact on the political environment, by shifting resources (both material and ideological) among actors. On the other hand, transnational companies have a relevant stake in the political outcome of the transition. The hypothesis here is that the most preferred outcome for TNCs was obtaining more and better contracts to operate freely in the country to maximise their profits. It follows that they probably feared radical changes would be brought about by a new political force and determined that support needed to be given to the current power holders who were embracing market-oriented reforms aimed at attracting even more foreign direct investment.

Finally, the end of the socialist ideology and the international victory of liberal-democracy as the seemingly best mode of political governance provided the wider context within which actors had to operate. The hypothesis is that both larger trends affected domestic decision-making directly, as actors came to realise that they were operating in a more restrictive ideological environment. Policies following discredited ideologies and supporting winning ones followed from this consideration.

5.7 Conclusion

Unlike many other studies of transitions, this research looks at two neglected dimensions that are deemed important when analysing regime change. Countries are not isolated from the wider surroundings and their geo-political environment determines to some extent the interests and the policies they have. This is also the case for actors who share the same environment and who have an 'interest' in developments in the area. Thus, the geo-political dimension should be examined in order to understand what kind of external influences are present before and during a regime change. In the case of Algeria, the geo-politics of the Mediterranean has been examined. A second dimension that has not been duly analysed in the literature is the nature of the state under examination. Specifically, its economic structure has implications for the political system and for society as a whole. Countries are linked to the international economy and changes in the economic context may have profound effects on some of them. The consequences of these effects differ according to the nature of the country in question. Algeria has been traditionally over-dependent on hydrocarbons and this has had

implications for domestic political and economic development. Thus, it is important to examine the nature of the *rentier state* and how it reacts to the volatility of the international economy.

From the dimensions, we have also derived a set of variables that can be analysed in detail. The central role of larger trends, direct active policies, and external shocks has been highlighted. They all help contextualise the process of regime change.

From these variables, a number of hypotheses have been formulated. They cannot be entirely separated from one another, but it is possible to look for evidence supporting or disproving the claims made. It should be also recognised that they do not all 'act' at the same time nor have the same degree of intensity. This is because one of the most important innovations of this project is to look at international variables throughout the duration of the transition and not to consider them simply as triggers. It follows that their impact may change over the course of the game, while at specific moments in time a particular variable may intervene to influence and change the incentive structure of the main actors. Furthermore, some of them may seem in conflict with others, while some may mutually reinforce each other. This is because there are multiple levels of policy-making and therefore of influence, and at the same time there are multiple external actors with their different agendas and objectives. Strategies therefore may combine or collide, but they are all intended to modify perceptions and behaviour at the domestic level. Finally, it should be mentioned that these variables at work are 'different' at different stages of the transition. However, the point of the exercise is to have a set of variables from which hypotheses can be derived and to look for evidence. In the following chapter the amount of evidence gathered will be surveyed and put into context.

CHAPTER 6 – The External Context of the Algerian Transition

This chapter provides a general outline of the external conditions during the Algerian transition. This is more descriptive than substantive and will only outline a series of international elements that should be accounted for in the analysis. In Chapter 7 then, an in-depth analysis of the evidence will be used to substantiate the claims of Chapter 5.

6.1 The Economic Factors

Huntington's study of why so many countries democratised or attempted to do so at a particular moment in time sees “the unprecedented global economic growth of the 1960s”¹ as central for three reasons: a) the effect on authoritarian regimes of the oil price hikes of the 1970s, which undermined previous economic performances and therefore had negative consequences for their political legitimacy; b) the effect of long-term growth on the expansion of a middle-class that favoured democracy as a way of preserving and enhancing its success; and c) the effect of rapid economic exchanges destabilising closed authoritarian regimes due to the perceived necessity of openness in conducting trade relations, particularly with established democracies. These economic factors, largely dependent on developments in the international economy, “provide the base for democracy”². When it comes to Algeria, it emerges that economic factors seem to have contributed to the timing of the process of liberalisation, although they are not the same factors identified in Huntington's study. On the contrary, the timing of the process of liberalisation in Algeria does not follow any of the effects Huntington puts forth. Due to the position of Algeria as a petroleum and gas exporting country and the nature of the *rentier-state*, it is extremely important to analyse the external economic conditions and the shifts in the world market of oil and gas, which largely determines the amount of revenues available for internal redistribution. Before such an analysis it is important to briefly outline the domestic economic structure of the country in order to put in clearer perspective of the international economic environment contributed to its creation, to its endurance and to its crisis.

After independence, Algeria chose to develop a socialist economic model where the state would be in charge of running the economy. In order to achieve rapid

¹ Samuel Huntington, *The Third Wave of Democratisation*, (Norman, Oklahoma University Press, 1991), p. 45.

² *Ibid.*, p. 59.

industrialisation and in order to provide social services to the population, it was believed that a strong state was required. Moreover, the Algerian revolutionaries had been influenced by the *étatisme* of the French, as they had studied it in schools and experienced it in their daily lives. Following the policy advice of French economists, who saw the success of the Algerian revolution with romanticism and expectation, the new government adopted the then fashionable socialist model of development. This model was built around three fundamental priorities: 1) the priority of accumulation of capital over consumption and the satisfaction of immediate needs; 2) the priority of industrialisation over agriculture and; 3) the priority of developing capital equipment over consumer goods.³

It was believed that Algeria would be very well placed to succeed both economically and socially, as it could count on vast natural resources. From the very first four-year economic plan, priority was placed on investing in 'industrialising industries' and hydrocarbons production. Algeria, according to Lise Garon, "wanted to avoid the trap of adopting a model that would see it become an exporter of natural resources and an importer of finished goods."⁴ Investing heavily in the hydrocarbons sector allowed the country to finance its own development. The idea was that oil and gas revenues would be the basis for industrial development. Lise Garon points out: "the Algerian strategy consisted of reinvesting the oil revenues in the construction of a modern industrial state, which was seen as the necessary and sufficient condition to acquire economic independence."⁵ For this reason, the insertion of the country in the oil and gas world market was one of the post-independence imperatives for the ruling elites. This swift insertion gave the illusion that the oil and gas revenues would keep the project of rapid and effective industrialisation alive, although it was recognised that eventually the rent would disappear. Precisely because it was believed that the rent would eventually come to an end, it was necessary to build industries as quickly as possible and to maximise revenues. The illusion of economic independence and autonomy was however built on a contradiction, as the country was increasingly dependent on 'events' and markets outside its own control. It follows that the growth of the economy was almost entirely made dependent on revenues (i.e. foreign currency) from the oil and, later on, the gas sector.

³ Driss Dadsy and Lazhari Doukali, *Algérie: les années de tous les dangers*, (Paris, Presse Africaine, 1994), p. 36.

⁴ Lise Garon, "Crise économique et consensus en état rentier: le cas de l'Algérie socialiste", *Revue Etudes Internationales*, Vol. 25, n. 1, mars 1994, p. 30.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

The exploitation and further discovery of new reserves of hydrocarbons allowed Algeria to build a substantial net of social protection, granting free education, health care and housing with low taxation, which helped the regime to solidify its legitimacy. In addition, revenues from the oil and gas sector allowed the Algerian government to undertake programmes of rapid industrialisation by acquiring technology and turnkey manufacturing companies. This strategy, although useful in the short term to create employment and allow for the output of indigenous products, made the country even more dependent on foreign interests. The technology and the skills involved in the setting up of these manufacturing companies was of foreign provenance and this linked the country, in a subservient position, to the international economy. Algeria's impressive growth reached its peak in the 1970s, when the unexpected oil price hikes contributed to filling the coffers of the publicly owned oil company SONATRACH and therefore the coffers of the state. Contrary to the destabilising effect of these oil price hikes in other authoritarian countries importing these resources, oil producing and exporting countries benefited enormously from these increases.

The advantages gained through skyrocketing prices of natural resources were of a political nature as well. The revenues strengthened the political legitimacy of the government, whose unofficial pact with the population was built on the simple exchange of basic services and the possibility of economic and social mobility for support of, or at least acquiescence in, the political and institutional features of the country. Thus, the large oil and gas revenues, far from undermining the regime, were a blessing for the Algerian state, as it was able to hide the mismanagement of the economy, the poor results of the policy of rapid socialist industrialisation and the decline of agriculture.

Moreover, and again contrary to the expectation that a rising professional class puts pressure on authoritarian governments to democratise, businessmen in the limited private sector and the educated middle-classes were quite easily co-opted. The regime, through pay-offs of various types (from the granting of exclusive licences to import manufactured goods from abroad to allowing unrestricted travel), made sure that their 'fate' was dependent on the regime's fate. Since the regime controls most of the revenues, generates most of the wealth through a large public sector, and grants access to privileges, sections of civil society normally associated with demands for greater political and economic liberalisation became the main supporters of the existing political order. Thus, "businessmen, instead of becoming vigorous proponents of free markets, end up as crony capitalists, making profits because of their connections to those in

power.”⁶ From this, it follows that *rentier*-states, even imperfect ones such as Algeria, depend for their political legitimacy largely on their ability to deliver economically. When they are unable to perform on that particular front, their legitimacy comes into question. In the words of Pierre Claverie, “Algeria was a society entirely organised by and for the redistribution, controlled but widespread, of the oil rent.”⁷

As previously underlined, the smooth running of the Algerian economy was, and still is, strictly linked to the revenues in foreign currency that the regime can earn through the export of oil and gas. It has been estimated that up to 95percent of all foreign currency earnings comes from exports of natural resources. The oil shocks of the 1970s filled Algerian coffers and did not encourage the regime to think about alternative strategies of development during those good times. This is certainly due to domestic politics and domestic choices, but also has to do with international economic pressures, as Algeria supplied natural resources and was kept in that role by not being allowed to export or produce much of anything else due to very restrictive quotas and tariffs set up to protect the markets of developing countries. Thus, the regime was taken aback when the price of oil fell dramatically in 1986. According to Ismail Khennas and Mustapha Mekideche, “the drop in the price of oil in 1986 translated itself into a brutal regression of the value of exports, from 13,5 billion US dollars in 1985 to 9,6 billion US dollars both in 1986 and 1987.”⁸ This counter-shock deprived the government of vital revenues, and problems were further compounded by the fluctuation of the US dollar. Jean-Pierre Sereni affirms that “the addition of the oil shock and the dollar effect represent from the beginning of 1985 to mid 1991 a drop in revenues in foreign currency of about 80percent.”⁹ This point is made also by Faycal Tachir, who sees the period 1985-1986 as a powerful catalyst of the difficulties for the already fragile Algerian economy.¹⁰ Sid Ahmed also agrees and argues: “since the mid 1980s Algeria was a victim of a classic external process of strangulation, provoked by the collapse of the exchange terms on the hydrocarbons market.”¹¹ It is not only economists who see the pivotal role played by the

⁶ Quandt, op. cit. p. 120.

⁷ Pierre Claverie, “Algérie: le desarroi”, *Etudes*, Vol. 381, n. 3, Septembre 1994, p. 151.

⁸ Ismail Khennas and Mustapha Mekideche, “Les hydrocarbures en Algérie: politiques internes et rapport avec le marché mondial” in Martine Verlet (ed.), *Cooperer avec l'Algérie: convergences et solidarités*, (Paris, Publisud, 1995), p. 76.

⁹ Jean Pierre Sereni, “L'Algérie, le FMI et le FIS”, *Les Cahiers de l'Orient*, n. 25-26, Premier et Deuxième Semestre 1992, p. 225.

¹⁰ Faycal Yachir, “Algérie: l'ajustement inachevé” in Samir Amin (ed.) *Le Maghreb: enlèvement ou nouveau départ* (Paris, L'Harmattan, 1996), p. 106.

¹¹ Abdelkader Sid Ahmed, *Un projet pour l'Algérie: éléments pour un réel partenariat euro-méditerranéen*, (Publisud, Paris, 1995), p. 38.

mid 1980s oil counter-shock. The very strong political relevance of such a change is more widely recognised. Defence analyst J.F. Coustillière pointed out immediately after the military coup that “the economic difficulties in the Maghreb provoked a very strong sentiment of popular dissatisfaction which in turn perturbed the political and social life of these countries.”¹²

Some empirical evidence also exists to support the existence of a link between the international economic changes and the decision by the political elites to liberalise the system. In an article that applies the inverted U-shape theory to Algeria's experience with political repression, democratisation and civil conflict, Abdelaziz Testas concludes that economic dissatisfaction is central to understanding democratisation.¹³ His main point is that Algeria is strong evidence for the case that “the people will accept state dictatorship as long as they enjoy increasing prosperity. Once the economic pie starts shrinking, however, they rise up in protest against the ruling establishment.”¹⁴ His claim is substantiated by an empirical analysis of the relationship between per capita income growth and political protests in Algeria between 1974 and 1992. He finds that the Berber Spring riots of 1980 coincided with a sharp decline in the real GDP per capita growth rate from 4.6percent in 1979 to minus 2.4percent in 1980 and he also finds that a similar pattern characterised the key years between 1986 and 1988. During that period, “in 1986, the real GDP per capita growth rate decreased to minus 3.6percent from minus 2.3percent in 1985. In 1987 and 1988, the respective real GDP growth rates were minus 4.4percent and -4.1percent.”¹⁵ According to Testas, the main cause for the long-lasting collapse of growth rates is to be found in the 1986 world oil price collapse.

A more in depth-analysis of this issue and its relevance in terms of supporting the hypothesis that liberalisation is a direct cause of economic difficulties will be in Chapter 7. For now it suffices to say that at the political level different actors formed different ideas about the importance of the oil price collapse and its impact on decisions made. The ruling elites, although internally divided on the choices to be made, saw the international element as a crucial alibi. It thus invoked the recession to legitimise the necessity of rapid reforming of both the economy and the political system.¹⁶ The

¹² Jean Francois Coustilliere, “Une Politique de l'Europe Latine en Méditerranée Occidentale”, *Defense Nationale*, Vol. 48, May 1992, p. 104.

¹³ Abdelaziz Testas, “Political Repression, Democratization and Civil Conflict in Post-Independence Algeria”, *Democratization*, Vol. 9, No. 4, Winter 2002, pp. 106-121.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 112.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 112.

¹⁶ Lise Garon, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

suggestion can be made that without such a crisis the regime would have not had the incentive nor the willingness to democratise. The Islamic Front's interpretation is quite different and does not really revolve around the economic factor at all. In fact, "the FIS does not regard the mismanagement of the economy as the causal agent of the October 1988 uprising. The sharp drop in oil revenues in 1985 and 1986 was indeed a contributing factor [...], but there were clearly other factors at work."¹⁷ The question is whether the regime would have liberalised the political system in their absence.

On the economic front, there was a strong link between the international crisis affecting the prices of oil and gas and the tentative liberal economic reforms dictated by the necessity to integrate the country into the international economy. In turn, this necessity reinforced the influence of the international environment on the process of democratisation through the import of neo-liberal economic ideals and through the official entrance on the Algerian scene of powerful international financial institutions. Domestically, the counter-shock permitted the economic reformers to have more input in policy-making to the detriment of the more conservative elements still favourable to a socialist planned economy. President Chadli and his reform-orientated advisers attempted to introduce some free market reforms in the mid-1980s in the wake of the evident failures of the planned economy. These reforms further alienated the masses from the regime, as they seemed to accelerate the impoverishment of the population. Despite, or perhaps because of, the October riots and the substantial diminishing of revenues, the Hamrouche government stepped up free market reforms in 1989 with the blessing of the President. Upon his appointment as Prime Minister, Hamrouche declared: "my plan is going to transport the whole Algerian society from one system to the other."¹⁸

Where did the initiative of reforming the economy come from? The abandonment of the planned socialist economy was certainly an internal decision, made to tackle the structural problems of the economy, but its roots can be found in developments taking place internationally. In this respect the role played by international organisations such as the World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) is central. Moreover, the changing international economic environment put severe constraints on the policies available to Algerian governments. Hamrouche himself made

¹⁷ Personal Interview, National Executive Office of FIS, November 2002, Geneva, Switzerland.

¹⁸ Souhayr Belhassen, "Algérie. Ce que veut Hamrouche", *La Jeune Afrique*, N. 1500, 2nd October 1989, p. 40.

no secret of the fact that some of his ministerial appointments were made with the intention of pleasing the international community. The appointment of Sid Ahmed Ghozali to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Ghazi Hidouci to the Department of the Economy stand out in this respect. Ghozali was a man “well-known and much appreciated in Western financial circles, having served as Ambassador to the European Community.”¹⁹ The logic behind his appointment was to “reassure foreign investors and attract fresh foreign capital to the country.”²⁰ Hidouci was appointed in order to “proceed to the complete transformation of the [country's] entire economic structure.”²¹

The pace and intensity of the Hamrouche-sponsored reforms, which had begun under the good auspices of the international community, in turn affected the ongoing process of liberalisation and vice-versa. In order to have a fuller picture of the external economic environment in the mid-1980s, it is also important to put the case of Algeria in comparative perspective.

During the 1980s the three Maghreb countries all undertook policies of structural adjustment.²² Morocco was the first country to do so in 1982, under the auspices of the WB and the IMF. Morocco was unable to pay back the interest on its external debt and the international financial institutions intervened to save the bankrupt kingdom in exchange for far reaching free-market-oriented reforms. What is of interest in the case of Morocco is that its economic crisis coincided with the collapse of the price of phosphates on the international market. Prior to this price drop Morocco had earned a substantial amount of revenue through the export of phosphates and it is not simply a coincidence that the Moroccan economic situation worsened quickly after the price collapse.²³ In 1985, Tunisia followed the example of Morocco and, before the economic crisis could hit the country really hard, undertook policies of structural adjustment early on. Other petroleum-exporting countries in the MENA region followed the same pattern of Algeria and introduced some market reforms to counter the drop in oil prices and attempt to improve the economy, with the richest countries managing to weather the storm both economically and politically. This is the case of Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf States, which were also propped up by the West by virtue of their strategic position.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 41.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 41.

²¹ Ibid., p. 41.

²² Yves Gazzo, “Les économies arabes face à la crise”, *Maghreb-Machrek*, n. 120, Avril-Juin 1988, pp. 58-67.

²³ For an in-depth of Moroccan economic development over the last 50 years, see Henry Clement and Robert Springborg, *Globalisation and the Politics of Development in the Middle East*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 171-178.

Algeria was one of the last countries to put in place a programme of reforms that would move the country away from a planned economy and controlled prices to an economy more receptive to market forces. A group of reformers existed within the senior bureaucracy that met informally and periodically to discuss the possibility of reforming the ailing economy, but they were only allowed to have a real influence on the government after the oil counter-shocks of 1985 and 1986. Tunisia and Morocco relied much less on rents than Algeria and thus were forced to make changes earlier, while the Gulf monarchies were much better positioned to introduce economic changes without substantive political ones, as the recession did not threaten the very stability of the state.

In Algeria, it was becoming apparent that economic planning was failing to deliver the same results as it had produced in the past in terms of growth due to its inherent problems, but also due to the expanding dominance of liberal economics on world markets. The fast-paced opening up of international economics put additional pressure on the regime to enter the country into this system. In addition, it needs to be highlighted that the shocks felt in Algeria at the changes in the international economy were not unexpected but followed logically from the position Algeria occupied in the capitalist international system. Dadsı and Doukali argue for instance that “despite an internal and external ideological discourse that wanted to portray the Algerian model as naturally challenging Western capitalism, both the Boumedienne regime and the Chadli regime developed, reinforced and diversified links with the capitalist world.”²⁴ Calchi Novati who sees this movement towards the capitalist West as driven by the “need to find new markets and obtain aid in order to further the development of the country”²⁵ makes the same point.

It is at this point imperative to briefly outline the reforms that were implemented in the period between 1988 and 1992 and to examine their effects. Most of the reforms were to a large extent externally driven, either directly by international economic organisations, donor countries, and commercial partners, or indirectly by systemic pressures, and contributed to shaping the way which domestic political actors acted during the transition process. The reformers, once in government, worked to transform the legislative and institutional framework in order to put in place an environment more conducive to the workings of a free market. Georges Corm distinguishes two phases of

²⁴ Dadsı and Doukali, *Algerie*, op. cit, p. 39.

²⁵ Giampaolo Calchi Novati, *Storia dell'Algeria Indipendente*, (Milano, Bompiani, 1998), p. 229.

this process of reforms: before and after the February 1989 Constitution.²⁶ During the first phase, the most significant achievement was the transformation of the agricultural sector with the abandonment of collective farming and the re-introduction of the right to own land. During the first phase, there was also the relaxation of the licensing system for import and export activities. While this may seem a minor reform, its effects are quite relevant given that the monopoly of the state on external trade was effectively broken. After the adoption of the new Constitution in 1989, reforms accelerated with the introduction of far reaching liberal changes: elimination of price subsidies, autonomy for the Central Bank, liberalisation of foreign investments, and new laws on currency and credit. When it comes to the all-important hydrocarbons sector, it must be noted that “since the mid-1980s, the government ha[d] put a high priority on attracting involvement by international oil companies.”²⁷

These profound changes found their justification in the poor recent performance of the economy, but also in the significant economic shifts taking place outside Algeria. The Algerian elites, reformers and ‘continuists’, had to contend with the pressure coming from the outside. When the reformers were finally handed the levers of power they found a disastrous financial situation as the level of foreign currencies was very low due to the diminishing revenues caused by the oil counter-shock. In addition, the service on Algeria's foreign debt increased from 50 percent of all exports in 1986 to 75 percent of all exports in 1988.²⁸

While the Algerian government did not enter into official negotiations with international financial institutions until late 1988, the reformers had already begun unofficial talks with World Bank and IMF executives on the scale and pace of reforms to undertake. The reluctance to engage officially with such institutions, and the refusal to accept the imposition of structural adjustment programmes as well as a rescheduling of the foreign debt, derived from the traditional Algerian position of shunning any form of direct international intervention in the country's affairs and in the belief that the international economic order should be changed rather than accommodated. A more pragmatic reason had to do with the threat that these official links may have posed to those with privileges. Nevertheless, reforms were necessary and the expertise of international financial institutions was instrumental to the reformers' efforts. Thus a

²⁶ Georges Corm, “La réforme économique algérienne: une réforme mal aimée?”, *Maghreb-Machrek*, n. 139, Janvier-Mars 1993, pp. 8-27.

²⁷ John Entelis, “SONATRACH: The political economy of an Algerian state institution”, *Middle East Journal*, vol. 53, N. 1, winter 1999, p. 22.

²⁸ World Debt Tables 1991-1992, World Bank Publications, Washington DC.

policy of unofficial engagement with the IMF was launched and it was labelled “*faire du FMI sans le FMI.*”²⁹ However, the increasing economic difficulties and the ongoing political process of liberalisation forced the reformers to have official contacts with both the WB and the IMF. Thus, “in May 1989, the first loan in support of the ongoing reforms [was] obtained by the Merbah government, and it [was] swiftly followed by a stand-by agreement with the IMF.”³⁰ These two accords were soon followed by other loans from the World Bank, another stand-by agreement with the IMF and by a loan from the European Community in support of the programme of economic reforms. In addition, private banks led by the Credit Lyonnais decided to reopen their lines of credits towards the country. The timing of these loans and accords is very relevant insofar as it had enormous effects in the social and political arenas. The European Union made the delivery of the second instalment of a 400 million ECU aid package contingent on economic not political conditions, sending the message that the Union was more interested in advancing its economic interests in the country rather than promoting democracy.³¹

The pressure for economic change did not simply come from international financial institutions, but had its roots in the expansion of international capitalism. Thus, Algeria was somehow forced to change its policies towards foreign investors in order to encourage them to set up business in the country. The problem Algeria had was that the only field of interest for foreign investors was hydrocarbons and a series of accords were signed between SONATRACH and foreign companies between 1986 and 1992.³² In fact, oil and gas companies had been quietly entering the Algerian market since the mid 1980s and their efforts to make Algeria more compliant to the new international climate for foreign investors paid off. In December 1991 a new law was passed concerning hydrocarbon investment in the country.³³ The main points of this new law were indeed favourable to foreign companies, as summarised by Entelis:³⁴

²⁹ Francois Soudan, “Algérie: l'adieu au socialisme”, *Jeune Afrique*, No. 1469, 1st March 1989, p. 26.

³⁰ Corm, 'La reforme economique', op. cit., p. 24.

³¹ Hugh Roberts, “Dancing in the Dark: The European Union and the Algerian Drama”, *Democratization*, Vol. 9, No. 1, Spring 2002, p. 110.

³² Khennas and Musatpha, 'Les hydrocarbures en Algérie', op. cit., p. 48.

³³ Law 91-21 of 4th December 1991 amends the 1986 Hydrocarbon Investment Law 86-14 of 19 August 1986. *Journal Officiel de la Republique Algérienne Démocratique et Populaire*.

³⁴ Entelis, SONATRACH, pp. 22-23.

- Authorisation for foreign companies to explore and develop gas deposits in partnership with SONATRACH.
- Exploitation of existing oil fields with SONATRACH.
- International arbitration for disputes between foreign firms and SONATRACH.
- Reduction in royalties and taxes for foreign companies operating in difficult areas of exploration.
- Permission for foreign firms to finance, build and operate oil pipelines under contract with SONATRACH.

Unfortunately all these changes did not improve the socio-economic conditions of large sectors of the population. On the contrary they seemed to make the situation worse. As previously mentioned, the programme of economic reforms did not have the positive effects its proponents hoped for and it fed into an already explosive social situation and into a still underdeveloped new political system. Since independence, Algeria had enjoyed high rates of growth, but, more importantly, the whole population seemed to benefit from economic development. From 1967 to the end of 1984, the number of jobs created through ambitious programmes of development stood at over 2 million, while inflation remained lower than pay increases thanks to price subsidies. Not only could Algerians easily find a job and enjoy high rates of consumption, they could also benefit from free health care, free education and social housing paid for by oil revenues. In addition, the money coming back to the country from migrants in France contributed to the elevation of the purchasing power of all sections of the population. The cumbersome bureaucracy, the monopoly of the state on external trade and periodic shortages of certain products, were tolerated in the belief that social mobility was possible and that there were plentiful jobs around.

All this changed from 1986 onward. Abdellatif Benachenou describes the Algerian economy in the period between 1984 and 1992 as “having entered a tunnel.”³⁵ The abandonment of the policy of price subsidies pushed inflation up, particularly for foodstuffs, but there were price increases for industrial products as well. The galloping rate of inflation was coupled with growing unemployment. The latter peaked officially in 1990 at 25percent. To make matters worse, unemployment massively touched a great number of university graduates, leading to both frustration and political radicalisation.

³⁵ Abdellatif Benachenou, “Inflation et Chômage en Algérie. Les aléas de la démocratie et de reformes économiques”, *Maghreb-Machrek*, n. 139, Janvier-Mars 1993, p. 31.

The rise in unemployment was accompanied by a decreasing availability of housing, aggravating the social situation.³⁶

As the crisis continued, two more phenomena made their appearance. First, the middle-class began to feel the pinch of the crisis and the “cadres witness[ed] the decrease of their living standards due to the high inflation rate, while the economic reforms put them on the front line without giving them the means to fight.”³⁷ Secondly, Algerians began to notice that a new class of *nouveaux riches* was emerging and flaunting their money without embarrassment. The deregulation of the import-export licensing system, and the new opportunities offered to those who had the capital for starting a business, fed into a corrupt network where connections to those in power allowed a few to make fortunes. While the majority of the population struggled to make ends meet, a minority enjoyed newfound wealth. In addition, “the freedom of the government to manoeuvre was almost non-existent given the situation of heavy debt”³⁸ and it became impossible to address these problems, as the levers of power were taken away from those in government.

Thus, while the social situation worsened, from 1988 Algeria was forced every year to transfer to its creditors abroad 13-15percent of its national wealth to service its foreign debt. In addition, the agreements with the IMF and the World Bank forced the country to accelerate the pace of reforms. Benachenou summarises the situation convincingly: “between September 1989 and September 1992, the logic of reform and adjustment - devaluation of the dinar, complete price liberalisation, diminution of the debt of public enterprises – prevail[ed] and weigh[ed] heavily on prices and unemployment without any positive effect for the economy due, in particular, to external financial constraints.”³⁹

Investigative reporter Djallal Malti points out that “the international economic environment had an important influence on the democratisation of the regime, but in a 'mechanical' way through the drop of the dollar and through the drop in the price of

³⁶ The problem of housing is a huge strain on social relations, as numerous families are forced to live in confined spaces leaving no intimacy or privacy to the members. The overcrowding is so bad that people are forced to take turns in sleeping in the same bed. The sense of alienation, in particular for the younger generations, is immense and the lack of prospects of finding a house just compounds it.

³⁷ Benachenou, ‘Inflation et Chomage’, p. 35.

³⁸ Hocine Benissad, *Algérie: restructurations et réformes économiques entre 1979 et 1993*, (Alger : OPU, 1994), p. 141.

³⁹ Benachenou, *Inflation et Chomage*, p. 37.

oil.”⁴⁰ During the transition process itself, the changing economic conditions had an impact on the domestic actors and their strategies. According to most scholars, the FIS gained strength during these difficult economic times and spoke for the underprivileged in Algerian society. In fact, Séverine Labat argues that the FIS is not so much a political party, but rather a very large social movement capable of attracting support for its stance on economic and social issues. It is not surprising that many Algerians came to know the FIS through the party's charitable operations and began to appreciate FIS militants as they were seen to help out with daily problems. The FIS's proximity to people's real needs was in sharp contrast with the government's distance from the difficulties of the population. This was exemplified in the aftermath of the earthquake that struck a region of Algeria, when the FIS was able to quickly organise rescue and relief operations, while government agencies were unable to respond. At the same time, the ruling elite was divided on the pace and scale of reforms and different clans used the economic environment to advance their claims and their agenda.

One trend is however constant during the transitional period: Western powers, particularly the leading European countries, were concerned with the rise of the FIS, as they believed the party threatened their economic interests in the country. Algeria is the most important supplier of gas and oil in the region and its exports are central to the economic development of all southern European countries. In addition, the United States is its most important commercial partner in the liquefied gas sector. Algeria also has the potential to further develop its capacity to extract and export both oil and gas. All this explains the key position Algeria occupies in the geo-economic game. The role played by Algeria's foreign debt in determining and driving Western policies towards the country should also be highlighted. At the beginning of 1990 France was owed 4.1 billion US dollars, Japan 3.6 billion, USA and Canada were owed a combined 2.8 billion US dollars, the United Kingdom 1.6 billion and Italy 1.4 billion.⁴¹ Governments had a very powerful lever they could use, but were not the only actor with stakes in Algeria. Foreign oil companies had as much interest and input in both economic and political reforms as foreign governments did.

These two elements played a crucial part in the transitional period, as it was feared that the FIS would jeopardise them. This is particularly true of foreign investment in the hydrocarbons sector. The state-owned SONATRACH concluded a number of

⁴⁰ Personal Interview, Paris, France, November 2001.

⁴¹ Smail Goumeziane, *Le mal algérien. Economie politique d'une transition inachevée*, (Paris, Fayard, 1994), p. 195.

contracts with a number of multinationals, which obtained favourable conditions thanks to a corrupt network of political patronage that would enrich those Algerians in key administrative positions. The danger of losing the grip on vast natural resources due to the policies the FIS would implement once in power made many in the business and diplomatic circles very sceptical about supporting democratic reform. The FIS was at the time denouncing the fact that Algeria had not fulfilled its revolutionary role after independence and that the new international economic order it supported never came about. An Islamic Algeria would take up that role, according to the FIS propaganda.⁴² The FIS was largely in favour of liberal economics, but it also maintained that relationships with other countries should be based on equality and the international economic system should not be rigged in favour of the West. Breaking the corrupt network existing between Western and Algerian elite was the key to using Algerian wealth in natural resources for the population and not simply for the benefit of the few. Fairer rules in the economic game in the hydrocarbon sector would have also meant diminishing profits for the oil multinationals.

France in particular had more difficulties than other countries in accepting that democracy in Algeria might bring to power an Islamic party with strong anti-French attitudes. A phenomenon that has characterised Franco-Algerian relationships in the post-independence period was the “structural integration of Algeria, and in particular its economy, with France.”⁴³ The economic integration of Algeria with France is due to historical factors dating back to the colonial experience and, despite the fierce nationalism of Algerian elite in the post-independence period, it has never ceased to be the undercurrent of the relationship between the two countries. As Lucille Provost points out, “under the cover of self determined development, the country inserted itself in a dependent economic position with respect to the former colonial power and other Western countries.”⁴⁴ Other commentators emphasise this by arguing that the economic dependence of Algeria since French imperialism is to be found in the Evian Accords, which granted Algeria its political independence from France.⁴⁵ Given this familiar pattern repeated by a number of ex-colonies, it follows that “France, witnessing the

⁴² A Al-Ahnaf, Bernard Botiveau and Franck Frégosi (eds.), *L'Algérie par ses Islamistes*, (Paris: Editions Khartala, 1991), pp. 273-274.

⁴³ Abed Charef, *Algérie. Le Grand Dérapage*, (Editions de l'Aube, 1994), p. 87.

⁴⁴ Lucille Provost, *La Seconde Guerre d'Algérie. Le quiproquo franco-algérien*, (France, Flammarion, 1996), p. 39.

⁴⁵ Exposes du Cercle Leon Trotsky, *Le peuple algérien face à la barbarie islamiste et à la dictature des militaires: les responsabilités de l'imperialisme français*, Paris, n. 76, December 12th, 1997, p. 23.

emergence of democracy and a new generation of largely unknown politicians, was uneasy.”⁴⁶

France saw the process of political and economic liberalisation in Algeria as a means to reinforce its penetration of the country. Once the economic reforms of the Hamrouche government seemed to threaten the privileges of the corrupt elite and therefore favour the FIS’s programme for change, France refrained from helping the reformers achieve their ultimate goal, as full-scale democratisation would entail a renegotiating of the privileges France enjoyed. Massive changes in government personnel and in the management of state-owned enterprises with the FIS in power would have endangered the old ties between Paris and Algiers. According to Malti, “far from being traditional political relations between nation-states, the relationships are about economic co-operation and political networking.”⁴⁷ The Hamrouche government was supported in its economic liberalising effort until the reforms impinged on the political sphere. In French foreign policy circles there was widespread scepticism about Hamrouche and its reforms, as it was believed they would destabilise the country and favour anti-French movements, and to a certain extent these beliefs proved to be correct.

The United States did not have the same level of economic interest in the country as France, but they had also had become one of Algeria's leading trade partners and foreign investors. In 1990, the United States exported goods and merchandise for a total value of 948 million US dollars and, more importantly, American oil multinationals had been welcomed in as partners and investors in the hydrocarbons sector. The “US gas importers and SONATRACH resumed contracts”⁴⁸ in 1989 and imports of gas reached the value of 2.6 billion US dollars in 1990. In addition, large oil companies such as Anadarko Petroleum Corporation “signed in October 1989 an oil exploration/production contract for 100 million US dollars over 10 years”⁴⁹ and Occidental Petroleum Corporation signed a similar contract the following year. Other investors include Pfizer and Air Products Company. A beneficiary of the new policy on investment from foreign companies has been British Petroleum. The company had always been active in Algeria after independence, but after the nationalisation of the hydrocarbon sector in 1972, it left the country. However, contacts had been maintained and by 1993 BP had an office in

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 99.

⁴⁷ Personal Interview, Paris, France, November 2001.

⁴⁸ Library of Congress, Country studies on line: [http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field\(DOCID+dz01110\)](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field(DOCID+dz01110)).

⁴⁹ Library of Congress, Country studies on line: [http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field\(DOCID+dz01110\)](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field(DOCID+dz01110)).

Algiers and it now operates three major upstream projects.⁵⁰ Another important trading partner of Algeria, Italy, took advantage of the economic openings on offer in Algeria and in December 1990 a very important accord for the export of gas between SONATRACH and the Italian SNAM was signed. In addition, after the accord, Italy granted credits to Algeria amounting to 7 billion US dollars. What follows is a table of the main agreements signed by SONATRACH with foreign companies between 1986 and 1992.⁵¹

Table 3.1 Accords between SONATRACH and foreign companies – 1986-1992

<i>FOREIGN COMPANY</i>	<i>DATE OF THE AGREEMENT</i>
Alepeco (Libya)	June 16, 1987
Agip (Italy)	December 15, 1987
Cepsa (Spain)	February 9, 1988
BHP (Australia)	June 24, 1989
Anadarko (USA)	October 23, 1989
CFP (France)	November 9, 1989
Repsol (Spain)	November 9, 1989
Neste (Finland)	March 13, 1990
Repsol (Spain)	December 12, 1990
Agip (Italy)	December 12, 1990
Total (France)	May 12, 1991
Occidental (USA)	June 9, 1991
Agip (Italy)	December 1991
Anadarko (USA)	January 1992
Atlantic Richfield (USA)	May 1992
Mobil (USA)	June 1992
Philipps Petroleum (USA)	July 1992
Louisiana Land Expl. (USA)	November 1992
Pluspetrol (Argentina)	December 1992

This was the international economic context before and during the transition. The programme of economic reforms and the stance of Western countries towards these

⁵⁰ Detail of BP operations in Algeria can be found at http://www.bp.com/in_your_area/transition_page.asp?id=1

⁵¹ The original table can be found in Smail Goumeziene, *Le Mal Algérien* (Paris: Fayard, 1994), p. 48.

reforms are also important elements to analyse in order to understanding how the process of democratisation determined the strategies and choices of the different domestic actors. The economic dependency of Algeria in the post-independence period, with all the benefits it entailed for the Algeria elite and French actors, is central to understand the reasons why France was sceptical about the far-reaching reforms of Hamrouche and their political repercussions. The preferred outcome for France would have been the liberalisation of the Algerian economy accompanied by the retention of the old elite and the old network system. Through the process of democratisation, and due to the popularity of the Islamic Front, French policy-makers feared that many changes would occur both in terms of personnel replacement and in terms of policies. These changes would have been an inconvenience and the FIS contends that pressure was applied to derail democratisation⁵² while pursuing the objective of a more encompassing inclusion of Algeria and its natural resources into the world economy. Since “over the years tight links had been created between the political and military elite in Algeria and the French elite”⁵³, the replacement of this elite would have had considerable consequences for French-Algerian relationships. On the Algerian side, there was resistance to the Hamrouche programme for many of the same reasons. Those who were in key positions to take advantage of their role were threatened by the extent of the economic and political reforms. They acted with their foreign counterparts to boycott the political liberalisation by raising the spectre of the FIS and hijacked the economic liberalisation in their favour. As Ghazi Hidouci states, “all those who benefited from the planned economy in terms of power, privileges and profits mistrusted the economic liberalisation.”⁵⁴

6.2 The Political Factors

The relevance of the international economic context has to be integrated with a description of the international political environment. At the time of the Algerian transition, there were a number of changes and events that took place at the international level, which had profound consequences for domestic politics in countries across the world. At the most general level we find the political and ideological implications of the collapse of socialism and the end of the Cold War. This ‘traumatic’ event led not only to

⁵² Personal Interview, National Executive Office of FIS, November 2002, Geneva, Switzerland.

⁵³ Exposé, op. cit., p. 44.

⁵⁴ Ghazi Hidouci, op. cit., p. 179.

a re-adjustment of power on the international stage with the United States emerging as the sole superpower, but it had repercussions for the domestic politics of most countries. Algeria was not immune to this and the transition to democracy has to be seen in this context of the loss of appeal of socialism and increasing appeal of liberal democracy as a form of government. The timing of the Algerian transition is also intimately connected to another fundamental event taking place at the beginning of the 1990s: the second Gulf War fought by a US-led and UN-sanctioned force against Iraq with the objective of restoring the sovereignty of Kuwait. While Western countries did not feel the effects of this war at home due to the 'clarity' of the moral stance the West took and due to the few coalition casualties during the short period of fighting, this event was quite traumatic for the Arab world and domestic repercussions of the Gulf War were substantial. Finally, this war took place at a time when Islam as a tool of political mobilisation was on the rise across the Muslim world. This third trend of 'international Islamism' also needs to be analysed. At the time of the Algerian transition, political Islam was on the rise due to the Iranian revolution, the victory in Afghanistan and the evident failure of ideologies imported from the West. It is no coincidence that the largest opposition force in the country was an Islamic movement. This rise of political Islam generated a set of domestic and international responses that affected the development and the outcome of the Algerian experiment with democracy.

Thus, these political factors - the weakening of the socialist ideology and the end of the Cold War with the inevitable corollary of the intellectual domination of the principles of liberal democracy, the Gulf War, and the rise of political Islam - worked in conjunction with domestic factors and international economic pressures to determine both the occurrence of change and its direction.

6.2.1 The End of the Cold War

Throughout the 1980s, the socialist ideology was weakening considerably in both economic and political terms. The failure of socialism to deliver on its promises was most evident in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union where economic stagnation and political repression stood in sharp contrast with the success of Western capitalist societies.

The reformist policies implemented by Gorbachev had a huge impact, in both practical and more indirect terms, on the demise of socialism. By questioning the very basis of how socialism had been implemented in the Soviet Union, Gorbachev

undermined the ideology itself. The repercussions of this were immense. Algeria did not escape this trend and socialism began to be questioned by both the elite in power and the population at large. According to Hasan Nafa, “Gorbachev’s reforms had immense repercussions on the future of democracy around the world”⁵⁵ and Nafa highlighted their role in undermining Marxist ideology and changing both Soviet foreign policy and the USSR’s international status. As one of the leaders and symbols of ‘non-aligned’ countries that had chosen a political and economic model of development firmly based on the Soviet mould, Algeria could not escape the new debate about whether socialism was a viable basis for economic development and political freedoms. Superpower involvement in the region had always been substantial and “given the prevalence of conflict in the region, it is especially true that what the superpowers have to offer - arms, money and diplomatic influence - [was] in heavy demand.”⁵⁶

While it can be admitted that the elite simply paid lip service to the ideological precepts of socialism, it can be stated that the population had been to a certain extent socialised into accepting socialism as the state ideology. When it became clear that the demise of socialism was going to be the inevitable by-product of the changes in the Soviet Union, Algeria needed to overtly embrace a different set of beliefs and structures.

To a certain extent, the questioning of socialism had been set in motion by Western countries. Through the Helsinki platform, for instance, the human rights record of socialist countries was put on trial. The legitimacy of authoritarian regimes, whether socialist or otherwise, was questioned on the basis of the lack of protection for basic individual freedoms and for the lack of proper electoral procedures through which political legitimacy could be derived. In this sense, Huntington's assertion that liberal democratic norms have acquired prominence and are becoming the measuring stick by which the legitimacy of different countries will be considered seems to be correct.

The indication from Algeria in the 1980s was that the new leader and his entourage had begun to slowly ‘thaw’ the system. The relaxation of the measures put in by the Boumedienne's regimes did not amount to liberalisation, but they were the beginning of a longer process that would lead to the country to experiment with democracy. The contemporary and intertwined ascent of liberal democratic values and the loss of socialism’s prestige meant that the Algerian elite had to find a new

⁵⁵ Hasan Nafa, “Le Nouvel Ordre International et l’Avenir de la Démocratie dans le Monde Arabe”, in *Dossiers du CEDEJ, Démocratie et Démocratisation dans le Monde Arabe*, Le Caire, CEDEJ, 1992, p. 81.

⁵⁶ William Quandt, “The Superpowers and the Middle East Crises”, *Middle East Studies Association Bulletin*, Vol. 23, N. 1, July 1989, p. 2.

ideological framework to justify their rule and had to adopt a different economic model in order to reap the benefits of an increasingly integrated world. In this sense, the adoption of the liberal democratic discourse with its emphasis on multipartism, clear institutional procedures and respect for individual rights, was instrumental to renewing their legitimacy and did not necessarily bear witness to a real change of heart.

Furthermore, Western enthusiasm surrounding the crumbling of the Eastern Bloc had a double effect on Algeria. Firstly, it made it possible for the Algerian elite to justify the programme of liberal economic reforms they were undertaking in terms of adapting to a changed environment where it had been proven that socialism was unable to compete with capitalism. Secondly, the same degree of enthusiasm meant that in the short run Western powers would not be as keen on supporting authoritarian regimes as they had been in the past: the justification of fighting expansionist communism had collapsed (Latin America and Africa were among the regions where this became evident). If Algeria remained authoritarian, this could have gone to the detriment of the elite's position and privileges.

Throughout the whole transition process, the parallel developments in the Soviet Union and around the globe further undermined the legitimacy of the ruling elite despite their efforts to 'recycle' themselves as the new democrats of Algeria, and enhanced the credibility of the opposition parties, including the FIS. The latter, in particular, had been very critical of the 'socialist' direction of the country after independence and its older leaders claimed that the revolution, which was originally an Islamic project of political and social renewal, had been hijacked by the importation of foreign doctrines such as socialism.

To summarise, the collapse of the Soviet empire has been interpreted as a major ideological victory for the Western liberal democracies with their emphasis on individual rights, formal democratic procedures and free market economies. In this rapidly changing international environment, where Western countries were both victorious and confident of their 'superior' system of government, Algeria had to adapt its domestic political and economic institutions and structures in order to survive and benefit from the changes that had taken place. The realisation that Western support would now be 'the only game in town' convinced the elite to become 'liberal democrats', but their credibility was shaken by the blatant opportunism they showed. By contrast, the FIS played on its original revolutionary purity to further its support.

6.2.2 The Fall-Out from the Gulf War

Another major source of destabilisation and influence on the transition was the shock waves sent throughout the Arab world by the Gulf crisis and Operation Desert Storm. Far from the sympathy for their plight found in Western countries, the rulers of Kuwait enjoyed very little sympathy in Arab public opinion. Their wealth, their privileges, their flaunting and their harsh treatment of Arab guest-workers made them objects of contempt rather than admiration. In addition, the unwillingness of the United States to come to a peaceful compromise to resolve the crisis, and Bush's disdain for Arab efforts at mediation, convinced many that Islam had replaced Communism as the major enemy for the West. The ensuing US-led war against Saddam Hussein put most Arab regimes in a very difficult position. Their respective populations did not share their support for the Western campaign to liberate Kuwait.

As in all other Arab countries, the war had a tremendous impact in Algeria, but it had different repercussions and meaning for the government, the population and the opposition parties. The Algerian government, together with 13 other member states of the Arab League, condemned the invasion of Kuwait by the Iraqi troops, but worked immediately to avoid an internationalisation of the crisis that would likely lead to war and major divisions among Arab states.⁵⁷ The Algerian diplomatic corps, well-reputed for its conflict-solving abilities and negotiating skills, offered its services to peacefully solve the crisis, but a last-ditch effort before the expiration of the Bush ultimatum in January 1991 failed. During the ensuing military operations, the Algerian government progressively hardened its stance against the West, but failed to convince the population of its real opposition to the war as it did not take any measure susceptible to interpretation in the West as being pro-Saddam. The low profile of the government can be seen as an attempt to avoid a total break with its own citizens who were demonstrating in the streets, while avoiding, at the same time, upsetting its Western partners. This fine balancing act failed to work, as the Algerian population and opposition movements increasingly hardened their stance towards the war and Western countries in general.

What is very important for the Algerian transition is that the Gulf War “considerably inflamed the passions within which Algerian politics took place”⁵⁸ and

⁵⁷ Nicole Grimaud, “Prolongements externes des élections algériennes”, *Les Cahiers de l'Orient*, n. 23, Troisième Trimestre 1991, pp. 30-32.

⁵⁸ Robert Mortimer, “Islam and Multiparty Politics in Algeria”, *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 45, No. 4, Autumn 1991, p. 587.

was the external shock that began to destabilise the equilibrium and peaceful co-existence that had been reached between the FIS and the elite in power. Both Remy Leveau and Séverine Labat point out that the Gulf War unsettled the informal and unofficial pact of non-aggression between the FIS and the Chadli presidency and undermined the possibility of a smooth transition by radicalising both sides.⁵⁹

The leadership of the FIS was at first at odds on how to react to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and the Saudi response to it. It is claimed that the FIS had been receiving funds from Saudi Arabia to carry out its political and social activities and it was reluctant to fully support Saddam Hussein in his enterprise given that the Saudis were greatly opposed to it. However, given the popular mood, the FIS quickly found itself at the helm of street demonstrations that were clearly pro-Saddam and anti-West. The FIS leadership was encouraged by the strong popular and largely spontaneous support for Saddam to ride the wave and they “channelled and exploited the urban masses’ dissatisfaction by ditching their previous prudent stance.”⁶⁰ The FIS saw the Gulf War as a major boost to its position within an Algerian society that found itself deeply at odds with Western actions. FIS’s actions were not limited to mass demonstrations challenging the Algerian government to take radical action against the West, but went as far as trying to send volunteers to fight with Saddam’s troops. While this very radical undertaking was a failure, it is nonetheless evident that the majority of Algerians sympathised with most of the FIS’s demands. Among these, there was an official request to the government to “stop exporting oil and gas to those countries involved in the aggression against Iraq.”⁶¹

The FIS leadership exploited the feelings generated by the Cold War to further undermine the legitimacy of the government, and to have more bargaining chips to play at the negotiation table by arguing that they were the only movement really in touch with the population. The radicalisation of the FIS was not directed simply at the Chadli presidency, but also at the other opposition parties competing for political visibility. All other parties within the opposition were against the war and disagreed with Western policies in the region, but stopped short of making dramatic demands on the government

⁵⁹ Severine Labat, *Les Islamistes Algériens. Entre les urnes et les maquis*, (Paris, Editions du Seuil, 1995), p. 109; Rémy Leveau, ‘‘Algérie. Les Pièges de l’Aide Internationale’’, *Politique Internationale*, n. 24, 1994, p. 184 and Rémy Leveau, ‘‘Crise des Etats et transitions incertaines’’, in Raymond Benhaim, Youssef Courbage and Rémy Leveau (eds.) *Le Maghreb en suspens*, Paris, Les Cahiers du CERI, n. 8, 1994, p. 49.

⁶⁰ Rémy Leveau, ‘‘Algérie. Les Pièges de l’Aide Internationale’’, p. 184.

⁶¹ Severine Labat, *Les Islamistes Algériens*, p. 112.

to change its policy. In order to out-flank them in their opposition towards the war, the FIS instead radicalised its stance and began making very radical demands that gave the movement increased visibility. In a sense, the drawback of the FIS's position was that it revealed its strong anti-Western feelings. According to Olivier Roy "one of the geo-strategic consequences of the Gulf War in the longer term was the anti-Western radicalisation of fundamentalist movements"⁶² and the FIS did not escape this process of radicalisation.

From the point of view of the government, the Gulf War presented the opportunity to play a relevant role in negotiating a solution that would see Algeria return to being a central actor in international politics. Algeria was looking to reinvent itself in the New World Order after having abandoned its role as a 'mediator' between the Eastern bloc and the movement of non-aligned countries. A peaceful outcome of the crisis, if obtained thanks to the efforts and negotiating skills of Algerian diplomacy, would have increased the international prestige of the President and would have made Algeria a privileged interlocutor between the West and the Arab world. Unfortunately for the regime this policy, and the efforts to peacefully solve the crisis while condemning the Iraqi invasion backfired. The government was caught between the need to be seen by the West as a reliable partner and the need to be seen as voicing the worries of the majority of the population. This dilemma was not solved and "the Gulf crisis revealed the cruel delegitimisation of the Chadli government, ended the political apathy of the population and marked the end of the government foreign policy aimed at reinserting Algeria in the international system."⁶³

The problems of the governing elite were compounded by the fact that, while trying to normalise relations with France, they were open to the accusation of collusion with the 'enemy', as France had chosen to stand by the United States to the detriment of its privileged relations with North African countries. The Algerian government realised that they were not in touch with the reality of the majority of their citizens and that their efforts to find a position for the country in the new international system would be compromised by the arrival of the FIS in power. The forthcoming parliamentary elections were paramount in the mind of Chadli's entourage and another massive defeat of the FLN, accompanied by another convincing win by the FIS, would have provoked

⁶² Olivier Roy, "Les mouvements islamistes à l'épreuve de la guerre du Golfe", Revue du Monde Musulman et de la Méditerranée, Numero Special 'Crise du Golfe', Printemps 1991, p. 71.

⁶³ Remy Leveau, "Des Crises à la Guerre", in Remy Leveau (ed.) *L'Algérie dans la Guerre* (Bruxelles, Editions Complexe, 1995), pp. 20-21.

either very radical change in terms of domestic and international politics or the intervention of the real wielders of power: the Army and the security forces.

The Gulf War and the reactions it provoked in North African countries and other Middle Eastern states had a tremendous impact on the perceptions and policies of leading Western nation-states towards these areas of the world. Concerning the situation in Algeria, the French government was finally convinced that the arrival in power of the Islamic Front would be detrimental to French interests and security. According to a presidential aid, the French government already had tremendous reservations about the FIS, not so much for its dubious democratic commitment, but for the anti-France policies it might implement.⁶⁴ In fact, following the FIS victory in the local elections in June 1991, French ministers commented on the result to the press by explicitly calling into question the FIS's democratic credentials and by warning about potential security problems deriving from their victory in future elections as well. If anything, the Gulf War dispelled these reservations. Before the outbreak of hostilities against Iraq, President Mitterand was quite confident that relations with North African countries would not be affected by French participation in the war.⁶⁵ His conviction was quickly put to the test and the events of the following months seemed to confirm to many in France the dangers that the FIS would pose.⁶⁶

However, and more importantly, the Gulf War began to change American perceptions of its interests in Algeria. Changes in policy followed swiftly. The United States had traditionally had poor relations with Algeria due to the commitment of Algeria to anti-imperialism and Third-Worldism. Moreover, Algeria had privileged military relations with the Soviet Union and this was not well perceived in Washington even though the US was an important commercial partner for Algeria. For these reasons, the United States did not share the French preoccupation about the FIS when the party was founded. The commitment of the FIS to liberal economics and the opportunities that American companies might exploit in the region placed the United States ahead of France given the strong anti-French sentiments within the FIS. In addition, the fear that Algeria might follow the path of revolutionary Iran drove the United States diplomacy to entertain relations with FIS representatives. American policy-makers are still haunted by the mistakes made during the Carter administration when clinging to the Shah alienated

⁶⁴ Personal Interview with former French Presidential adviser, Paris, France, June 2001.

⁶⁵ Paul-Marie de La Gorce, 'La Dechirure', *Jeune Afrique*, n. 1572, 13/19 Fevrier 1991, pp. 32-35.

⁶⁶ Jean-Francois Daguzan, 'Les rapports franco-algériens, 1962-1992. Reconciliation ou conciliation permanente?', *Politique Etrangère*, N. 4, Hiver 1993-1994.

them from the new revolutionary actors emerging on the Iranian scene. Given that the United States traditionally had had good relations with some fundamentalist movements,⁶⁷ US policy-makers believed that they could 'do business' with the FIS as well.

For American diplomacy, "the only real preoccupation is the stability of Arab and Muslim countries and not the type of regime in charge, particularly if they are sitting on billions of cube metres of gas, as Algeria is."⁶⁸ This is, effectively, the bottom line of American policy-making in the region, but the ambiguity towards the FIS present in American policies since the creation of that party began to disappear during the Gulf War, when the attitude of the FIS leadership was violently anti-Western. The Gulf crisis showed to American policy-makers that the FIS would challenge the given international order and, more generally, "it reminded both the US and France of the political and strategic importance of Algeria."⁶⁹ The FIS was poised to win the parliamentary elections to be held later in the year and Western governments, already worried about the future of their economic ties to Algeria, felt threatened by the FIS stance over the crisis in the Gulf. It follows that, even in times when the promotion of democracy was at the top of the foreign policy agenda in western countries, "the hostile attitude of the FIS during Desert Storm contributes to explaining the moderate reaction of the United States to the cancellation of the parliamentary elections in January 1992."⁷⁰ Given that 'stability' is the true interest of the United States in the region, the exiting Bush administration did not sanction the military coup on the grounds that it had been carried out according to constitutional procedures. The Bush administration was severely criticised by members of the democratic opposition for its lack of resolve in condemning the cancellation of the elections and for its inconsistencies and double standards.⁷¹ The question was asked how could the President defend the institutions and procedures of democracy in Eastern Europe and Latin America, but not in Algeria? Ahmad Moussali goes even further and argues that "Washington has also welcomed the Algerian

⁶⁷ Michel Faure, "Washington-Islamistes. Liaisons Dangereuses", *L'Express*, 20 Septembre 2001, pp. 88-94.

⁶⁸ Pierre Devoluy and Mireille Duteil, *La Poudrière Algérienne*, (Paris, Calmann-Levy, 1994), p. 123.

⁶⁹ Paul-Marie de la Gorce, "L'Algérie et les Grandes Puissances", *Recherches Internationales*, N. 43/44, Hiver-Printemps 1996, p. 25.

⁷⁰ Robert Mortimer, "Les Etats Unis face à la situation algérienne", *Maghreb-Machrek*, n. 149, Juillet-Septembre 1995, p. 4.

⁷¹ Lee Hamilton, "A Democrat Looks at Foreign Policy", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 71, No. 3, Summer 1992, pp. 31-52.

government's iron-fist policies towards the Islamists and its suspension of the elections.”⁷² Moussali’s assertion seems to be confirmed by former Secretary of State James Baker. In an interview given to the Middle East Quarterly in 1994, Baker admits that the Bush administration “pursued a policy of excluding the radical fundamentalists in Algeria, even as we recognised that this was somewhat at odds with our support of democracy.”⁷³

6.2.3 The Impact of ‘International Islam’

Another important element that should be mentioned when analysing the international context of the Algerian transitions is the powerful ideological and political attraction exercised by Islam. The egalitarian and unitary aspect of Islam makes it a transnational tool for ideological mobilisation, particularly at times of perceived crisis for the ‘Muslim community’ as a whole. This crisis was reflected in the inability of Western imported ideologies such as nationalism and socialism to lift the Muslim masses from widespread poverty, authoritarian rule or both. In many cases, the mosque had become the only place where opposition to government policies could be aired and Islam began to be used to mobilise the masses for political activism. The resurgence of Islam as a political tool had begun in intellectual circles during the colonial period and had continued in the years after independence,⁷⁴ but the success of secular leaders such as Nasser and the Shah of Iran confined the political use of Islam to the margins. During the 1970s however the failures of many regimes became more apparent and a return on the scene of militant Islamism followed. This phenomenon led, first of all, to the Iranian revolution of 1979, the consequences of which were felt deeply in the entire Muslim world. While Iran was neither an Arab country nor a Sunni one, the message of the Iranian revolution was clear: Islam could be and indeed should be the guide to political action to rid the country of corrupt authoritarian leaders. While the Revolution was far from being the product of solely religious mobilisation, the religious hierarchy was able to ‘hijack’ it to serve its own political plans. The repercussions in the region were three-fold:

⁷² Ahmad Moussali, “Introduction”, in Ahmad Moussali (ed.) *Islamic Fundamentalism. Myths and Realities* (Reading, Ithaca Press, 1998), p. 7.

⁷³ James Baker III, “Looking back on the Middle East”, *The Middle East Quarterly*, Vol. 1, No. 3, September 1994.

⁷⁴ The cases of Sayyid Qutb in Egypt and Mawdudi in Pakistan are exemplary in this respect.

- Political movements that were undertaking political action against their own governments were energised by the success of the revolution even though it had taken place in a Shi'ia country. The Iranians had shown it was possible to dislodge unwanted leaders, even when they could count on a powerful security apparatus and on the support of Western countries. Furthermore, the new Iranian leadership set out to export its own revolution by sending ideologues and fighters to foreign countries such as Lebanon.
- It triggered 'religious' competition with the Sunni rulers of the Gulf States, who felt threatened by the success of the revolution. Khomeini was now openly accusing the Saudi rulers, in particular, of having betrayed Islam and of having lost their religious legitimacy to guard the Holy Sites. This meant that the Saudis had to go on the 'attack' diplomatically across the Muslim world to re-establish their credibility and legitimacy. In order to do so they began to finance political movements across the whole Muslim world and this money allowed many of these movements to effectively compete with governments in the provision of much needed social services. The standing of these movements improved and their efficient charity work in providing a wide range of essential social services showed how poorly governments were faring in providing basic necessities to the population.
- The third consequence of the Iranian Revolution was to make Western states aware of the importance of using Islam as a political tool. On the one hand, Western states were afraid that the Iranian revolution would spread to other countries, threatening their allies in the region, and therefore began to see Islam as the enemy. On the other hand, the realisation that religion could be a mobilising factor led the US in particular to try to use it in Cold War policy-making as an ally.⁷⁵ The result of this was the 'unholy' alliance between Sunni radical Islam and Western countries in the war in Afghanistan during the 1980s. While the strategy of backing such radicals worked, resulting in the defeat of the Soviet Union, it also led to the emergence of the belief that Islam was indeed the solution to all political problems, having just won a *jihad* against the Soviets.

⁷⁵ Azza Karam, "Transnational Political Islam and the USA: an Introduction" in Azza Karam (ed.) *Transnational Political Islam. Religion, Ideology and Power* London: Pluto Press, 2004, pp. 1-27.

6.3 Conclusion

It has been deemed essential for the research to describe the external conditions present during the Algerian transition in order to set the boundaries within which regime place took place. Given the nature of the two dimensions presented in Chapter 5, the focus of this chapter has been on both economic and political elements surrounding the transition. An examination of the economic factors is necessary because the very peculiar nature of the Algerian economy makes it susceptible to changes taking place outside it and beyond the control of domestic policy-makers. While the domestic structure of the economy is the result of domestic choices, it should not be forgotten that due to its colonial past and to its natural resources, Algeria occupies a very particular position in the international economic system. Furthermore, the hydrocarbons market is very volatile and the counter oil-shock of 1985 and 1986 had not only economic consequences, but political ones as well. The unwritten contract between rulers and the people broke down as a result of the economic crisis, triggering demands for both political and economic change.

An examination of the political factors accompanies this. In particular the focus has been on events that had a profound impact on the region as a whole. Three have been identified as being central in affecting domestic constituencies. The geo-politics of the Mediterranean had been profoundly changed by the end of the Cold War and Algeria, one of the leading countries in the region, had to come to terms with the sudden international instability of its position. Such instability was compounded by the Gulf Crisis, which gave renewed impetus to pan-Arab solidarity. This event had dramatic consequences in the Arab world, as it further radicalised Islamic movements and delegitimised the rulers who were attempting a fine balancing act between satisfying Western interests and heeding to the population demands for more radical pro-Iraq actions. Domestic constituencies reacted very differently to this event and it can be claimed that the Algerian transition suffered from the Gulf War, as it undermined a pattern of stable interactions that had been created between the ruling elite, the military and the opposition forces. In this context, it has also been deemed necessary to deal with the issue of 'international Islam'. While it would be mistaken to lend credibility to the claim that there is an organised Islamic international that acts in concert to destabilise Middle Eastern regimes, it should not be forgotten that Islamism had been on the rise for some time in the region. In particular, the Iranian Revolution and the responses to it

made it possible for Islam as a political tool to spread in the region. This had profound repercussions for both domestic and international actors.

To conclude, describing the international context of the Algerian transitions is a step towards building a better analysis in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 7 – The External-Domestic Links: Shattered Dreams of Democratisation

The objective of this chapter is to analyse in detail how the international context presented in the previous chapter specifically relates to the set of arguments formulated in Chapter 5. Each hypothesis made in Chapter 5 will be tested against the available evidence and some conclusions will be drawn about whether the evidence substantiates the claims or fails to do so.

7.1 The External Shocks: The Economic Recession

The first element that needs to be analysed is the role played by the economic crisis of 1985-1986 in 'forcing' the ruling elites to open up the system. It has been established in previous chapters that government revenues fell due to the oil counter-shock and this led to widespread impoverishment among the general population, which in turn led to the October 1988 riots. Due to the outbreak of violence, and in the face of further difficulties on the economic front, the ruling elite decided to open up the political system. The basic question that should be asked is the following: did the externally driven downturn in the economy have a causal link to the decision to liberalise?

In order to answer this question, it is necessary to take into account a number of elements. First of all, it should be underlined that prior to the crisis in the mid-1980s, the Algerian political system and Algerian society had known a substantial degree of stability. This stability was obviously enforced through authoritarian means and there were periods when this stability was threatened, but overall it can be argued that since the end of the war of independence, the ruling elite had a firm grip on the country. Over the course of the decades, there were only two episodes that seemed to shake the regime. The first was the Berber Spring of 1980, which was dealt with quite swiftly, and a radical Islamic insurrection, which enjoyed little popular support and was put down. The limitation of the Berber Spring was that it concerned the Berber ethnic and linguistic minority and never spread across the country. The radical Islamic armed rebellion of the early 1980s did not enjoy the support of the population and was limited to a few hundred fighters, who were easily defeated by the military. Roberts confirms this point by

arguing that prior to 1989, “the Algerian Islamist movement [had] been a far more superficial affair than virtually all its Western observers have supposed.”¹

The second element to take into consideration is that stability was a recognised trait of Algerian society and that it was maintained thanks to the expanding economy and to generous welfare state provisions. There is little doubt that the vast programme of social welfare and provision of jobs was possible thanks to the revenues from the hydrocarbon sector. There is unanimous agreement among scholars and government officials that development and economic growth were based entirely on external revenues: the figures suggest an almost total dependency. Aissaoui pints out that “by the end of the 1970s hydrocarbon revenues had reached the point of providing 95% of foreign income and 60% of government fiscal receipts”² and this dependency was by its very nature highly susceptible to changes and fluctuations on the international market place. Aissaoui again confirms that this type of dependency on of the export of hydrocarbons “critically expos[ed] the national economy to the instability of world oil markets and aggravat[ed] the country's vulnerability to external shocks.”³

In this context, it is difficult not to interpret the counter-shock of 1985-1986 as the central element that changed not only the fortunes of the Algerian economy, but also the political landscape of the country. It should be reiterated to what extent the Algerian economy was 'shocked' by the fluctuations of the market in 1985 and 1986. Aissaoui affirms: “export earning from hydrocarbons fell to \$ 7.3 billion in 1986 from a peak of \$ 14.2 billion in 1981.”⁴ In a study examining the relationship between *seignorage* and hydrocarbons, Abderrezak shows that “seignorage has grown at times of decreasing international hydrocarbon revenues”⁵ leading policy-makers to print more money. This however contributed to the growth of inflation and to a worsening of socio-economic conditions. Again, the volatility of the hydrocarbons in the international sector is the key to understanding domestic economic policy-making.

It also seems to be beyond dispute that the recession experienced by Algeria during the oil counter-shock was the principal cause of the October 1988 riots, given that

¹ Hugh Roberts, “Doctrinaire Economics and Political Opportunism in the Strategy of Algerian Islamism”, in John Reudy (ed.) *Islamism and Secularism in North Africa*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994, p. 131.

² Ali Aissaoui, *Algeria: The Political Economy of Oil and Gas*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 13.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

⁵ Ali Abderrezak, “Seignorage and Hydrocarbons in Algeria”, *The Journal of North African Studies*, Vol. 6, No. 4, Winter 2001, p. 25.

in a very short period of time, the country's economy virtually collapsed. While previous mismanagement⁶ and rampant corruption are certainly to be blamed for the recession, the international hydrocarbons market is directly responsible for such a swift decline. This is also supported by the experiences of other countries with similar economic structures. Most oil-exporting countries went through a painful economic recession and had to undertake political and economic measures to face the crisis. Thus, it is not problematic to see the economic crisis as being externally driven.

The establishment of a causal mechanism is however not clear-cut when it comes to linking the recession to the opening up of the political system. Would the political system have been opened in the absence of such an economic crisis? It is very difficult to offer a definite answer, but it would be contentious to conclude that without such an externally driven crisis the political system would have remained closed. Looking at the evidence, the verdict has to be 'mixed.'

The evidence emanating from the Islamic Salvation Front indicates that the role of the economic crisis may have not been as important in determining political outcomes because the system was already doomed. In short, "given the fact that the regime never enjoyed either Islamic or electoral legitimacy, given that it enjoyed only a revolutionary legitimacy that went on the decline in the late 1970s, the collision course between the regime and society was set much before the mid-1980s."⁷ The FIS offers other explanations as to why the Algerian elites decided to open up the system when they did, and these explanations have much more to do with the issue of political legitimacy than with the economic crisis. According to the FIS, the system had been failing for a long time and the impact of the crisis was almost incidental to an already pre-ordained development.

In one FIS publication this sentiment emerges quite strongly: "Aren't the elites proud of occupying the mansions and the apartments left by [former French colonial rulers]? With independence, there was no break with the colonial State, just a transfer of

⁶ For instance, it is often claimed that the planned economy was responsible for much of the poor results Algeria experienced. While this is not insignificant, it should also be recognised that "Algeria's centralised planning was a myth" and that "the reality was a centralised system for distributing the rents and prebends." This argument strengthens the view that with funds suddenly lacking, this distribution ceased to trickle down to the general population, which in turn rebelled against this state of affairs. For the citations see Henry Clement and Robert Springborg, *Globalisation and the Politics of Development in the Middle East*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 107.

⁷ Personal Interview, National Executive Office of FIS, November 2002, Geneva, Switzerland.

competencies.”⁸ The leader of the FIS, Abassi Madani, had already formulated this view in an interview with Slimane Zéghidour when he claimed that “the Algerian state of 1962 did not correspond at all to the one dreamt of on November 1st, 1954, when we took up arms to create it: an independent state based on Islamic principles.”⁹ This deviation from the original project, and the transformation of Algeria into a secular, socialist state, seems to be the origins of all of Algeria’s ills, according to the FIS. Therefore the economic variable does not really enter FIS’s explanations.

This view can obviously be countered by arguing that the regime began to lose legitimacy precisely when the recession hit the country and the FIS is reluctant to admit that they capitalised on an unprecedented economic crisis. Tehami claims this: “succinctly, very few people took note of this serious deviation before oil prices began plummeting.”¹⁰ However, the FIS’s analysis insists that even if the recession had some relevance, it had its roots in past policy choices and not simply in the economic circumstances of 1985/1986. Furthermore, the October riots themselves, while sparked by the worsening economic conditions and a general sentiment of *ras-le-bol* (being generally fed-up with the whole system) with the lack of hope for a better future were more ‘political’ than traditional bread riots. While there did not seem to be a great degree of organisation behind the riots and the protests looked spontaneous, they were not devoid of political demands for change, as there were demonstrators chanting slogans in favour of it.

The evidence emanating from government circles contends that, without such a severe economic crisis, Chadli would have been very reluctant to introduce such far-reaching political reforms. It is worth noting at this point that the President had already introduced extensive market-oriented reforms since the mid 1980s and he was mostly interested in moving the country away from a planned economy rather than in political pluralism. Just before the October riots, Chadli had harangued the cadres of his own party and the bureaucracy claiming that change was needed as the economy was stalling and that corruption was rife. This hostile attitude towards his own party members, and towards the state apparatus, was motivated by Algeria’s poor economic performance of recent years. He however avoided talking about any political reforms that might accompany the introduction of economic reforms. There was no reference to getting rid

⁸ FIS Publication *El Ribat*, n. 234, published on November 6th, 1998.

⁹ Slimane Zéghidour, “Entretien avec Abassi Madani. Pour Une Nouvelle Legalité Islamique”, *Politique Internationale*, No. 49, Automne 1990, p. 180.

¹⁰ Amine Tehami, “Partisan Islamists in Algeria: a Case of - and for - Malleable Identities”, *The Journal of North African Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 1, Spring 1999, p. 109.

of the one-party political system nor was there any discussion about constitutional changes to allow for political pluralism. It was in fact the riots that modified Chadli's perspective. To a large extent, the changes in the economic structure of the country would have been painful even without the collapse of oil prices, but Algerian policy-makers believed that the fall in price would be short-lived and this would have allowed them to manage the reforms. This did not happen and the internationally driven crisis had profound effects on the politics of the country.

The October riots are a source of academic dispute regarding their origins. It has been argued that FLN conservatives who did not want change had orchestrated the riots in order to undermine Chadli. While this explanation may be correct, it is nevertheless accepted that the motives behind the riots were mainly driven by economic dissatisfaction, although political demands quickly accompanied economic ones. In fact, it is not even very important to discover if the riots were orchestrated or spontaneous, although orchestrating such large scale rioting in the absence of concrete and widespread opposition to government policies would have been tremendously difficult. The main point is that the economic situation was the main factor behind Chadli's decision to liberalise the political system, as the difficulties of implementing economic reforms were so overwhelming that a political outlet for popular discontent was needed. It is for this reason that government circles insisted that without such a severe economic crisis there would have been no political opening.

If we look at how 'similar' countries reacted to the same economic recession, we can see that their responses were similar. Although none of the other petroleum-exporting countries formally espoused socialism as their model for economic development, they all had a large public sector to sustain and had a strict control over economic activities.

Furthermore, just like Algeria, they were (and are) heavily dependent on oil revenues to finance government expenditures. All the other oil exporting countries were very seriously affected by the contraction of oil prices and introduced far reaching economic reforms and some political reforms as well. Even Saudi Arabia had to contend with demands for some form of popular participation in political decision-making given the poor state of the economy after the counter shock. Thus, there is a 'comparative' pattern in all of the *rentier states* in terms of their reaction to the crisis. Lisa Anderson, as cited in Gould, claims that all processes of political liberalisation started because of the economic recession and Algeria went as far as it did in terms of liberalisation

because of the sheer severity of the crisis. Finally, Addi also claims that “political Islam is popular because it promises to renew the redistributionist policies that oil revenues permitted during the 1960s and 1970s,”¹¹ indicating that the state of the economy may indeed be a crucial variable.

In spite of the Algerian government’s claims and the assertions of some scholars regarding the opening up of the system at a time of negative economic growth, it would be unsound to claim that there is a demonstrable direct causal link between the drastic drop in the price of hydrocarbons (together with the fall of the dollar and the debt crisis) and the decision to liberalise the system. Regarding the first hypothesis, it can be concluded that there is strong evidence to support the claim that the drop in oil prices had a causal effect on the economic recession. However, there is not as much evidence to indicate that without such an internationally driven downturn the political system would have not been opened up. In this respect the severe recession was more of an accelerating factor rather than a causal one. After all, it has been pointed out that Algeria, like many other economies in the area, had structural deficiencies that the 1985/1986 recession simply highlighted. In this context, the international economic crisis acted as a catalyst for problems the country was already experiencing. The relationship between economic crisis and subsequent political liberalisation is a causal one, as shown by Testas,¹² but it is difficult to point to a causal mechanism in the relationship between the internationally driven crisis and the decision to open up the political system.

The only arguments that can be validated in this respect are the existence of solid links between the counter-shock and the domestic recession, and between the domestic recession and liberalisation.

7.2 The External Shocks: the Victory of the Afghan Rebels

The war against the Soviet Union’s invading army in Afghanistan represented a major turning point in the Cold War. The United States, under the Reagan presidency, were determined to challenge the perceived supremacy of the USSR and to counter its expansionist policy. This confrontational strategy did not begin with Ronald Reagan, but had been inherited from his predecessor, who had devised a policy of indirect military engagement with the Soviets.

¹¹ Lahouari Addi, “The Islamist Challenge: Religion and Modernity in Algeria”, *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. , No. July 1992, p. 79.

¹² Abdelaziz Testas, “Political Repression, Democratization and Civil Conflict in Post-Independence Algeria”, *Democratization*, Vol. 9, No. 4, Winter 2002, pp. 106-121.

The United States was not interested in using its own troops to challenge the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and opted instead to finance and train local guerrillas. The plan worked rather brilliantly and the Soviet Union was ultimately humiliated. The war lasted for almost the entire decade of the 1980s and saw the military and ideological mobilisation of a number of radical Islamic groups and individuals. The campaign against the Soviets was not solely conducted by Afghani freedom fighters, as many foreign fighters joined the ranks of the guerrillas. These foreign fighters were Muslims from all over the globe and they went to Afghanistan to participate in a *jihad* against invaders who had desecrated 'Muslim soil.'

There are two factors that need to be highlighted with respect to the war in Afghanistan. First of all, it was perceived across the Muslim world as a 'holy war', which was entirely justified given that the Soviets had invaded a Muslim country. The concept of holy war was instrumental, not only in uniting Afghan tribes that did not have much in common except Islam, but in attracting foreign fighters who believed it was their religious duty to go to war. This focus on holy war, and the duty of Muslims to fight, attracted substantial 'ideological' attention from radical Muslims. Islam-based political radicalism had been making a recent comeback and Afghanistan proved to be the place where an extreme form of Sunni radicalism formed in combat took hold. For many of the foreign fighters the war was not simply a cause that would see them help the Afghans get their country back, but it was an ideological commitment to a new type of political arrangement. A new society based on Islam was the long-term project.

The second factor is the impact of the war on Muslim governments and public opinion. Despite the absence of the widespread telecommunication and media network present today in the Muslim world, the war in Afghanistan was a popular cause. Governments, particularly the oil-kingdoms, financed the Afghani fighters and the general population felt sympathy for the guerrillas.

What made the war in Afghanistan a special event was that the Soviet Union was defeated. More than a victory that would lead to the liberation of Afghanistan, the victory was held to be the triumph of Islam. The prestige derived from fighting in Afghanistan reflected extremely well on radical Islamic movements (who could claim this victory as their own) and on the individuals who participated in the war effort. From this it follows that in Algeria we should see two contemporary phenomena. Firstly, we should see the ideological boost from the war in Afghanistan translated into the political discourse of the FIS, which was created at the end of the war. Secondly, we should see

returning Algerian ‘Afghan fighters’ involved in the movement itself, as many of the returnees “were anxious to introduce changes within their own states, where there was real and tangible dissatisfaction and where they hoped to utilise their ‘Afghan’ experience against their own governments.”¹³

On the first count, the FIS does not seem to have made any relevant or substantial references to the war in Afghanistan to underpin its ideological discourse. On the one hand, the war in Afghanistan was a distant event and by the time the FIS was founded the war was virtually over. On the other hand, until the Gulf war, the FIS was much more preoccupied with domestic issues and the ideological discourse of political Islam was used to underpin specific local socio-economic and political demands. When asked about the FIS priorities in case of electoral victory the leader of the FIS, Abassi Madani, was very clear: “these are the most pressing problems we need to solve for our people: housing, employment and [guaranteeing access to] basic necessities.”¹⁴ This indicates that the FIS did not seem to be influenced directly by the Afghani events, and the appeal to the radicalism espoused by other movements was limited for Algerian Islamists, who seemed more worried about getting to power to solve domestic problems than celebrating an Islamic victory in Afghanistan.

However, this does not mean that external events did not have any impact in terms of ideological influences. The contemporaneous rise of strong Islamic movements across the Muslim world is witness to the challenge faced by Western doctrines, but there is very limited direct ideological contamination between the FIS and other movements which were more radically involved with Afghanistan such as the Pakistani Islamists or the Egyptian al-Gama Islamiyya. If anything else, paradoxically, it is probably “Khomeinism that was able to exercise considerable appeal for Islamic movements in North Africa.”¹⁵

Islamism was the answer to the problems brought about by the failures of modernisation, but the FIS itself was very much a domestic product in ideological terms. Again Abassi Madani refutes the claim that the FIS had close links with the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood (a very committed sponsor of the Afghan *jihād*) and accuses those

¹³ Antoine Basbous, *L'Islamismo. Una Rivoluzione Indomabile?* (Formello: Edizioni SEAM, 2003), p. 28.

¹⁴ Zéghidour, op. cit., p. 184.

¹⁵ Francois Burgat, *L'Islamisme au Maghreb*, (Paris: Editions Payot et Rivages, 1995), p. 49. Antoine Basbous also agrees with this proposition about the influence of Khomeinism, op. cit., p. 128.

who made the claim of lying.¹⁶ A member of the Instance Executives du FIS à l'Étranger (IEFE), Ould Adda Abdelkrim, confirmed this by stating very clearly: “the FIS is fundamentally Algerian.”¹⁷

On the second count, the studies conducted on the movement show that membership does not show much influence from the ‘Algerian Afghans.’ Treating the FIS as a domestic movement rather than the product of foreign ideologies, membership can be broken down into three groups, as identified by Séverine Labat.¹⁸ The first is the *salafis*, a group that finds its inspiration in the actions of the Muslim Brotherhood and prefers the Islamisation of society from below. The second group is the ‘Islamotechnocrats’ who would like to replace the current corrupt elites and technocrats and favour an electoral strategy to get into power. Preachers and imams, who are very close to Abassi Madani and would like to see a radical change in the policy orientations of the country, compose the final group. In a subsequent study of FIS militants, Tehami offers a slightly different categorisation by including a group labelled ‘radicals’, but he also excludes the ‘Algerian Afghans’ from his typology.¹⁹ Basbous on the other hand claims that within the party a group of ‘Algerian Afghans’ had been able to gather substantial support. Gilles Kepel has also suggested that the Algerian Afghans played a prominent role in Algerian politics from 1989 onwards.²⁰ In spite of this last claim, the picture that emerges of the FIS is a one of a nebulous collection of personalities and movements with quite distinct beliefs, who are nevertheless able to stick together in order to defeat the FLN and get elected to government.

Basbous’s claim is based on the fact that between 700 and 3,000 Algerians went to fight in Afghanistan,²¹ but even taking into consideration the highest figure and speculating that all of them returned and became politically active within the FIS (highly unlikely speculations), the number is still too small to have a substantial effect, given that the FIS could count on a very large pool of members. Furthermore, the wider electorate did not seem to be too preoccupied with the issues of Islamic purity that are

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 182.

¹⁷ Patrick Denaud, *Algérie. Le FIS: Sa Direction Parle* Paris: L'Harmattan, 1997, p. 48.

¹⁸ Séverine Labat, *Les Islamistes Algériens. Entre les Urnes et le Maquis* (Paris. Editions Le Seuil, 1995).

¹⁹ Tehami, op. cit.

²⁰ Gilles Kepel, *Bad Moon Rising. A Chronicle of the Middle East Today* (London: Saqi Books, 2003), p. 96.

²¹ The figures of 700 is found in *Al-Chark Al Wassat* published on November 4th, 1997, while the figure of 3,200 is found in *Algérie Confidential* published on November 27th, 1998.

dear to the 'Afghanis' and was much more concerned with practical solutions to overwhelming social problems.²²

In conclusion, it emerges that the ideological pull of the brand of radical Islam that had triumphed in Afghanistan was almost non-existent in Algeria. Not even through contacts with other movements which had much more open supporters of the war in Afghanistan did the FIS acquire the same ideological discourse of the Islamists who fought the Soviets. Furthermore, the role of ex-combatants within the structures of the party was, at best, extremely limited if the background of the principal leaders is examined. However, this interpretation is contested in government circles. In attempting to explain political violence in the country, the former Algerian Ambassador to the US, Osman Bencherif, claimed: "violence in Algeria was [not] triggered by the cancellation of elections in January 1992...but violence rode on the wave of Islamist militancy brought into the country by veterans of the war in Afghanistan."²³ He also added: "the Afghans and their most radical followers had no interest in the ballot box."²⁴

This interpretation is not borne out by the evidence. In fact, the membership reflected other more relevant constituencies such as the Islamo-technocrats led by Hachani, who led the FIS to participate in the December 1991 elections despite the arrest of its two leaders six months prior the ballot. There is therefore very little evidence to support the claim that the war in Afghanistan, and the victory against the Soviets, had consequences and repercussions on the Islamic movement in Algeria. A further indication of this is to be found in the commitment by the party to play the electoral game to the end and to avoid reverting to armed insurrection for several months after the military coup. Given the radicalism and the Qutb-inspired ideology of the former Afghanis, it can be argued that, if they had been in control of the party or had been more influential, violence would have been the preferred option some time before the cancellation of the legislative elections.

7.3 The External Shocks: the 1990/1991 Gulf War

As mentioned in chapter 5, the impact of the Gulf War on the protagonists of the Algerian transition has been profound. Algeria is by no means unique in this respect, as the Gulf War of 1990/1991 sent shockwaves across the Muslim world. The impact of

²² See Benjamin Stora, "Algérie. Huit Clés pour Comprendre", *La Jeune Afrique*, No. 1539, 27 Juin/3 Juillet 1990, pp. 17-21.

²³ Osman Bencherif, "Algeria Faces the Rough Beast", *Middle East Quarterly*, Vol. 2, No. 4, December 1995, On-line version: <http://www.meforum.org/meq/issues/199512>

²⁴ Ibid.

this conflict is generally underestimated in the West, possibly because it was coated in the language of international legality and had come at a time when there was a widespread belief that a New World Order was coming into existence. This was not the case in the Muslim world nor, more specifically, in the Arab world. The hypothesis under examination holds that the outbreak of the crisis, the diplomatic attempts to solve it peacefully and the subsequent Operation Desert Storm affected the distribution of power and resources in Algeria. If this is the case, we should find evidence of the three main actors (government, FIS and the other parties) changing their strategies and their objectives throughout this phase of the transition due to the shifts in their own 'mobilisational' resources.

Starting with the impact of the crisis on the FIS, it emerges quite clearly that the party was considerably strengthened by its choice to place itself firmly in the anti-Western camp. However, before analysing in detail the effects of the crisis on the FIS, it is important to highlight how Islamic fundamentalists in general reacted to the Gulf War, as their support (open or implicit) for Saddam was, at the very least, strange given Saddam's secular beliefs and the suppression of the Islamic movement in Iraq. "The leadership of the Islamic movement across the Muslim world faced a dilemma: on the one hand, sentiment from the rank and file of membership was clearly in favour of Saddam, yet, on the other hand, their very organisations were often financially dependent on the Gulf states."²⁵ Most movements solved this dilemma by shifting the focus away from support for Saddam and towards opposition to Western intervention and double standards. They were helped in this by Saddam's references to religion. Through this shift in focus, they were able to ride the wave of Arab unity, vent their anti-Western feelings and avoid direct support for a leader whose Ba'athist ideology was clearly anti-Islamic. At the same time, they capitalised on the pro-Saddam feelings emanating from the so-called 'Arab street'.

Piscatori identified three factors that made the Arab street so sympathetic to Saddam in spite of his instrumental and cynical use of religious language to gather support for his stance over Kuwait and against the US-led coalition. First of all, "the entire range of discontents that emanate from developing, inefficient, over-bureaucratized and undemocratic societies crystallised in the illogical but no less real

²⁵ James Piscatori, "Religion and Realpolitik: Islamic Responses to the Gulf War" in James Piscatori (ed.) *Islamic Fundamentalisms and the Gulf Crisis*, (Chicago: The American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1991), p.11.

hope for some release”²⁶ and Saddam claimed to provide just that type of liberation. Saddam would give Arabs a cause to concentrate on, including defiance of the West, and this was making him stronger and admired.²⁷ Secondly, there was very little sympathy for the Gulf monarchies across the Muslim world as their regimes had “become synonymous with corruption, insincerity, and licentious, un-Islamic conduct”²⁸ in spite of the amount money they gave to less fortunate non-oil-exporting countries. The Saudi regime in particular was coming in for widespread criticism, and even hatred, for its perceived misuse of oil revenues, its alliance with the US and the lavish lifestyle of most members of the House of Saud.²⁹ Finally, “latent suspicions of Western intentions in the Muslim world played into Saddam's hands.”³⁰

In Algeria, the FIS reacted much like the other Islamic movements. Condemnation of the invasion of Kuwait was swiftly replaced by anti-Western sentiments once it became clear that the vast majority of the population was quite favourable to Saddam’s actions. The turning point in the crisis was the beginning of operation Desert Shield on August 7th, 1990. As Roberts argues, “from that point on, the issue of Iraq's aggression against a fellow Arab state was overshadowed by the issue of the massive Western military presence on Arab soil, and the way in which the military deployment had pre-empted a possible Arab solution to the crisis.”³¹ The FIS, in order to satisfy its own natural constituency, progressively radicalised its discourse and “once the war began, the FIS emerged as the most vociferous and militant supporter of Iraq.”³² This position, albeit difficult to justify in ideological terms and in view of the FIS’s previously close links with the Gulf Monarchies, increased the profile of the party even further and made it even more popular. The FIS openly recognises the shift: “the FIS is a party that takes its electorate seriously, and had to make representations on behalf of its

²⁶ Ibid., p. 12.

²⁷ Said Aburish, *Saddam Hussein. The Politics of Revenge* (London: Bloomsbury, 2000).

²⁸ Piscatori, op. cit., p. 12.

²⁹ For a scathing critique of the House of Saud and their way to run Saudi Arabia, see Said K. Aburish, *The Rise, Corruption and Coming Fall of the House of Saud* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 1994).

³⁰ Piscatori, op. cit., p. 13.

³¹ High Roberts, “A Trial of Strength: Algerian Islamism” in James Piscatori (ed.) *Islamic Fundamentalisms and the Gulf Crisis* (Chicago: The American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1991), p. 140.

³² Ibid., p. 141.

constituency and air its concerns. There is nothing weird about this. This is what representative politics is all about.”³³

This increase in bargaining power and resources can be seen in the mobilisation capabilities of the party, which was able to organise mass demonstrations in favour of Iraq and put pressure on the government. The very high profile the party kept throughout the crisis, including its own attempts at mediation for a peaceful resolution of the conflict, substantially increased the ‘credibility resources’ of the movement when it came to negotiate with the Algerian regime on how to proceed with democratisation. To the splendid results obtained at the local elections in June 1990, the FIS could now add its ability to mobilise the masses on foreign policy issues, which gave the leadership leverage at the transition table.

For their part, both the government and the other opposition parties, after the initial condemnation of Saddam's actions, moved quickly towards the same positions the vast majority of the population held. In doing so, they faced problems and constraints that the FIS did not have and it is precisely these constraints that diminished their legitimacy and therefore their bargaining resources. The government could not possibly go as far as the FIS in criticising the Western response to the invasion and could not delegitimise the United Nations, as the Security Council had mandated the war. Furthermore, the government was at the time dependent on credits and loans from France and the United States, and the economic situation in the country was sufficiently bad without upsetting foreign lenders by making 'wild calls' against the US-led coalition. This does not mean that the government, and the presidency in particular, were supine. They attempted to mediate between the different sides in a pan-Arab context and their failure is more a reflection of Saddam's stubbornness, and the US's unchangeable decision to go to war, than on the lack of effort from Chadli. However, the inability to provide a solution, accompanied by the prudent proclamations against the West, did not work well with the domestic audience. Finally, once the coalition went into the fight, Chadli was even quite supportive of its actions.³⁴ The FIS, conscious that it could gain political capital by riding on the crisis, could make claims and demand actions (such as the setting up of volunteers' camps trained by the Army to go and fight in Iraq or the halting of oil supplies to the West) that the government could not even consider. The

³³ Personal Interview, National Executive Office of FIS, November 2002, Geneva, Switzerland.

³⁴ See Milton Viorst, “Algeria's Long Night”, *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 76, No. 6, November/December 1997, pp. 91.

FIS's populist stance paid off, while the government looked static and unresponsive to the electorate.

The other opposition parties behaved in much the same way as the FIS and former exiled leader Ben Bella even outflanked the Islamic party by "taking a vigorously pro-Iraqi position on the traditional basis of pan-Arab solidarity and hostility to Western imperialism"³⁵ before anyone else in Algeria. However, the opposition parties lost momentum and found themselves outplayed by the FIS. There are two factors that help to explain this reversal of fortunes. First of all, most opposition parties held marches where the slogans were all about peace and a peaceful solution to the crisis within a multilateral context. This position was progressively out of touch with the more extremist pro-Iraqi positions displayed during the FIS marches and demonstrations. It is interesting to note that as the crisis moved from the invasion of Kuwait to the Western presence on Arab soil, the idea that there was a US plot to control Arab lands (and access to oil resources) took hold.³⁶ This meant a further radicalisation among the opponents of the war and marginalised other opposition parties, which were still calling out for peace instead of being more pro-Iraq. Secondly, the FIS spoke the same language as Saddam in religious and ideological terms. Even if Saddam was a cynical 'user' of the language of Islamism, his discourse had the same resonance as the political discourse of the FIS. This was not acceptable to many of the other opposition parties, which were largely secular.

Thus, during the entire duration of the Gulf Crisis, it can be argued that the FIS was able to increase its resources, make more compelling demands on the government and become a leader in the transition game. The Gulf War provided the FIS with the opportunity to link the 'state of the Arab nation' internationally with domestic concerns. David Seddon claims: "much of the impetus for the popular protest derived from dissatisfaction with domestic economic and social policies and deteriorating economic conditions."³⁷ However, these conditions existed prior to the Gulf crisis. What the crisis did was to intensify the call for change by giving the spokespersons of such a call a much greater degree of bargaining power with the static elites. At the same time, the government and the opposition parties further realised how little legitimacy they had

³⁵ Roberts, op. cit., p. 141.

³⁶ For an example of this, see the interview held by Francois Soudan and Samir Gharbi with the leader of the Tunisian Islamic Party Rachid Ghannouchi. Francois Soudan and Samir Gharbi, "Interview: 'Saddam Hussein, les Hypocrites et Nous'", *La Jeune Afrique*, No. 1572, 13/19 Février 1991, pp. 50-53.

³⁷ David Seddon, "Politics and the Gulf War Crisis: Government and Popular Responses in the Maghreb" in Haim Bresheeth and Nira Yuval-Davis (eds.) *The Gulf War and the New World Order* (London: Zed Books, 1991), p. 110.

compared to the Islamic movement and began to play the game differently as a result. The clearest sign of the impact of the Gulf crisis can be found in the postponement of the legislative elections. The legislative elections should have been the foundation of the new political system that was being built at the time and the Gulf crisis forced the government to fear this ballot. It would have taken place at a time of high emotions, with the FIS in an extremely advantageous position and neither the regime nor the other opposition parties, which were equally weakening, could welcome this. Some analysts argue that the humiliating defeat of the Iraqi troops undermined the credibility of the Islamists, as the “war was too brief and the disaster too evident to allow [them] to make an impact externally and consolidate domestically.”³⁸ However, the defeat could be easily explained away by the superior firepower of the coalition and the Iraqis had showed courage in resisting heavy bombardment. Also, as promised, Saddam did hit Israel with his missiles. The FIS was not weakened by the end of the military operations in Iraq and maintained its ideological appeal intact as it never justified Saddam's aggression, but simply “sought a regional solution.”³⁹

Roberts summarises the fall-out from the crisis best: “[it] complicated the political situation by disrupting the pre-existing timetable for the protracted transition to democracy in Algeria, obliging the authorities to postpone the long-awaited elections for the National Popular Assembly.”⁴⁰ The crisis was a major challenge to the transition and it contributed to its eventual demise if seen in combination with the effects it produced on external actors regarding the perceived threats coming from political Islam. There is strong evidence to suggest that that the crisis changed quite dramatically the distribution of power and leverage among the domestic actors and this in turn modified both expectations and strategies.

7.4 The External Shocks: the End of the Cold War

At a very general level, it is fair to argue that the end of the Cold War had a considerable impact on world affairs. When it comes to the issue of liberalisation in the Arab world, this event is often cited as an important catalyst for change. According to Hudson, “the collapse of the Soviet Union has undermined a certain type of

³⁸ Francois Soudan and Samir Gharbi, “Les Islamistes, Victimes de la Guerre”, *La Jeune Afrique*, No. 1578, 27Mars/2 Avril, 1991, p. 48.

³⁹ Personal Interview, National Executive Office of FIS, November 2002, Geneva, Switzerland.

⁴⁰ Roberts, op. cit., p. 131.

authoritarian-nationalist model.”⁴¹ This factor is particularly relevant for Algeria, as the country had quite close links with the Soviet Union. These ties did not make Algeria a close ally of the Soviet Union, and the country was quite fierce in guarding its own independence of action from the Soviets. However, Algeria was a leader of the non-aligned movement and espoused a form of Third-Worldism that usually pitted it against the US.

The links with the Soviet Union were therefore not codified in a formal alliance, but rested on military co-operation and some ideological proximity. After all, the Algerian constitution advocated socialism and the economy was formally run according to central planning. The contention of the hypothesis here is that the end of the Cold War forced the Algerian ruling elite to respond by attempting to fit into the new international political and economic system that was being built around the United States's unipolarity. In this respect, the hypothesis holds that there should be evidence of an Algerian realignment towards the United States immediately preceding and following the crisis of the Soviet Union, which loosely coincides with Gorbachev's aborted reform attempts. The very recognition that the USSR was in a state of crisis by the new Soviet leader was sufficient for the Algerian elites, and in particular the presidency and the military, to seek new political options in terms of international political and economic alliances.

Economic difficulties and political stagnation in the Soviet Union were clear signs to the Algerian governing elite that some change needed to be made at the domestic and international levels. Domestically, market-oriented reforms were introduced to remedy the problems of central planning, and internationally, Algeria began to slowly move away from Soviet influence towards better relations with the US. The very first step in that direction was the visit to Algeria by Vice-President George Bush in September 1983. According to Ait-Challal, “after that visit, relations intensified and meetings multiplied.”⁴² The United States was clearly interested in having better relations with Algeria and “in view of Algeria's increasing pragmatism in foreign policy, the US main objective was to encourage Algeria's efforts at liberalising the economy.”⁴³

⁴¹ Michael Hudson, “Arab Regimes and Democratization: Responses to the Challenge of Political Islam” in Laura Guazzone (ed.) *The Islamist Dilemma. The Political Role of Islamist Movements in the Contemporary Arab World* (Reading: Ithaca Press, 1995), p. 217.

⁴² Amine Ait-Challal, *L'Algérie, les Etats-Unis et la France: des Discours à l'Action* (Paris: Publisud, 2000), p. 171.

⁴³ Yahia Zoubir, “Algeria and US Interests: Containing Radical Islamism and Promoting Democracy”, *Middle East Policy*, Vol. 9, No. 1, March 2002, p. 65.

Building on Bush's visit to Algiers, and on the increased economic contacts, the more difficult issue of military and security co-operation was tackled. Algeria was heavily dependent on the Soviet Union for military hardware and officer training, but the failings of the Soviet system had become even more evident under Gorbachev and the ruling elites decided to improve military relations with the US and other Western countries. First of all "just as many officers [were] sent to military academies in the Soviet Union as are sent to France, the US and Great Britain."⁴⁴ The United States military established a programme to welcome high-ranking Algerian officers to its academies, although it has to be admitted that "in the late 1980s the United States simply was not paying very much attention to Algeria."⁴⁵ This lack of great interest by the US in Algeria emphasises even further the action undertaken by Chadli to move the country towards US and Western positions on the international stage. If the US had been more forthcoming in their support for Chadli, the realignment could be seen as an attempt by the US to gain influence in a changing Arab world, but the fact that diplomatic activities were mainly coming from Algiers indicates a real willingness to move away from Soviet influence. This was not so much a free choice as a forced one, with a view to adapting to a new international order.

More evidence of Algeria's attempt to realign with the winning side in the Cold War can be found in its diversification of weapons supplies, as indicated by research on arms transfer in the Middle East. According to Bennett, while Algeri, obtained 83 percent of all its weaponry from the Soviet Union until 1982, by 1985 it was already attempting to diversify its purchases to other suppliers. In particular, it was "interested in expanding further military relations with the United States."⁴⁶ The United States were still sceptical at the time, but were interested in developing new markets. The French already had very close military links with Algeria and had sold them substantial amounts of weaponry. In general, it is accepted that "arms transfers facilitate the occurrence of coups d'état and help prolong military rule in Third World states."⁴⁷ These sales by both France and the US seem to indicate that they were aware of the very powerful role of the

⁴⁴ Pierre Devoluy and Mireille Duteil, *La Poudrière Algérienne*, (France: Clamann-Lévy, 1994), p. 46.

⁴⁵ Personal Interview with former US Ambassador to Algeria, Washington DC, December 2001.

⁴⁶ Alexander Bennett, "Arms Transfer as an Instrument of Soviet Policy in the Middle East", *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 39, No. 4, Autumn 1985, p. 759.

⁴⁷ Talukder Maniruzzaman, "Arms transfers, Military Coups, and Military Rule in Developing States", *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 36, No. 4, December 1992, p. 734.

Algerian military in the running of the country and used these links to obtain 'political' access.

In political terms, there is also evidence of the abandonment of Soviet-inspired discourse about the necessity of socialism. In a very important speech to the cadres of the FLN in September 1988, Chadli called for such extensive reforms as to virtually signal the end of socialist developmental policies. Chadli's language towards the end of the 1980s was far from the pompous socialist proclamations the Algerian public had been used to and signified that Algeria's experiment with socialism was over. In international terms, it meant not only adopting friendlier policies towards the United States, but an improvement in the relationship with the French government as well. Chadli found Mitterrand to be a useful ally and French economic aid allowed Algeria to survive economically.

The ending of the Cold War, with its ideological, economic and strategic implications, had a profound impact on Algeria's policy makers. Their reaction to the unfolding events in Eastern Europe was an attempt not to be left out in the cold, having supported the losing side since independence. Their attempts at redirecting foreign policy towards better relations with the United States, and strengthening the links with France, began before the fall of the Berlin wall, but coincided with the emergence of huge problems in the Soviet system. The Algerian government made substantial policy shifts and adopted a more pragmatic and less antagonistic stance in international affairs. The toning down of the Third Worldist discourse signalled to the West that the country was changing and this was exemplified by the abandonment of issues raised by past commitment to a New Economic Order. Economically, market-oriented reform signalled a willingness to participate in the world economy on the basis of rules set out by Western countries and were meant to 'impress' the West about the reality of the changes taking place. From a political point of view, Bush's visit to Algiers and Chadli's visit to the US meant that Algeria wanted and needed better relations with the superpower poised to win the Cold War. These visits were followed by agreements touching on economic investment in Algeria and military co-operation in the form of training and weapons supply. From an ideological point of view, the new constitution of 1989 eliminated references to socialism and was a further sign of the abandonment of the policies and discourse that the country had espoused since independence.

All this does not mean that there were not domestic pressures behind the changes that were implemented. However, the end of the Cold War represented a watershed for

many countries previously aligned to Soviet positions and Algeria needed to conform its domestic and external policies to an environment where the rules of the game would not be negotiated, but dictated by the winning side. The evidence suggests that the ending of the Cold War played a role in forcing the ruling elite to seek alternative sources of international legitimacy, and this realignment towards the West was both a resource and a curse. On the one hand, the encouraging signs coming from the US and the West, in terms of investment and co-operation, strengthened the ruling elites. Algeria could join the family of those countries willing to put their Soviet-inspired past behind them. On the other hand, the regime was also weakened, as this realignment looked suspicious to the opposition parties. The *rapprochement* towards France in particular was used by the FIS to delegitimise the regime. The FIS's attempt at rewriting the history of the war of independence meant a demonisation of France and 'its Algerian children' who had led the Revolution astray. The links with France were therefore seen with extreme suspicion and attracted criticism.⁴⁸

7.5 Direct Active Policies: the West and the Question of Democracy Abroad

Nation-states are held to be the most important actors in international relations and the more power they have, the more interests they have to defend or promote, and consequently, the more influence they will try to exert in order to achieve their preferred goals. Over the last three decades, there is one rather specific policy that seems to have reached the top of the agenda when it comes to foreign policy actions for these countries: the promotion of democracy. It has already been argued in Chapter 5 that such promotion is not an end in itself, but a means to achieve other goals and it is therefore a contradictory, *ad hoc* and context-dependent strategy. The contention here is that the political liberalisation in Algeria, although not created by active policies of democracy promotion, was supported and encouraged as the best means to achieve stability in the region while obtaining material advantages. A corollary of this hypothesis is that once it became clear that the process of democratisation would lead the FIS to power, the key Western countries in the region, namely the US and France, pushed for the termination of the democratic experiment.

When it comes to the United States, there is very little evidence to suggest that they exercised any type of influence to promote democracy in Algeria or that they

⁴⁸ For a review of the FIS attitude towards France, see Gilles Kepel, *Allah in the West* (London: Polity Press, 1997), pp. 156-173.

supported the democratising efforts of the regime. Prior to Bush's visit in 1983, diplomatic relations were rather icy and US policy-makers had very little access to their Algerian counterparts. Even after the *détente* of the mid and late 1980s, the United States was more interested in the process of economic liberalisation than in the political changes taking place. A former US Ambassador to Algeria stated that, broadly speaking, “the US welcomed liberalisation, but did not devote much attention to it.”⁴⁹ At the time there were much more pressing priorities for the United States and even in the regional context, “Algeria was of minor economic importance to the US and far from the travails of the Arab-Israeli peace process.”⁵⁰ This means that aside from being pleased that democratic governance was now being tried in the Arab world, it emerges quite clearly that the Bush administration did not really have an interest in Algeria. It follows that influence was exercised only in so far as US multinationals were going to invest in Algeria, as confirmed again by the Ambassador. He stated that “the opening of the Algerian economy after 1989 provided a new opportunity for US energy companies to invest”⁵¹ and this was the real area of interest at the time for the US government. The political scene was ‘left alone.’

When it comes to France, and its role in supporting the democratisation efforts of the regime, matters are quite different. A number of different perspectives seem to emerge. The first point to be underlined is that after the October riots, Mitterrand and his government did not believe that the outcome of such an event would be democratisation. During the Cabinet meeting of October 12th, 1988 Mitterrand stated: “What will happen in Algeria? I do not really know. However, there is a hypothesis which we are forbidden from thinking about: the establishment of democracy.”⁵² What followed in Algeria was a surprise to France, as confirmed by a close adviser of the president, who asserted that “we were very surprised that the solution to the economic, social and political problems [was] to initiate a serious programme of democratisation.”⁵³ In spite of the initial surprise, it soon emerged that the French government was keen in supporting Chadli's democratising effort. The problem was that France should not be seen doing so too openly, to avoid undermining the man they were ‘betting their money on’, as Chadli

⁴⁹ Personal Interview with former US Ambassador to Algeria, Washington DC, December 2001.

⁵⁰ Personal Interview with former US Ambassador to Algeria, Washington DC, December 2001.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² Pierre Favier and Michel Martin-Roland, *La Décennie Mitterrand. Les Défis. Volume 3* (Paris: Editions du Séuil, 1996), p. 483.

⁵³ Personal Interview with former French Presidential Adviser, Paris, June 2001.

could be accused of colluding with the old enemy and ousted by anti-French forces. This is the belief of Hubert Vedrine who argued: “if Chadli is ousted, he will be replaced by a representative of the anti-French faction and the regime ... will be completely militarised.”⁵⁴

It is for this reason that support for the project of liberalisation was 'confined' to the economic sphere until the approval of the new Constitution in February 1989. On January 8th, 1989 France granted Algeria 7 billion francs in credit and agreed shortly after (January 12th) to buy Algerian gas at more than the market price, injecting an extra 1 billion francs into the coffers of the regime. The political support came in March of that year when Mitterrand visited Chadli in Algeria and implicitly gave his blessing to the process of democratisation. One of Mitterrand's advisers confirms this: “there was strong support for the rapidity with which the regime chose the 'democracy' option.”⁵⁵ At a more informal level, Ambassador Audebert was enthusiastic about the transition in Algeria and relayed this enthusiasm from Paris to Algiers. Furthermore, “both the embassies and the two military establishments had very close contacts”⁵⁶ and support was shown to the principal Algerian decision-makers.

This support has been interpreted rather differently. Some independent experts such as reporter Djallal Malti argue that the “real objective of France was not democratisation and... there was no real support for it.”⁵⁷ He cites for example the very little support that was given to Hamrouche and his reform-orientated government. According to Malti, the true objective of France was stability in the country so as to avoid dangerous spill-over effects into France and to maintain the old network with the Algerian elites. Others argue instead that support was genuine and it is only domestic Algerian constraints that did not allow France to play a more overt supporting role. The two interpretations are not necessarily different in theoretical terms. Every transition is a game played by the ruling elites in order to (re)-gain legitimacy and stay in power, but the process that is initiated has unknown outcomes and unforeseen consequences. The same is true for external actors. They may not believe that the process is genuine, but they may take actions that are contrary to that belief. Once these actions are taken they do ‘make a statement’ and have consequences. It can therefore be argued quite convincingly that France supported the efforts made by Chadli to democratise the regime

⁵⁴ Favier and Martin-Roland, *op. cit.*, p. 446.

⁵⁵ Personal Interview with former French Presidential Adviser, Paris, June 2001.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ Personal Interview, Paris, November 2001.

and this support was instrumental in the survival of the regime in the face of the mounting economic crisis. This point is confirmed by Maria Do Ceu Pinto who argues: “French support for the ailing and discredited Algerian regime can be dated back to the 1988 riots when Paris provided generous aid to rescue Chadli's government from total collapse.”⁵⁸ France was so committed to shoring up Chadli and to antagonising the FIS that Mitterrand involved the European Community as well. According to Mélanie Morisse-Schlibach “at the European Summit in Luxembourg in June 1991, the president put the issue of Algeria at the top of the agenda. Without hesitation, the Council decided to support Chadli financially with aid worth over 400 million ECU.”⁵⁹

French support was not the only reason why the process continued, but it had the consequence of involving France in the politics of its former colony. The implications of this meddling are very relevant for the analysis of the second part of the hypothesis: once the FIS became the likely winner of the transition, both the US and France applied pressure to avoid the Islamic party coming to power.

Again, France and the United States adopted somewhat different attitudes towards Algerian developments, which were the result of different experiences of Islamic movements and the Algerian elites. When it comes to analysing France's reaction to the emergence of the FIS as the principal force of opposition to the Chadli regime, it should be first outlined that at the beginning of the transition the French government seriously underestimated the FIS and made the mistake of focusing on “the so-called democratic forces.”⁶⁰ However, these movements “did not have any clout with the people, they lacked presence.”⁶¹ Thus, the results of the local elections of June 1990 came as a real shock to French policy-makers, as they did not expect the FIS to do that well. These elections were the real turning point for France and there was a widespread preoccupation with the legislative elections scheduled for the following year, which might have confirmed the same result. According to the French government, “the FIS in power [was] a very worrisome development for France”⁶² and therefore even more support was thrown behind Chadli, given that the so-called democratic parties had proven to be rather unpopular with the population. Support for Chadli came in the form

⁵⁸ Maria do Ceu Pinto, “European and American Responses to the Algerian Crisis”, *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 3, No. 3, Winter 1998, p. 68.

⁵⁹ Melanie Morisse-Schlibach, *L'Europe et la Question Algérienne* (Paris: PUF, 1999) p. 52.

⁶⁰ Personal Interview with former French Presidential Adviser, Paris, June 2001.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

of grants and economic loans just one month after the 1990 election results. The FIS was still in no doubt where France stood and they accused “some senior French political figures [of making] slanderous, patronising and antagonistic statements.”⁶³ Moreover, they were and still are particularly unhappy about media coverage of the party in France: “the French media certainly played a critical role in demonising the FIS.”⁶⁴

Thus, it is quite evident from June 1990 that France was no longer particularly happy about the development of the transition because “France did not see how the FIS would be stopped from taking power through the ballot box.”⁶⁵ A further development confirmed to the French that they should be hostile to the FIS: the huge popular support in the country for Saddam Hussein against the US-led coalition. This event, as mentioned above, had profound effects not only in Algeria, but in France as well. Such a high level of support for Iraq and such a high level of hostility for France were not expected, and the radicalisation of the FIS regarding foreign policy issues made France even more uneasy about the Islamic movement winning power.

The French stance towards the FIS had two important domestic consequences for Algeria. On the one hand, it made the FIS an even stronger actor because it conferred legitimacy on the party as the real ‘independent’ force in the country. The FIS could now present itself as the true heir of those who fought for independence against France and could accuse the regime of colluding with the former colonial power. At a time of hostility towards the West in general, this radicalised and emboldened the FIS, whose political demands become more pressing, as the FIS wanted an acceleration of democratisation in order to benefit from well-known French attitudes. On the other hand, clear French support for the regime and its hostile stance towards the FIS substantially decreased for the regime the eventual costs of repression.

Mitterrand's anti-Islamic parties speech in the aftermath of the Gulf War,⁶⁶ the credits and loans given to Chadli just after the electoral defeat of 1990, the declarations of many government ministers and politicians, and the anti-FIS campaign of the French media all contributed to making the Algerian ruling elites less nervous about the future. The media in particular have been the focus of scrutiny by some researchers interested in the crisis. An example of this is an article by Fouzi Slisli, who argues that “anti-Islamic

⁶³ Personal Interview, National Executive Office of FIS, November 2002, Geneva, Switzerland.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Personal Interview with former French Presidential Adviser, Paris, June 2001.

⁶⁶ Francois Soudan, “Mitterrand contre les Islamistes”, *La Jeune Afrique*, No. 1594, 17/23 Juillet, 1991, pp. 16-20.

prejudice, rampant in international media and Western public opinion between the late 1980s and in the mid-1990s, provided both alibi and justification for the military repression that was unleashed on the Algerians during the same period.”⁶⁷ With the FIS poised to win the legislative elections, French attitudes and policies seemed to support those in Algeria who would intervene to deny the FIS a place in government. Key elements within the French government had very solid links with the Algerian elites in spite of rhetorical outbursts in Algiers claiming that France was still attempting to run Algeria as a colony. For instance, Slisli argues: “the corrupt FLN government was a major business partner with the West, France in particular, trading national resources for personal favours since independence.”⁶⁸

The real difficulty still remains: finding evidence of real French support for the military coup itself. Hard evidence is very difficult to find in this respect and once again there are diverging interpretations, with very strong political connotations. Mitterrand's adviser admitted that “when the process was stopped, the Ambassador in Algeria and the government knew it was going to happen”⁶⁹, but this prior knowledge does not constitute proof that they encouraged it. He pointed out that the French government “did not push for intervention and this intervention was decided to save the country from radical Islam without taking into account what the external reactions would be. They [the generals] probably gave it some thought, but not that much.”⁷⁰

The FIS offers a rather different picture where the French role is not simply limited to knowledge of the coup, but includes some direct action to stimulate its occurrence. It is claimed: “there is evidence that the French government did act to prevent the FIS from taking power.”⁷¹ In particular, there are two events that are cited to back this claim up. According to the FIS “General Nezzar had discussed in 1991 with some unnamed officers in the Ecole de Guerre in France about a Turkish scenario in case the FIS won a majority of seats in Parliament.”⁷² The second event is a series of trips to France undertaken before the coup by General Larbi Belkahir to liaise with French

⁶⁷ Fouzi Slisli, “The Western Media and the Algerian Crisis”, *Race & Class*, Vol. 41, No. 3, 2001, p. 43.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

⁶⁹ Personal Interview with former French Presidential Adviser, Paris, June 2001. Claims about prior French knowledge are also made by Antoine Basbous, who quotes former Ambassador Jean Audibert on the matter, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.* The same claim is made by one of the principal protagonists of the coup, General Nezzar, in his memoirs, *op. cit.*

⁷¹ Personal Interview, National Executive Office of FIS, November 2002, Geneva, Switzerland.

⁷² *Ibid.*

military and civilian leaders, including Mitterrand, about the feasibility of carrying out a coup to prevent the FIS from heading the new government.

While decisive evidence of direct French involvement in stimulating the coup is hard to find, there is very little doubt that the consistent pro-*junta* behaviour of the French government after the military's intervention to cancel the elections shows that France had a very high stake in achieving the outcome that was reached in January 1992. France's hostility to the FIS preceded the FIS victory in the 1991 elections and given that "the intent to undermine the party did not materialise *ex nihilo* after its victory, it follows that at the very least the intent and will to prevent the FIS from governing the country did exist before the *putsch*."⁷³

Thus, France had access to the major government players (both political and military leaders), motivation for action and the means of exercising influence. The costs of the military coup were at the very least substantially reduced given that no price would be paid in terms of international repercussions.

Concerning the United States, their role in Algeria had traditionally been much more limited. This limited access and knowledge of the country made US actions in Algeria more circumspect. Until the end of 1989, the Bush Administration did not really have a clear policy on Algeria's Islamists. The US had dealt with radical Islamists before and did not seem overly concerned about the emergence of the FIS. They were not worried either about the economic policies the FIS might have implemented if and when they got to power. A former US Ambassador argued rather convincingly: "whoever came to power [in Algeria], the need for revenues from energy would remain paramount and any Algerian government that suspended contracts would effectively prevent itself from developing new sources of revenues."⁷⁴

This stance on economic matters was not clearly reflected on political matters, as "Bush's administration officials became particularly concerned about Islamists' impressive gains in parliamentary elections in Egypt, Turkey and Jordan."⁷⁵ This mounting preoccupation with the rise of political Islam did not translate into actual policies detrimental to the FIS in Algeria, and the victory in the local elections in June 1990 did not attract much interest from the Bush Administration. However, changes took place during the Gulf Crisis. A privileged observer of American foreign policy in the

⁷³Ibid.

⁷⁴ Personal interview with former Ambassador to Algeria, Washington DC, December 2001.

⁷⁵ Fawaz Gerges, *America and Political Islam. Clash of Cultures or Clash of Interests?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 74.

region noted that “FIS’s support for Saddam Hussein upset Washington and this displeasure was compounded by the increasingly bellicose attitude of the Islamic party, which was now perceived as threatening the stability of the Maghreb.”⁷⁶ This interpretation is rebuffed in Washington diplomatic circles and a former Ambassador to Algeria argued: “the pro-Saddam stance of the FIS had [no] impact on perceptions in Washington.”⁷⁷ According to him, the Algerian generals acted without external support or stimulation. The decision to carry out the coup was totally autonomous, although they may have discussed the potential international effects of such action. Lahouari Addi seems to agree with this interpretation and claims that “one of the reasons why democratisation broke down was that the army wished to avoid any sudden change of regime, for this would have exposed its leaders to legal proceedings and squarings of accounts.”⁷⁸ What is more important, the FIS itself did not feel that the United States was involved in supporting the Algerian regime either before or after the Gulf crisis. According to the FIS, the US approach since 1989 has been a consistent ‘wait and see’ policy towards the FIS, while a more antagonistic stance began only in 1995. This shift in policy was due to a revision of US interests in the region, perceived as a potentially dangerous area of instability due to the many problems originating there.⁷⁹

This does not mean that “the stunning victory of the FIS in the first round of legislative elections in December 1991 [did not] alarm Washington.”⁸⁰ Evidence of this alarm can be found in the official statement following the coup, which was more or less condoned by the Bush administration. The State Department spokesperson, Margaret Tutwiler, pointed to the fact that the military’s intervention was justified by the Algerian constitution and therefore did not actually qualify as a coup. Not condemning the cancellation of the elections “was widely seen as tacit approval of the military’s *junta* action, thus reinforcing a view held by many Muslims that the United States was not serious about democratisation in the Arab world.”⁸¹ Bush’s acceptance of the military

⁷⁶ Personal Interview with former French Presidential adviser, Paris, November 2001.

⁷⁷ Personal interview with former Ambassador to Algeria, Washington DC, December 2001.

⁷⁸ Lahouari Addi, “Political Islam and Democracy: the case of Algeria” in Axel Hadenius (ed.) *Democracy’s Victory and Crisis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 106.

⁷⁹ Ian Lesser, “Southern Europe and the Maghreb: US Interests and Policy Perspectives” *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 1, No. 2, Autumn 1996, pp. 231-242.

⁸⁰ Gerges, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 75.

coup, and therefore of the so-called 'exclusionist approach'⁸² *vis-à-vis* Islamic movements, drew criticism from leading Democrats in Congress. Lee Hamilton was particularly vocal in emphasising the hypocrisy of the Bush administration with respect to the policy of democracy promotion.⁸³ Secretary of State James Baker defended the administration's actions by stating that the State Department pursued a policy of excluding radical Islamists from power and that this choice took priority over the policy of democracy promotion abroad.

In spite of Baker's statement, there is no evidence to support claims that the United States was actively behind the military coup. Unlike France, the US role in Algeria was much more reactive than pro-active. Given its lack of easy and widespread access to Algerian decision-makers, its limited knowledge of the country and lack of specific interests, the United States "deferred to the late President Mitterrand."⁸⁴

It can be concluded that while there is little evidence of US activity to decrease the costs of repression for the Algerian military prior to the cancellation of elections, there is strong evidence pointing to a consistent pattern of direct intervention from France to avoid a FIS victory.

7.6 Direct Active Policies: the Promotion of Political Islam

There is very little doubt that the rise of the Islamic Front in Algeria was part of a wider trend in the Muslim world that has seen Islamic political movements achieve both visibility and appeal for Muslim populations. These movements have been dealt with quite differently according to domestic circumstances, with some of them co-opted by the ruling elites (Jordan), others forcefully repressed (Tunisia) and some allowed to compete in the political arena although with considerable restrictions (Egypt and Pakistan). Their emergence across the Muslim world has common roots, particularly if attention is focused on Arab countries. The failures of Western derived ideologies, massive social and economic problems, the harshness of authoritarianism, and the perceived Western discrimination towards the Muslim world in international affairs, are all causes for the contemporaneous emergence of these movements. In spite of all this, however, these movements focus their political activity on domestic issues and aim at

⁸² For an in-depth analysis of relations between the US and Islamic movements, see Scott Hibbard and David Little, *Islamic Activism and US Foreign Policy* (Washington DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1997).

⁸³ Lee Hamilton, "A Democrat Looks at Foreign Policy", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 71, No. 3, Summer 1992, pp. 32-51.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 75.

taking power in their respective nation-states. Moreover, each movement has a distinctive 'national' character.

Nevertheless, this should not obscure the fact that they have links with each other, they influence each other ideologically and they derive political legitimacy from many of the same sources. The main hypothesis being discussed here is that the Islamic Front in Algeria is as much an expression of domestic concerns as of external influences, particularly in terms of ideology and party structure. This is an important aspect of the transition game, as it helps determine the 'character' of one of its key protagonists.

The discussion is divided into two parts. External influences will be discussed firstly in ideological terms and, secondly, in more concrete and policy specific terms. At the ideological level, there is evidence to suggest that the FIS benefited from the revival of Islamism as a political ideology across the entire Muslim world. The Islamic movement in Algeria was present from the very beginning of the war against the French and participated actively in the war, Islam being a distinctive trait used to mobilise the masses against the French. However after independence, the Islamic movement was marginalised until the late 1970s and early 1980s when the regime began to 'flirt' with it in order to defeat the radical left. This pattern was not uncommon in the MENA region.⁸⁵ By the mid and late 1980s, the Islamic movement in Algeria, although divided and poorly organised, was beginning to benefit from events outside the country. Fred Halliday speaks of "the broader repercussions of the Iranian revolution of 1979 and the subsequent strengthening of Islamist movements elsewhere."⁸⁶

The Iranian revolution was an inspiring event for many in the Islamic movement, and in a context of the loss of ideological appeal of either nationalism or socialism, it became the catalyst for political change. Algeria was no exception to this trend and even figures within the ruling party called for an increased Islamisation of the country to pre-empt the rise of a strong Islamic party.⁸⁷ The new Iranian government became a sponsor of Islamic movements across the region and attempted to influence the political system of Iraq and Lebanon through money and advisers. This policy of 'permanent revolution abroad' sparked the reaction of the religious and political enemy of Shi'ia Iran: Saudi Arabia. The Saudis and the rulers of the other Gulf States attempted

⁸⁵ See Gilles Kepel, *Jihad. Ascension and Decline* (Roma: Carrocci, 2001).

⁸⁶ Fred Halliday, "Review Article: the Politics of Islam - A Second Look", *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 25, No. 3, July 1995, p. 403.

⁸⁷ Labat, *op. cit.*, p. 97. The same point about the relevance of the Iranian revolution is made also by Francois Burgat, *L'Islamisme au Maghreb* (Paris: Editions Payot et Rivages, 1995), p. 49.

to retain religious legitimacy, which Iran was threatening, by setting up a vast network of support for their Wahhabi version of Islam. This strict version of Islam appealed to the vast majority of Muslims, as it is a Sunni-inspired catechism.

In the context of the Saudi-Iranian struggle, the promotion of political Islam as an ideology to gain influence abroad became a major policy during the 1980s. Some movements found the Iranian Revolution inspiring and openly declared their admiration for Khomeini (the Lebanese *Hizb 'llah* for example), while others considered Shi'ism an aberration and sided with Saudi Arabia. The overall result of this Iranian-Saudi competition was an increase in the number of movements that became politically active and also an increase in their membership. As mentioned above, there is very little doubt that this turn towards Islamism as a response to the problems of modernisation, combined with the *realpolitik* policies of Muslim regional powers, created a favourable climate for the emergence of an Islamic movement in Algeria.

When it comes to specific policies devised by external actors to 'create' or shore up Islamic movements to serve their interests, the main issue regarding the FIS revolves around the nature and origin of their finances and, finally, the personal links of the FIS leaders with Saudi official representatives. There is a substantial amount of scholarly work arguing that the FIS received massive amounts of financial aid from Saudi Arabia.⁸⁸ This money was used to provide social services for the impoverished population and was therefore a powerful tool to win votes and support. It is claimed that the money allowed the FIS to outspend the other parties and constituted an unfair advantage. Furthermore, to some of them, the existence of such links justified an anti-FIS stance. Charles Pellegrini, in his analysis of the FIS's presence and activities in France, argues that the party is an instrument in the "tentacular strategy of the Teheran-Khartoum axis"⁸⁹ to spread radical Islam and undermine Western societies. The French government was also convinced of the existence of such financial links. The FIS flatly denies that the party ever received any money from Saudi Arabia.⁹⁰ The leader of the FIS, Abassi Madani, made similar points in August 1990 in an interview with a Pakistani journalist. To the claim made by the journalist that external aid reached the FIS from

⁸⁸ Paul Balta and Claudine Rulleau, *L'Algérie* (Toulouse: Les Essentiels Milan, 2000); Pierre Devoluy and Mireille Duteil, *op. cit.*, p. 122.

⁸⁹ Charles Pellegrini, *Le Fis en France. Mythe ou Réalité* (Paris, Editions 1, 1992), p. 116.

⁹⁰ Personal Interview, National Executive Office of FIS, November 2002, Geneva, Switzerland

certain countries and organisations, Madani responded: “such reports are false and untrue. We do not want to rely on supplies provided by others.”⁹¹

More recently, however, after spending much time discussing how the FIS was able to secure funding from wealthy and middle-class Algerians willing to finance political change, the terms of the interviewed FIS official’s answer changed slightly. He concluded thus: “having said this [it was all coming from domestic sources], I would like however to stress that we totally reject the scheme which aims at denying us our right to secure, through transparent and legal means, much needed financial resources for our party.”⁹² This does not constitute an admission that money was indeed received from external sources, but it is not a flat denial. It should be emphasised at this point that the FIS aimed at being perceived as fiercely nationalist, and receiving money from abroad would jeopardise this position. As mentioned, the same logic was at work for the government, which tried to keep its links to France as far away from the public eye as possible in order not to be accused of colluding with the old enemy.

When it comes to the personal links of FIS leaders with Saudi officials, there are no indications that there were any. Unlike other religious leaders in the region, Madani did not study in Saudi Arabia and instead pursued his studies in the United Kingdom. Moreover, he taught in Algerian universities and he seemed to be quite critical of Saudi Islam, which he accused of being too strict. While the other FIS leader, Ali Benhali, was probably ideologically closer to the Islam practised in Saudi Arabia, he also did not seem to have links to Saudi officialdom.

In conclusion, it is rather difficult to validate the hypothesis that the promotion of political Islam in both ideological and practical terms was instrumental in the creation of the FIS. There is some evidence to suggest that the rise of the FIS had some loose ideological connections to the wider international phenomenon of the rise of Islamic movements, but it is fair to say that the causes of the development of the FIS and its expansion were mostly endogenous to Algeria. Some scholars even dispute the loose influence of the Iranian Revolution.⁹³ While this last point is, to say the least, controversial, there is no denying that the party expressed domestic concerns rather than external interests, even at the level of ideology. At a practical level, it is extremely

⁹¹ Interview with Sheikh Abassi Madani, *Qadaya Dawliyah*, August 1990. Available at <http://library.cornell.edu/colldev/mideast/madani.htm>

⁹² Personal Interview, National Executive Office of FIS, November 2002, Geneva, Switzerland.

⁹³ Ignace Leverrier, “Le Front Islmaïque du Salut entre la Hâte et la Patience” in Gilles Kepel (ed.) *Les Politiques de Dieu* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1993), p. 37.

difficult to offer evidence for the existence or absence of external financing. However, even if external sources were proved to exist, it does not necessarily imply external control. More recently, movements clearly financed by Saudi Arabia and other Gulf States have evidently escaped their control and thus funding does not automatically translate into control.⁹⁴ Once movements are created, they tend to take on a life of their own and survive and prosper thanks to their ability to connect with a local population and local issues.

Moreover, as Karam argues, “although we must not assume or imply that Islamist political parties are entirely self-subsidised from internal sources, the impact of internal funding dynamics should not be underestimated either.”⁹⁵ This means that the promotion of political Islam may not be an influential factor in determining the rise of such movements. They have contacts, they exchange ideas and they broadly spring from similar sources of discontent, but they are not external creations and do not seem to represent the national branches of a unified ‘Islamic International.’

7.7 Direct Active Policies: The Role of Financial Institutions and Multinationals

Nation-states are not the sole relevant actors in international politics and there is a large literature dealing with the impact non-state actors have on international relations. Among the principal non-state actors are international organisations and multinational companies. By virtue of their size, their resources and their high degree of autonomy from state actors, these entities play a considerable role, particularly towards weak developing countries.

Just like nation-states, these entities are rational actors with specific interests and with strategies to promote or defend them. The hypothesis in this case holds that given that they have preferred outcomes, they will use their influence with domestic actors to guarantee that these outcomes occur. In the case of Algeria, international financial institutions had the objective of forcing a radical change in Algerian economic management. In short, they wanted to see a move away from a planned economy and an acceptance of structural adjustments programmes that would favour the rapid development of a market economy. With this objective in mind, they attempted to influence domestic actors by changing the resource structures available to them. Much of the same can be said for oil and gas multinationals acting in Algeria.

⁹⁴ Kepel, *Jihad. Ascesa e Declino*, op. cit.

⁹⁵ Azza Karam, “Islamist Parties in the Arab World: Ambiguities, Contradictions and Perseverance”, *Democratization*, Vol. 4, No. 4, Winter 1997, p. 173.

These actors are by nature much more interested in economic outcomes than political ones, but in order to obtain economic advantages, they need to influence political decision-makers and therefore they become political actors themselves.⁹⁶

In the Algerian transition, the role of international financial institutions has been of importance and there is some evidence to support the claim that in order to meet their preferences, they had a deep impact on the mobilisational resources available to domestic actors. Before the political transition, both International Monetary Fund and World Bank officials were involved in advising the reformers around Chadli in economic policy-making. Their role was not official, and would not become so for some time, because the Algerian government needed to pay lip service to its 'independent policy' in economic matters and had criticised these institutions in the past. Nevertheless, the Chadli reforms were clearly inspired by these institutions as detailed in Chapter 6. In fact, since 1986, there were close contacts between Chadli's economic advisers (and later ministers) and IMF and WB officials. Ruf states that "after the collapse of oil revenues in 1986, the international banking community made further credits for Algeria dependent on credit approval from the IMF, which thereby automatically and inevitably became the negotiating partner for the country."⁹⁷

It should be remembered that at the time both institutions had just undergone a radical change that saw the arrival of neo-liberal economists who had been formed in the Reagan and Thatcher years. As highlighted by Stiglitz, "the most dramatic change in these institutions occurred in the 1980s, the era when Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher preached free market ideology"⁹⁸ and "the IMF and the World Bank became the new missionary institutions."⁹⁹ The financial advice offered to developing countries was based on the experience of privatisation and liberalisation in the US and the UK, and was applied across the board.¹⁰⁰ The basic deal was implementation of these reforms in exchange for much-needed loans and credits.

⁹⁶ This point is strongly and repeatedly made in Clement Henry and Robert Springborg, *Globalisation and the Politics of Development in the Middle East* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001).

⁹⁷ Werner Ruf, "The Flight of Rent: the Rise and Fall of a National Economy", *Journal of North African Study*, Vol. 2, No. 1, Summer 1997, p. 9.

⁹⁸ Joseph Stiglitz, *Globalisation and Its Discontents* (London: Penguin Books, 2002), p. 13.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹⁰⁰ The list of the so-called neo-liberal Ten Commandments of the Washington Consensus can be found in John Williamson (ed.) *The Political Economy of Reform*, (Washington DC: Institute of International Economics, 1994), pp. 24-28.

Algeria was not in a position to refuse, and sections of the ruling elites were convinced that the reforms would work because they also predicted that there would soon be a rise in oil prices. By 1989, Algeria had signed an official agreement with the IMF in exchange for a 600 million US dollars loan to support the ongoing reforms.¹⁰¹ The second stand-by accord was signed in June 1991. At this stage however, the government refused to ask for debt rescheduling in order not to appear completely supine to the requests of the financial institutions. The reforms were therefore implemented, but had the effect of hardening the socio-economic conditions of the population, and poverty and unemployment massively increased as detailed in the previous chapter. The first effect of the reforms was to strengthen the opposition movements, and in particular the Islamic movement, while discrediting the government for its inability to deal with the economic crisis. According to Lamchichi, “the pressure from the IMF and the WB aggravated economic disparities”¹⁰² and therefore made the social situation worse, thereby favouring those opposed to such radical economic reforms. At the time, these institutions were not interested in promoting democratisation and were mainly involved in managing the economic transition. This position of ‘non-intervention’ in the political realm had great importance in that it considerably lowered the cost of repression for the ruling elites. Credits and loans were dependent on progress in implementing economic reforms and not on political progress towards the installation of a democratic system. Thus, the actors who did not want democratisation to occur, but still need external support for economic needs, have less of an incentive to ‘behave properly’ once the game is started. Furthermore, supporting the ruling elites before and after the military coup was a priority for these institutions, as it was not known what the FIS would have done once in power.

The same logic applies to multinationals investing in Algeria. Thanks to the economic reforms implemented in the late 1980s and early 1990s, foreign investment in the energy sector accelerated dramatically given the sizeable amount of untapped resources in the country, as seen in Chapter 6. New laws on foreign investment favoured large oil multinationals and they had very little interest in seeing dramatic political changes that might have meant a reduction of their profits. Asked if the FIS once in power would have welcomed foreign investors, the spokesperson for the party at the time

¹⁰¹ Faycal Yachir, “L’Algérie: l’Ajustement Inachevée” in Samir Amin (ed.) *Le Maghreb: Enlèvement ou Nouveau Départ* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 1996), p. 121.

¹⁰² Abderrahim Lamchichi, *Le Maghreb Face à l’Islamisme* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 1997), p. 78.

replied that “Algeria needs foreign investors”¹⁰³, but at the same time added that “we are asking to benefit from our own national resources.”¹⁰⁴ He also made no secret of the fact that the FIS wished to renegotiate and review the contracts signed. The main problem seemed to be that in order to get lucrative contracts, massive bribes were paid to key elements in the regime and in exchange for these bribes conditions for investors are made generous. Given the FIS’s preoccupation with stamping out corruption, in the name of both Islamic morality and economic efficiency, it is very likely that the contracts would have been revised according to new rules. Also, the FIS may have wished to implement a radical change in personnel, giving preference to the Islamo-technocrats that had supported the party and who hoped a FIS victory would give them professional benefits which they had been denied.

By supporting neo-liberal economic reforms without linking them to democratisation of the political system, international financial institutions left those domestic actors who were unfavourable to full democratisation in the driving seat. The FIS capitalised on the failure of the reforms in electoral terms and even proposed a revision of them if elected. Sectors of the government bureaucracy and the military, fearful of losing their privileges, were keen to implement the reforms in such a manner as to gain maximal advantage from them, and the international economic actors assisted them in such an enterprise. Their objective was to have an open economy in the most important sector (hydrocarbons) and to impose an economic model that reflected their ideological concerns. Both goals were better achieved through supporting some domestic actors to the detriment of others.

In conclusion, there seems to be sufficient evidence to claim that the role of international economic actors has been detrimental to the transition, as a FIS victory might have led to unwelcome outcomes for them. Support was thrown behind the government, which ultimately allowed it to halt the political process without affecting the economic changes underway. A confirmation of this strategy can be found in the post-coup policies, which saw international financial institutions grant aid to the military *junta* in exchange for further reforms, without any strings attached concerning democratisation. In Layachis's words: “the agreement signed with the IMF on May 27, 1994, and later with European leaders, would lighten the debt-servicing burden and bring in more foreign capital to help Algeria[...] After Algiers committed the country to a

¹⁰³ Daniel Pipes and Patrick Clawson, “Anwar Haddam: An Islamist Vision for Algeria”, *The Middle East Quarterly*, Vol. 3, No. 3, September 1996, p. 8.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 8

stabilisation program and debt rescheduling plan, the IMF responded with optimism and promised a 1.04 billion US Dollars paid package.”¹⁰⁵

7.8 Larger Trends: Democracy as a Universal Value

One of the main tenets of transitology is the fit between the ideal type of ‘democracy’ and its Western implementation. Not surprisingly, this is the mode of government of the most powerful states in the international system. This means that when a process of liberalisation begins in any given country, the population within that country determines the validity of their version of democracy only up to a point. Full democratic legitimacy and credentials depend on the final analysis of a process of international recognition. In other words, ‘you are a democracy if I say you are, otherwise you are something else and will be treated as such.’ The outside world, and therefore a range of external actors, have to judge if the process of democratisation has succeeded or failed. This is the logic behind a number of phenomena that characterise international politics. Among them we find for instance international monitoring of elections and political conditionality attached to foreign aid. The problem with this is that the only accepted version of successful democracy is a Western one and this model is the one adopted in the countries dominating the international system. Thus, any process of regime change that is attempting to arrive at a democratic society has a very well established, internationally sanctioned blueprint. This is problematic for a number of reasons.

First of all, it pre-empts certain policies or institutional solutions from being adopted, thereby restricting the options available to domestic actors when it comes to political, social and economic arrangements. Secondly, there is the problem of ‘cultural adaptation’, which is particularly acute in the Muslim world where large Islamic movements tend to be seen as enemies of democracy by definition.¹⁰⁶ This in turn influences external policies towards them and towards the other domestic actors. For instance, if policy-makers in Western countries cannot conceive of an Islamic democracy, they will be unable to accept a process of transition that legitimises Islamic parties. Finally, there exists the problem of pigeonholing the new democracies into a pre-

¹⁰⁵ Azzedine Layachi, “Algerian Crisis, Western Choices”, *Middle East Quarterly*, Vol. 1, No. 3, September 1994. Available at <http://www.meforum.org/meq/issues>

¹⁰⁶ There is widespread reluctance to engage with Islamic parties and movements even if they openly support the introduction of classic democratic procedures.

conceived role, which serves the dominant interests in the international system, whether they are state or non-state actors.

Despite these problems, it cannot be denied that democracy has become a universal value and term of reference for all political systems. Its superiority has been demonstrated in terms of both individual freedoms and economic performance. Furthermore it immediately exercises 'ideological' appeal, as it has become synonymous with all that is positive about regulating societal relations. How democracy is interpreted matters very much and it is important to underline a number of issues relating to it. First of all, it should be conceded that if democracy were simply equated with the procedure of elections, most Islamic parties would be very supportive of such an arrangement. Islam can be rather easily reconciled with the procedures of democracy such as consultation, popular consent and the mandate to elected representatives. Secondly, it should be stated that if democracy were more than elections and procedures, but had to do with liberal rights, a reconciliation with the Islamic *ethos* would be more difficult. Given this, the international sanctioning of democracy can only take place if both elements are present in the political system, as in the West they are perceived to be indivisible. However, this was not historically the case because 'liberalisation' was always a result of the introduction of procedural democracy. Thus, judging democratising countries with this 'wrong' perception in mind puts them at a disadvantage and forces them to introduce a set of changes that society cannot always cope with because it undermines traditional social structures and values.

The hypothesis here holds that domestic actors operate in a very restricted ideological environment and therefore their choices in managing regime change are extremely limited. The discourse of democracy, as sanctioned by the international community, is a powerful tool for domestic actors, who can use it for their own purpose. It becomes a very useful resource in the transition game because international legitimacy usually entails accession to a set of privileges that authoritarian states may not enjoy. In the Algerian case, the discourse of democracy was utilised by all protagonists, but the evident bias of the 'international definition' of it advantaged the actors who annulled the election results and installed an authoritarian government. The paradox is therefore that the army's intervention is justified as a democracy-saving enterprise.

The main point of contention centres on the issue of the commitment of the FIS to democratic means. Given the structure, the leadership and the political discourse of the Islamic movement, it is very difficult to be sure of what the FIS would have done

once in power. Its commitment to democratic means was questionable, and was questioned by many sectors of the Algerian society and by international actors. However, it should be stressed that the party, up to the cancellation of the second round of elections in January 1992, had played according to the 'democratic rules.' It formally requested legalisation, it participated in the local elections, it called for legislative elections forcefully but within the legal framework, and it decided to participate in the 1991 parliamentary elections in spite of the imprisonment of its leaders and in spite of gerrymandering by the government. This seems to indicate that the party was very confident about the appeal of its electoral message and saw no need to act outside the proper legal framework to make its demands.

It is striking that those who defended the values of democracy, as understood and practised in liberal-democratic systems, were the stronger advocates of military intervention and the cancellation of the results. They feared that the legislative elections of 1991 would have been the first and the last to be held if the FIS had been allowed to govern. The whole issue of democracy was therefore couched in a very partisan language, with both sides arguing that they were the real democrats.

The debate carried a definite 'international' weight and the inability of international actors to conceive of an Islamic party as democratic favoured those in Algeria who saw this as an opportunity to justify their intervention. General Nezzar and General Lamari, the two main figures behind the coup, are on record as stating that they should be thanked for saving democracy in Algeria. They obviously meant that the intervention was a necessary step to permit the creation of a 'true democracy' once the masses were ready to express their vote freely. The inability of international actors to come to terms with a different 'version' and interpretation of democracy augmented the resources of those domestic actors who shared the same belief. It is no coincidence that the most quoted sentence used to discuss the FIS is Ali Benhadj's anti-democracy statement in which he slams the concept.¹⁰⁷ This focus means overlooking most other FIS statements that are much more consistent with an acceptance of procedural democratic rules and, to a certain extent, of democratic liberal values as well. For instance Madani was asked about the FIS's acceptance of multipartism and he replied that: "multipartism and governmental *alternance* are normal, as no party can indefinitely preserve its youthfulness and its efficacy."¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷ Al-Ahnaf, Botiveau and Fregosi, op. cit., pp. 87-98.

¹⁰⁸ Slimane Zéghdour, op. cit., p. 186.

Louis Cantori argues that this diffidence towards models of democracy that do not seem to accept the main 'teachings' of the Enlightenment is detrimental to understanding other cultures and other ways of organising a polity. There are, according to him, three main teachings derived from the Enlightenment that contrast with the belief systems of Muslims. First of all, "there is the belief in an idealised future of freedom."¹⁰⁹ Secondly, "the stress upon the individual and individualism."¹¹⁰ Lastly, "the assumption that the ends of society consist of maximising individual freedom and material well being."¹¹¹ Muslims instead aim at recapturing the perfect society created by Mohammed, stress the primacy of the unity of the community of believers and do not see material wealth as the way society and individuals should be measured. From this it follows that their 'ideal' of democracy may be founded on very different values, but the procedures of democracy may indeed be similar to the ones in place in the Western and Westernised world. This is rather difficult to accept for Western policy-makers, who prefer their counterparts to espouse and practise the same basic values and ideas. This is for two reasons: first, that policies will be predictable and, second, that it makes them more at ease from an intellectual point of view dealing with people sharing the same basic value system. This stems from the belief that liberal democracy is the 'natural' state for society and that any other arrangement is simply deviant and does not merit particular attention and credence. An example often cited of the 'people' it would be perfect to deal with in developing countries regards Khalida Messaoudi, a prominent feminist activist and anti-FIS figure, who applauded the military's intervention. During the transition she was often seen on French television debating the changes in her country. However, she "may connect powerfully with like-minded Western audiences during her countless TV appearances, but she is never asked why she failed miserably to connect with her own constituency...she garnered less than 1 percent of the vote when she ran for a legislative seat in December 1991."¹¹²

All this explains not only the international preference for the 'democratic' discourse of those who cancelled the elections and for those who applauded that action, it also explains the simplicity through which the ensuing conflict can be explained:

¹⁰⁹ Louis Cantori, "The Limitations of Western Democratic Theory: The Islamic Alternative" paper presented at the Conference of Middle East Studies Association, in Orlando, Florida, United States in November 2000. p. 2.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., p. 2.

¹¹¹ Ibid., p. 2.

¹¹² Amine Tehami, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

Islamic fundamentalists bent on creating an Islamic Republic against a secular regime attempting to preserve future chances of democratisation. This is a very simplistic explanation that is revealed to be totally unsatisfactory on closer scrutiny. The discourse of democracy was used by all sides to defend completely opposite actions, but the central element in tipping the balance of the debate in favour of the army has been the very partisan international legitimisation of only one type of democracy.

7.9 Conclusion

The examination of the evidence, and how it relates to the hypotheses put forth, confirms that the influence of the ‘international dimension’ has been in many respects decisive in forming the strategies of the domestic actors. Furthermore, it has considerably altered their cost and benefit analysis regarding how to proceed with the transition game. This influence is derived from a variety of sources and a variety of actors.

However, it should be underlined that not all of the hypotheses formulated have been substantiated. The following is a brief summary of the main findings:

- The analysis of the economic recession shows that there is a solid causal link between the oil counter-shock and the economic crisis and between the crisis and liberalisation.
- The analysis of the consequences of the war in Afghanistan shows that there is no evidence to support the claim that the FIS was an ‘external’ creation and that the victory of the Afghani guerrillas and the return home of the Algerian Afghans had a meaningful impact on the transition.
- The 1990/1991 Gulf War shows that this external shock had a profound impact on the transition and the evidence validates the claim that the Gulf crisis dramatically changed the distribution of power among domestic actors.
- The end of the Cold War also proves to be an important factor and the evidence validates the hypothesis that the regime was looking for a new position in the international system and therefore democratisation was chosen as the path leading to this new position.
- When it comes to the direct active policies of the leading powers in the system, it emerges that the hypothesis about the US and French role is

only partially confirmed. Thus, there is little evidence of US activity in the country, while there is a rather consistent pattern of interference from France during the whole transition period. The overarching aim of France was to avoid a FIS-led democratic government.

- Given the context of international Islamic revival, it was also postulated that the FIS may have been an instrument of an ‘Islamic international’ and that the resources it enjoyed were externally generated. The evidence does not show this to be the case.
- The role played by international financial institutions and multinationals during the transition confirms the postulate that they were detrimental to the continuation of the transition because they pursued policies that increased the political resources of the Islamic movement. This was counterproductive in institutional terms because it facilitated their electoral victories with subsequent democratic legitimacy for their stances. When this became apparent, these external actors threw their support behind the domestic constituency that would guarantee their interests in the country: the Army.
- Finally, the discourse of democracy as a universal value was important to the domestic actors insofar as it legitimised their actions. Given the international preference for a democracy that is liberal, the FIS was always bound to fail to satisfy such criteria.

These findings have implications for the country under examination, but also for the literature on transitions and for international relations as well. The concluding chapter will deal with the main lessons this research has to offer.

CHAPTER 8-Conclusion

The intention of this final chapter is to summarise and draw together the main insights of this research. First of all, the chapter will summarise the main tenets of democratisation in light of the necessity of including international variables and in light of a strand in political science that attempts to link comparative politics and international relations. Secondly, this chapter will analyse in some detail the findings from the case study in the context of the inclusion of such external factors, and it will draw some conclusions about the ‘effectiveness’ of such inclusion. Thirdly, how the findings ‘speak to’ to both the literature on processes of democratisation and the literature on international relations will be outlined. There are important implications for both fields of study derived from this research and these highlight some of the strengths and weaknesses of key theories within both fields. This section will treat both literatures separately. Finally, this chapter will consider further research avenues that could be explored in light of its findings. Some suggestions are made as to how this type of study can be further developed and what its usefulness may be, in both academic and policy-orientated terms.

8.1 The International Dimension

One of the most significant political phenomena of the past decades has been the move away from authoritarian forms of rule to democratic governance. The number of democracies has vastly increased in recent years and this change has been captured in the literature on transitions. The end product of many transitions has been the establishment of Western-style liberal-democracies, but many other countries have either experienced a return to authoritarian rule or are suspended in the limbo of ‘liberalised autocracies.’¹ Whatever the final outcome of the transition, the resulting regime is always different from the one that was replaced. The process by which such outcomes are reached deserves to be analysed.

The examination of regime change and the theorising about how countries abandon authoritarianism to embrace democracy has been fully incorporated within comparative politics. The insertion of ‘transitology’ into comparative politics has meant that domestic factors and actors have been identified as the central explanatory variables for such processes. In a recent review article, Kopecky and Mudde lamented: “the

¹ Daniel Brumberg, “The Trap of Liberalised Autocracy”, *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 13, No. 4, October 2002, pp. 56-68.

international dimension of democratic transition and consolidation [...] received very little scholarly attention.”² While specifically analysing Eastern Europe, the same statement could be made about the more general literature on transitions. This dissertation lessens this gap and makes a contribution to our understanding of regime change by bringing the international dimension back into the analysis.

Most theories on transitions still regard domestic factors, whether structure or actor-led, as the only explanatory variables an analyst should look at to understand how the transition was triggered, how it developed and how it concluded. This dissertation rejects such an approach and argues that transitions do not occur in a vacuum and that international variables are a necessary part of the explanations, as they have the capacity to influence the strategies and the choices of the domestic actors. Not only do they have this capacity, but at times it seems that the external environment does not leave domestic actors much choice. Regarding processes of democratisation, it is necessary to underline that the sanction of the international community is a key element that needs to be taken into account by the domestic actors and that diminishes the range of choices available domestically.

Another important aspect that should be mentioned relates to the strength of counterfactual claims. At its most basic, there needs to be evidence about whether without the intervention of external factors the same outcome would have been obtained if international variables are to be omitted from the causal explanation. This evidence seems to be present but it seems to indicate that without the presence of a wide range of international variables, the transition would not have happened or would have not developed the way it did or would have not ended so abruptly. This aspect will be further discussed later in this chapter.

It follows that this study attempts to explore links between comparative politics and international politics. For some time now, there have been scholars on both sides lamenting the 'exclusivist' approach of both literatures. On the one hand, international politics has been accused of bowing to the dominance of neo-realism, which treats domestic factors as irrelevant to foreign-policy making and to external behaviour. On the other hand, comparative politics has been accused of thinking of domestic politics as completely insulated and isolated from trends and actors present at the international level. The accusations against international relations are not entirely well founded, as

² Petr Kopecky and Cas Mudde, “What has Eastern Europe taught us about the democratisation literature (and vice versa)”, *European Journal of Political Research*, Vol. 37, No. 4, June 2000, p.531.

there is a large strand that disagrees with the key neo-realist tenet of treating the state as a black box. In particular, both liberalism and Marxism put considerable emphasis on the nature of the state when explaining its external behaviour.

The accusations against comparative politics seem to carry more weight, particularly in the specific field of democratisation. In the very first comprehensive study on transitions by Philippe Schmitter and Guillermo O'Donnell, it was clearly stated that regime change was the exclusive product of domestic variables and bargaining. Since that seminal work, very few questioned this assumption although international variables appeared in the analysis as 'facilitating factors.' Schmitter even recognised that international variables may have been a neglected aspect of transitions. However, in line with other fields of study where international factors have been brought back in to have a better understanding of domestic political phenomena, transitology is going through much of the same change. Scholars such as Haynes, Grugel and Yilmaz put forth the idea that regime change should be studied through analysis of the external environment as well as the domestic one.

This research is therefore part of this expanding literature, which attempts to bridge the domestic and the international. It offers an explanation of democratisation constructed around two dimensions that have been previously neglected. Admittedly, this explanation is custom-built for the case study under examination, but the framework and explanatory structure employed here could be useful, with appropriate changes, to study other cases.

Previous studies of democratisation have emphasised the importance of the type of authoritarian regime in place when explaining how regime change could occur and develop into full democratisation and consolidation. To this end, it has always been seen as relevant to 'classify' the different authoritarian regimes as military regimes, one-party political systems, personal dictatorships and religiously-based regimes because it has been believed that they would democratise differently. While this may indeed be the case, such an emphasis on the type of government is to the detriment of further analysing the nature of the state independently from the type of regime in place. To this end, one of the dimensions of the thesis presents is the nature of the state, and specifically its position within, and its relation to, the international economic system. In the developing world, the nature of the state is strictly related to what type of economic organisation is in place and how resources are distributed. In turn, this profoundly affects the political system.

Another element that has been constantly examined in the wider literature on regime change is the presence or absence of previous democratic experience in the country undergoing a transition. It is argued that such a democratic past can lead to a more successful consolidation in new democracies, particularly if the previous experience was long and widely perceived as positive. There is some validity to the argument, but a democratic past does not automatically ensure that a new democracy will consolidate. For instance there are countries that have periodically shifted back and forth from authoritarianism to democracy (e.g. Turkey and Latin America). Furthermore, if the argument were to be stretched to its logical conclusion, we would have very few democracies across the globe today, as at one point in time any country that is democratic today had to start from authoritarianism. Even the United States, which thrives on the belief that it was founded *ab origine* as a democracy, could not be considered as such until much later once the 'segregation' system they had in place was dismantled. Instead of focusing on this element, explanations should look at the position of a country in the international system in terms of its geo-strategic relevance to other regional and world actors. This second dimension complements and integrates the nature of the state in economic terms by offering an innovative framework to understand and explain how a transition is launched, how it progresses and how it concludes.

Aside from the use of the two internationally-based dimensions, another innovative approach of this study is that it takes into account both external structural changes and actor-led policies. Most studies of transitions choose to concentrate either on structural changes or on contingent actor-led policies. This choice has been based on the need for 'parsimony', but this is often to the detriment of understanding. It is conceivable to argue that structural constraints and contingency interact to a considerable extent. In the 'historical' development of the literature, actor-led policies increasingly became more prominent and much more widely used than structural constraints. In fact, domestic actors, and elites in particular, became the focus of most studies, which rejected the main implication of structural approaches: the determinism of the process. It follows that much attention was paid to the bargaining process of actors involved in the transition and to how the 'game' was played.

The primary role of actors, their strategies and their resources is the building bloc of studies of democratisation. Although it has led to useful insights into processes of transition, this exclusivist approach in favour of actor-led policies is rejected by this research in favour of a more balanced and nuanced one, as suggested for instance by

Haggard and Kaufman. In their study, the two convincingly argue that “though bargaining lies at the core of most contemporary models of regime change, they are typically weak in specifying the resources that contending parties bring to the negotiation and even the institutional stakes of the negotiation itself.”³ Thus, while bargaining is important, it is necessary to specify how bargaining power is acquired and what determines its level. Haggard and Kaufman are particularly interested in underlying economic and social forces, but a different explanation could also conceive of the presence of strong political forces as well. All these forces can be derived as much from the domestic as from the international environment. This study focuses on the external conditions affecting the transitions and argues that the ‘international dimension’ can be conceived and defined in terms of both structural constraints and actor-led policies. Both contribute to influence the ‘power’ and resources available to the domestic actors who were formally in charge of the transition. This distribution of resources affects the strategies and the choices of these actors, modifying their interests during a time of high volatility.

In order to examine the impact of the international environment defined as a combination of the effects produced by structural changes and actor-led policies, three different variables have been taken into account. It has been argued that there are larger trends in international politics that indicate the existence of one general direction for authoritarian countries. These larger trends point to the ever wider acceptance of democratic governance as the ultimate basis for ruling over society, as well as the acceptance of a market-orientated economy underpinning such Western-style systems of government. However, these larger trends and structural constraints, if accepted uncritically, would seem to predetermine the socio-political fate of all countries across the globe, eventually erasing differences.

This is clearly not the case. Transitions are not pre-determined as there are intervening variables that throw the outcome into doubt. Thus, there are two more variables that can account for discrepancies, which lead to very different outcomes. First of all, there are external shocks that can change the course of a transition and, secondly there are specific policies put in place that can also affect the outcome. Crucially, it should be highlighted that in the context of a transition it is actors who are in charge of the process. It is these actors, through their choices, that largely determine the whole

³ Stephan Haggard and Robert Kaufman, “The Political Economy of Democratic Transitions”, *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 29, No. 3, April 1997, p. 263.

process. The only caveat is that actors are not, and cannot be, fully autonomous and independent in their decision-making, as they operate within a framework of structural constraints. Some of them are, inevitably, beyond their control.

8.2 The International Dimension in Algeria

The open model of democratisation with its dimensions, variables and hypotheses has been applied to Algeria in this study. The country was chosen for a number of reasons. First of all, it was representative of a region that has been poorly examined within larger comparative studies of transitions. Secondly, it represented a country that, although strategically relevant in economic and political terms, was not deemed of primary interest at a time when regime change was taking place in the communist bloc. It follows that if attention and resources were more concentrated in Eastern Europe, it could be thought that international forces neglected the Algerian case. Testing the relevance of external factors on a difficult case would strengthen the scholarship which focuses on the international dimension if the results pointed at a marked influence of the external environment. Thirdly, Algeria is a good case study to explore the implications of the admittedly difficult relationship between Islam and democracy. The emergence of strong Islamic parties, with their ideological arsenal of slogans and solutions derived from Islam, represents a challenge for the notion of liberal democracy. Fourthly, Algeria represents a good case study to highlight important regional developments given that it was not the only country in the MENA to attempt to reform both its economic and its political structures at the end of the 1980s and in the early 1990s. It was however the country that went the farthest in terms of democratisation. Finally, Algeria has been poorly studied (with due exceptions) in the English language literature. This is major shortcoming, particularly in light of the terrible events that have plagued the country, and still do so. Clear understanding of the civil war and its consequences for ordinary Algerians is still missing, and looking at Algeria and its failed democratisation may be helpful in understanding such a brutal conflict.

The evidence gathered by this study of Algeria indicates that including international variables in the theory of democratisation is useful to better understand how transitions are triggered, how they develop and how they end. When it comes to triggering the transition, it is commonly held that divisions within the regime bring about the initial phase of liberalisation. Facing a crisis, authoritarian governments may choose to liberalise, particularly if there is also considerable pressure 'from below' to do so. The

crisis however is often seen to be originating from domestic factors, but the decision to liberalise may also be the product of factors outside the country. The case of Algeria demonstrates that the economic crisis that led to political openings was not simply domestic, but was externally driven due to Algeria's over-dependence on the hydrocarbon sector. The nature of the state, and the links it has with the international economy, have a powerful effect on the structure of domestic political arrangements. The hydrocarbon sector is particularly volatile and sensitive to international price fluctuations. This does not mean that a simple causal link can be established between the oil counter-boom and the decision to opt for radical political change, as the crisis might not have had such a devastating impact if the country had a more sound economy in place. The poor state of the economy and serious economic mismanagement heightened the effects of the oil crisis. Nevertheless, it should be highlighted that Algeria had gone through other externally driven crises and that liberalisation had not occurred then even in the presence of the same type of domestic economic situation. This might imply that the decision to democratise was purely internal. This would indeed be the case if other alternatives to democratisation were available to the domestic actors in charge of the political process, but what seems to emerge from the evidence is that there was no other alternative, for a number of reasons and concomitant factors. First of all the severity of the crisis was much deeper than previous externally driven economic slowdowns and there was a need to respond not only through economic reforms but through political changes as well. Secondly, the externally driven crisis occurred at a time when left-leaning authoritarian regimes would have no external support if they wished to continue with past political practices. The international environment had changed and Algeria's position in the system did not allow for much room to manoeuvre. Thus, the leadership lacked alternatives to democratisation due to the constraints of the external environment.

While the 1985/1986 crisis alone cannot be the sole cause of the changes of late 1988, if we take into consideration the 'pressures' coming from other external sources the picture begins to change and points in the direction of outside involvement. This type of involvement was both direct and indirect. The indirect pressure to liberalise came in the form of the failure of socialism and authoritarian rule on a global scale, with the changes taking place in the Soviet Union and with the policies of democracy promotion by the 'winners' of the Cold War. The direct pressures came from the presence of officials from international financial institutions in the decision-making bodies of Algeria. While their role was more in the background than in public, the policies that

they suggested Algeria implement greatly increased social *malaise* and fuelled the riots of 1988. Both these pressures do not work autonomously and they need a 'domestic audience' to be truly effective. It is precisely at this 'crossing' between domestic and international factors that explanations for transitions should be sought. A neat separation between the two levels of analysis is impossible and there needs to be an open channel of mutual influence. This is something that transitology seldom envisaged and took into account.

During the period of democratisation following the initial opening, the strong evidence points to the decisive effect that external support had on maintaining the authoritarian regime (although the 'new' authoritarian regime looked, from an institutional point of view, rather different from the pre-1989 one). All domestic actors had a stake in the new political climate, as new elections were promised. Both the ruling party and the opposition parties had reason to believe that they would win such elections and therefore had an interest in sustaining the efforts of President Chadli and the government to continue the process of democratisation. However, the government was also attempting to introduce even more market-orientated reforms, which in the short period triggered even further discontent and dissatisfaction. Given that the Algerian economy was near collapse, and that such collapse might have helped the more 'radical' elements within the opposition with dangerous consequences for the stability of the country, France intervened financially to support the regime's democratising efforts. Social science cannot rely on 'experiments' that can be repeated by altering the initial equation and therefore it is impossible to determine whether the absence of such financial support would have been so crucial as to trigger a violent overthrow of the government. There can only be informed speculation about that.

In the Algerian case, it might have been that some sectors of the population, frustrated by the regression of their living standards and the presence of radical political elements (particularly within the Islamic movement), might have attempted to seize power without waiting for the 'natural' process of elections. It may also be that such an outcome was never on the cards with or without French financial aid. Nevertheless, such aid was handed out and helped the regime to face the crisis on a marginally more secure financial footing. The aid also represented much more than its financial value, as it meant that 'political' support was given to president Chadli himself. A powerful external endorsement, albeit kept secret for fear of accusations of colluding with the former

coloniser, could have proven useful in the transition game, as securing international legitimacy is vital to any country undergoing regime change.

The development stage of the transition into full democratisation was also influenced by other factors over which domestic actors had no control, but which modified the resources at their disposal. Thus, the Gulf War of 1990/1991 had a considerable impact on the Islamic opposition in particular, strengthening its ideology and showing the regime how unpopular it was.

The consolidation phase was never reached, as the second round of elections was cancelled when the Army dismissed the president and took direct control of the state to stop the FIS from coming to power. During the pre-consolidation phase, the external environment had its strongest influence, particularly in the messages conveyed to the military that they would not be punished for intervening. On the contrary, they were left into no doubt that an intervention would be both welcome and rewarded. The costs of repression were already lowering, as the Army believed that a FIS government might slash their privileges and prerogatives, and the knowledge that there would be no international interference made the costs even lower. To this end, France was informed of what would happen in January 1992 and from the lack of condemnation and punishing sanctions following the coup, it could be inferred that such an intervention came as no surprise and served a useful purpose from a French perspective. Such purpose was regional stability, as fears of a FIS government were quite widespread.

From the overall picture, it emerges that there was an influential role for international factors and actors during all phases of democratisation in Algeria. An interesting aspect that merits some attention is that different external forces acted at different moments. At one level, the forces that helped trigger the transition were not the same ones that helped end the transition. At a different level, external actors who supported democratisation at the beginning, and through its initial stages, shifted their policy positions when it became clear that their interests would not be served by the outcome of the democratic process. What remains constant is the necessity for democratising countries to conform to a preconceived model of democracy and international behaviour. Such a model does not allow for radical, challenging political movements to come to power in new democracies. Without the impact and influence of external pressures the outcome might have varied considerably, but the Algerian transition did not take place in a vacuum and it 'suffered' from external intervention. However, there are two different caveats that should be added to qualify the previous

statement. First of all, the role of the international dimension was not as extensive and far-reaching as the initial hypotheses suggested by the theory. For instance, it was argued that the FIS would have been highly influenced by external support in both ideological and resource terms. The evidence does not point in that particular direction, as the ideology of the FIS, its political discourse, its organisational structure and the profile of its militants reflect almost solely domestic concerns and developments. This is not to say that the FIS did not profit from the pro-Islamic ideological environment characterising the late 19980s and early 1990s due to the victory of the Afghan rebels and the Iranian revolution and from the Gulf monarchies' handouts, but these factors are largely marginal to the creation, objectives, strategy and behaviour of the FIS.

Another example is the extent to which the United States were involved in the whole process. While a certain degree of engagement with the protagonists of the Algerian transition clearly emerges, this should not be over-emphasised. At times there is a danger of pointing to the US for anything that happens or does not happen in the region, and this is plainly not the case.

A second qualification that needs to be made is that in the Algerian case, structural constraints may be as important as international actors in influencing the domestic constituencies. While much attention has been paid to the central role of actors and their bargaining at the domestic level, at the international level structural constraints may play a larger role. There is one very specific way they are able to do this and that is restricting the choices of developing countries when it comes to economic policy making. However, such constraints are not as much at work in the case of fostering democratic governance, as the interests of actors in political stability are predominant in that respect, to the detriment of democracy.

8.3 Counterfactuals, Algeria and the International Dimension: Would the Story Have Been the Same?

At this stage of the conclusion, it is necessary to address the issue of the role of external factors in the context of the Algerian story, in relation to the development of that story in isolation from the external environment. Obviously, it is impossible to say how the exclusion of one explanatory variable would affect the story of a specific political phenomenon, but it is nevertheless possible to make some inferences.

The absence of an internationally driven economic crisis might have simply deferred the necessity to launch a programme of political reforms, as claimed by the FIS

for instance. The argument here is that the Algerian economic system was so poorly organised, and was performing so badly, that the internationally driven recession worked only as a catalyst. In the absence of the oil and gas price drop, the elites would have been forced into making changes due to their lack of political legitimacy and due to the poor economic performance of the country. In fact, this argument may not be easily sustainable for a number of reasons. First of all, the regime had been able to manage other economic recessions in the past without conceding political reforms. This crisis was different in terms of intensity and timing, as mentioned earlier. Secondly, without such an economic recession, the regime could have implemented market-oriented reforms without having to worry about political changes, so as to improve economic performance. If we look at Algeria in a comparative context, it emerges that the other countries in the region were able to avoid radical political transformations mainly due to the international aid they received allowing them to remain authoritarian. This is patently the case in Egypt, where the economic recession would have forced the President to concede political pluralism in the face of economic collapse, but Mubarak was saved by injections of money coming from the United States as a reward for participating in the war against Saddam.⁴ Thus, it is legitimate to argue that without the recession, political reforms in Algeria could have been postponed for a long time, much like most other countries in the region.

When it comes to the transition game itself, after the launch of political pluralism, it is also legitimate to argue that without the domestic consequences provoked by the Gulf War, the different parties were likely to have come to a negotiated agreement for power-sharing. The year between the legalisation of political parties and the Gulf War had seen the parties and the regime behave as if democracy had already been established, and the indication was that the FIS, as the largest opposition force, would have been co-opted by the President to lead the country in coalition. In this sense, General Nezzar's argument that power-sharing was Chadli's objective is borne out by the reality. This plan might have resulted in a military coup because it would have threatened the privileges of the upper echelons of the Army and security forces, but such an enterprise would have been much more difficult to carry out without the radicalism the FIS displayed during the Gulf War. This particular event was decisive in increasing the divide between the regime and the Islamic opposition.

⁴ For details about Egypt's economic history over the last three decades, see Henry Clement and Robert Springborg, *Globalisation and the Politics of Development in the Middle East* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001).

Finally, the issue of the military coup that ended Algeria's experiment with democracy has to be tackled. The question that needs to be answered is the following: did it the international community matter at all in the decision to carry out the military coup? Most scholarship on Algeria is adamant on the answer. The military had too many privileges to defend and too much to lose by not intervening, so they would have intervened even in the face of open Western opposition. It follows from this that tacit Western support for the coup simply added an extra bonus, but did not fundamentally alter the line of thinking of the plotters and their cost-benefit analysis. In the absence of substantial evidence pointing to the decisive role of the external factors, it is quite difficult to refute the previous argument. However, it is possible to provide a different perspective on this based on the evidence gathered.

The first point to be made about the Algerian military coup is that it took place at a time when the international community was, at least in theory, putting much emphasis on democratic principles and procedures. Military coups were much more common in previous decades when superpowers' strategic imperatives saw defending democracy relegated to the background. By the early 1990s, those who carried out military coups were seen as outcast. Thus, the Algerian generals were at least playing a very dangerous game because international marginalisation might have resulted in all sorts of punitive measures, ranging from economic sanctions to a ban on military sales to exclusion from international *fora*. If these measures had been foreseen as likely, the Algerian generals might have had second thoughts about the coup. The resources available to them in case of civil conflict, in the absence of international aid, were far from being sufficient and they might have lost the conflict in a short period of time. It is true that they might have not foreseen such a widespread rebellion to their coup, but resistance to their intervention was expected. To this it should be added that, for instance, it was not a coincidence that both the French and the US were concerned after the coup to stress its constitutionality.

The second point has to do with the rewards that the generals enjoyed after the coup itself. The epilogue will deal with this aspect in greater detail. Suffice it to say that far from being shocked by the ending of the democratic experiment, and far from taking time to assess policy options, the international community swiftly came to the rescue of the regime with economic, military and political support. This seems to indicate that this support was a reward for a 'job well done.'

8.4 Implications for the Literature of Transitology

The findings of this research seem to confirm the need for the inclusion of international factors as central explanatory variables in processes of transition. These factors have been marginalised in the study of transitions and they need to be brought back in, as they have considerable influence. The Algerian case shows that external forces have been responsible for changing the incentive structure of domestic actors, thereby affecting the timing and the development of the transition game.

In the past, it was argued that the international dimension was not relevant at all and that regime change was an entirely domestic process. In the late 1970s, this view changed slightly and international factors were included as facilitating variables or second-order factors. This was particularly the case for the indirect attraction that membership of the European Community exercised on domestic actors. The transitions to democracy in the communist bloc should have made international variables even more central to the explanation of such processes, but instead they were still considered to be marginal in these cases. Exceptions were made for those cases where democracy was imposed from outside through military occupation. Importantly, this marginalisation stemmed more from the difficulty of defining the international dimension, and from its operationalisation, rather than from any theoretical obstacle. There is a further aspect that needs to be mentioned. Given the highly normative value attached to the notion of democracy and the belief that it is the 'natural' state of society, domestic explanations for its creation confirm that notion. Taking international variables into account would undermine that notion of 'naturalness' and would point instead to democracy as a model of governance that is functional to the interests of the leading actors in the system because it is their definition and their legitimisation of it that matter.

Once transitology opens up to the literature on international relations, it can utilise some of the theoretical concepts that it lacks and include the external environment in its analysis. When this is done, explanations will be more satisfactory. There are a number of ways through which this study impinges on the literature on regime change. First of all, it confirms that the external environment plays a much more central role than previously believed. Such a dimension should not be limited to cases of imposed democracy. Furthermore, it indicates quite strongly that using the external dimension simply as a *facilitating* factor is incorrect, insofar as it can also be an *obstacle* to the installation of a democratic regime. The Algerian case clearly demonstrates that international factors can actually work against democracy and can contribute decisively

to the return to authoritarian rule (or maintenance of it). Without utilising the tools offered by international relations theory this aspect of transition would remain obscured. It is in fact the contribution of such a literature that allows us to think of the external environment in a different light.

A second important contribution of this research concerns the novel finding that international variables play a strong role throughout the transition. This study indicates that the initiation of the transition had 'international links', particularly in the sphere of international economics; it also points to the role of external variables in fundamentally shaping and constraining the choices and strategies of domestic actors at vital points in the process; and it finally confirms that external factors played a crucial role in the consolidation phase. The consolidation phase had always been held as the phase when external variables would be more important in determining the fate of the transition. The actions through which external powers, both state and non-state, actively pursued a policy of exclusion of the Islamic movement in Algeria demonstrate that the trade-off between democracy and interests is more acute in the consolidation phase. When it becomes clear that a party with a radical agenda for change with important external repercussions is about to prevail through democratic means against authoritarian elites with strong ties to the dominant international powers, the latter finds it useful to facilitate the authoritarian regime's survival. In the Algerian case, the coincidence between the end of the Cold War and the emergence of a new enemy in the guise of Islamic fundamentalism changed the perceptions of key external actors quite dramatically. In a conference held in Quebec in August 2000, Philippe Schmitter argued precisely this point about the impact of external factors on the consolidation phase and the findings from this study seem to prove him correct. However, as mentioned above, the novel aspect of this research is that such an impact should not be limited to any particular phase. It is methodologically incorrect to assume that external factors work in stops and starts and it is also factually untrue in the case of Algeria.

A third important finding is that the 'domestic' is an unavoidable part of the explanation of transitions. The domestic actors are indeed formally in charge of the whole transitional process and without them there would be no change. Even in the clearest cases of external influence, such as the imposition of democracy following military occupation of the country, there have to be domestic actors and factors in place to sustain democracy. It follows that the external environment on its own does not constitute a necessary and sufficient condition to generate a process of regime change,

although some external factors such as economic recessions are beyond the control of any domestic actor. Most international factors work if there is a domestic constituency, as we have seen in the case of a domestic audience receptive to the ‘necessity’ of a military coup and it is therefore important to know the nature of the state, the culture of the country in transition, its level of socio-economic development and its political actors. It is in all of these areas that the external environment has an influence. At the same time, it could be argued that the reverse is also true. Transitions do not occur in a political and economic vacuum, and there are powerful external forces at work, which have a direct and an indirect impact on nation-states. Without a full understanding of these forces, it becomes very difficult to comprehend the timing, the development and the conclusion of processes of regime change.

It must be conceded that the custom-built theoretical framework used for the Algerian case is very much tailored to it and that it lacks parsimony. From this, it follows that it may be difficult to use the same explanatory structure for other cases, particularly the ones outside the MENA region, where the impact of the Gulf War or the presence of Islamic movements would be absent. However, such a framework of analysis can offer some insights to the literature on transition when it comes to looking at the nature of the state and the geo-strategic position it occupies in the international system. These two dimensions are very rarely examined, but they may be important for understanding the type of actions and the type of influences that can derive from that. Finally, it should be argued that a better knowledge and understanding of regime change has profound political implications and is not only of academic interest.

8.5 Implications for the Literature of International Relations

This dissertation attempted to build a bridge between comparative politics and international relations through the inclusion of theoretical tools drawn from international relations in the explanation of what has often been perceived an exclusively domestic affair. This required combining two types of literatures that do not really ‘speak to’ one other, but the final result indicates that there is a growing necessity to combine both literatures if we are to fully explain important political phenomena. At the same time, the results of this research have wider and separate implications for both literatures, because they point to trends and concepts that need to be reformulated more accurately.

When it comes to the theories of international relations, there are numerous aspects that need to be discussed. This study has shown that international factors,

properly qualified, have relevance and are central to explaining processes of transitions. These results considerably undermine some of the most important tenets of the dominant theories of international relations. If these dominant theories are unable to explain one of the most fundamental political acts, such as the emergence of a new political system, it follows that they are in need of considerable revision. It is true that choosing Neo-Realism may have been an easy option because it suffers from the same problem that traditional transitology suffers from. They both tend to exclude the possibility that a sharp distinction between the external and the internal dimensions might in fact not exist. However, Neo-Realism affirms that the international dimension determines domestic structures and it is therefore important to deal with that. When it comes to Neo-Liberalism, the choice of using some of its elements may also seem an easy option. Neo-Liberalism fares better than neo-realism when it comes to tempering the inside/outside dichotomy, but it tends to be overly normative and fails to take into account important issues of power and geopolitics.

There are three parts in this section. The first one will deal with the implications for neo-realism, as the dominant theory in the literature. The second one will discuss the findings of this study in light of the liberal proposition about the expansion of the 'democratic area' and its repercussions on international peace. The third part will attempt to bring the findings together to highlight some of the major methodological problems affecting international relations theory.

There is very little doubt that neo-realism, with its emphasis on the nation-state treated as a black box, on military power, on sovereignty and on the concept of national interest, is still the dominant theory of international relations. Furthermore, or precisely because of this, Neo-Realism enjoys the status of being the theory which has 'common sense', explaining reality as it finds it and not as it imagines it to be or would like it to be. This research employed some of the tools of Neo-Realism to bring the international dimension back in and some concepts have been useful in terms of explanatory power. Neo-Realism is a satisfactory approach if it is taken as a 'contingency' rather than a grand parsimonious theory able to explain the whole of international politics. This contingency is linked to its ability to point to the relevance of geo-politics as a guide for action and understanding. The negative implications for the theory will be analysed and, subsequently, the positive contribution that certain concepts of Neo-Realism can make will be highlighted.

The first myth that should be challenged is the myth about the primacy of the nation-state in international politics. This simply reiterates what others held against Neo-Realism for some time. The primacy of the state is one of the core tenets of Neo-Realism, but the study of processes of transition highlights the importance of non-state actors as well. The role played by these non-state forces is probably one of the most interesting aspects of the account of the failed Algerian transition, and therefore more attention should be paid to it. This does not mean that nation-states do not participate in the transition game nor does it mean that the domestic actors are not competing with one another for control of the state machinery. However, focusing simply on the role of nation-states and their policies when it comes to influences on the transition in a third country would be misleading. There are both non-state actors and 'ideological' changes that are free from the control of nation-states, but all play an equally relevant part in influencing the transition from without. There is very little doubt that French foreign policy had tremendous repercussions on domestic actors and that French national interest stimulated state action in Algeria. The clear support given to the Chadli regime at the initial stages of the transition is an example of such profound state involvement. At the same time, the French state did not seem to act as a unitary actor, as different sectors of it had divergent stakes in the Algerian transition and so the signals to Algiers were mixed. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs seemed to follow one line, while the Presidency was following a rather different one. The same pattern can be seen in Algeria as well where different sectors of the government and the military had different international interlocutors.

Furthermore, Franco-Algerian relations cannot be seen in the very clear-cut manner of traditional diplomatic ties. There are networks of contacts between the two countries which defy the idea of the 'unity of action' of the state. In addition to this, non-state actors played a central role as well. This undermines the belief that nation-states are all that matters in international politics. It would be extremely difficult to explain the initial stages of the transition without referring to the actions of international financial institutions for instance. Their role in Algeria provided the externally derived framework within which economic policy-making took place, leading to important consequences in the political realm, indirectly strengthening some actors while weakening others at the same time. It could be contended that international financial institutions, much like other international organisations, do not really act independently because they reflect the power-relations that exist at state level. At best they could be conceived of as

independent bodies with little weight, at worst they can be conceived as 'agents' of powerful states, carrying out orders on their behalf. While this may be true in some cases, it should be stressed that at a general level, once an institution is created, it tends to begin to 'take a life of its own' because it creates interests for itself to defend and promote. In the specific case of Algeria, the United States (the most important member of the World Bank and the IMF) did not seem to hold a special interest in the country and France was not an enthusiastic supporter of such institutions. The US, through the 'Washington consensus', attempted to export its form of capitalism, but refrained from intervening directly in the Algerian case. France was a reluctant supporter of this neo-liberal strategy and therefore accusing the WB and the IMF of being agents of the West in the Algerian case would be misleading.

Other non-state actors decisively influenced the domestic distribution of resources in the Algerian case and acted independently from nation-states. For example, oil and gas multinationals invested heavily in the country and modified the incentive structure of the domestic actors. It is clear that the new law on foreign investments passed during the transition encouraged foreign companies to flock to Algeria and conclude important accords with the ruling elites. If the FIS had come to power, some of these accords would have been re-negotiated, as specifically stated by FIS leaders. It follows that 'protecting' favourable conditions was paramount for these companies as well as the elite who had guaranteed such accords and profited from them. This common 'interest' decreased the costs of repression and had an impact on the whole transition game.

Finally, 'ideological' changes in both economic and political thinking at the international level influenced the process of regime change. This dimension is obviously difficult to capture and operationalise, but it does have an impact on how choices are made and strategies implemented. The difficulty in capturing this dimension lies in the fact that ideological changes travel across borders irrespective of nation-state frontiers or policies. In this context, it is particularly important to stress three different ideological currents that impinged on the Algerian actors. At one level, the changing attitudes towards democratic governance at the international level narrowed the menu of options for the regime in terms of the political changes it could make. Much of the same can be said for the second major ideology of the time, neo-liberal economic policy-making. Such were the constraints, and such was the lack of alternatives, that domestic actors were faced with only one choice when it came to reform of the economy, with all the

political consequences that this had. Finally the importance of the third ideology, namely the revival of political Islam, should not be dismissed. While the FIS was not a product of external forces and its political ideology and programme were in fact the results of domestic concerns, the revival of Islam provided the necessary context within which the FIS could operate with legitimacy and draw wider popular support. Given the positive results (for Islamists at least) that the Iranian revolution had achieved, for instance, it was logical that the political aspect of Islam would be utilised in other contexts, thanks also to a very widespread network of associations and organisations set up with the aim of propagating 'Islam as the solution.' It should be conceded that these ideologies can be interpreted as traditional international political tools devised by states to defend or promote their own interests, but, as often happens, ideas tend to escape this *etatiste* logic and take on a life of their own. Particularly in the case of political Islam, there is the necessity to look at non-state actors such as charities, Islamic banks, associations of scholars and religious leaders in order to understand its importance and the way it spread.

Another element that emerges from the findings that detracts from Neo-Realism is the influence economics plays on the international scene. The presence and active role of international financial institutions and multinationals is just one indicator of how much the international economy matters. The economic structure of a country determines to a considerable extent the nature of the state and is a strong indicator of how politics will be played out. This is linked to another Neo-Realist tenet that can be challenged. The state should not be treated as a black box. The domestic features of a country are relevant in determining its foreign policy; otherwise it would be difficult to comprehend the reasons behind not letting the FIS into power. Neo-realism fails to be entirely convincing in the long run because it cannot reconcile its marginalisation of the domestic level with the very 'realist' orientated policies aimed at impeding the arrival to power of a political movement perceived to be a threat to the stability of the system. If domestic politics do not matter, why take so much care in ensuring that domestic politics generate allies and not adversaries? If you are leading the system, the pressures generated by your dominance of it should 'constrain' other countries, particularly marginal and weak ones, to behave according to your rules no matter what the preferences of domestic actors are. This should be sufficient to ensure stability, but behaviour does not reflect this self-assurance and the need is felt to 'intervene' in other countries' domestic policies. What drives this behaviour? Neo-realism finds these questions rather difficult to answer.

As mentioned above, the findings of this study also point to the importance of a number of neo-realist preoccupations, particularly in terms of contingency. The first merit of neo-realism is its 'obsession' with power. Despite being defined rather strictly, and possibly wrongly, as military power, there is little doubt that international politics is characterised by power differentials that allow certain actors to wield more influence than others. There are two problems with neo-realism's use of power, but this should not obscure the merits of highlighting its primacy. The first problem is that 'power' seems to be solely a feature of nation-states. The second is that 'power' is very highly correlated with military capabilities. Concerning the first problem, it is rather implausible to argue that only nation-states possess power. There are in fact non-state actors that can muster a significant amount of power in order to influence political outcomes. At times, nation-states can actually be less powerful than some of these non-state actors. The case of multinationals from the hydrocarbon sector operating in Algeria is an example of this, as they have considerable influence when it comes to bargaining with state actors. Regarding the second problem, it seems that the military aspect of power relations has been over-emphasised. While military superiority is an important element in state-to-state relations, it is by no means the only one. Furthermore there is the problem that military power may not be a very useful source of influence when dealing with some non-state actors, as the threat of interfering with their territorial sovereignty non-existent. Joseph Nye explicitly argues this point in his review of American power.⁵

However, as mentioned above, these problems should not obscure the fact that power differentials are indeed a central element of international politics. Actors that have a greater amount of resources at their disposal are able to influence outcomes by gaining access to key constituencies and making their preferred objectives known. The Algerian transition demonstrates that domestic policy-makers from within the regime were conditioned, and even constrained, in their strategies and in their choices by more powerful external actors, which shaped their costs and benefits analysis. A sovereign nation state can suffer from so much external interference that the very word sovereignty begins to lose its meaning. This is because 'power' is not equally distributed.

Another concept that is useful in the analysis and that emerges reinforced from the findings is the notion of 'interest.' Once again, the Neo-Realists are correct in pointing out that actions and policies are driven by the notion of defending or promoting

⁵ Joseph Nye Jr., "Limits of American Power", *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 117, No. 4, 2002/2003, pp. 545-559.

interests, but it should also be stated that they are not the only ones concerned with the notion of interests. Their emphasis is obviously on the so-called national interest, which implies that only nation-states seem to have legitimate interests worth exploring. From the analysis of the Algerian transition, and from the study of democratisations in general, it emerges that the notion of national interest is rather important. Due to the fact that transitions do not occur in a vacuum, and that regime change has an impact on neighbouring countries and on the international system in general, certain nation-states play a role in attempting to influence the outcome of transitions according to their perceived national interest. There is little doubt that the emergence of an opposition movement in the country in transition that is believed to be 'dangerous' for the stability of the region or adversarial in foreign policy, would be seen as a threat to this national interest. The case of Algeria demonstrates how such a notion of national interest was utilised as the framework through which specific actions were taken in order to ensure that the most preferred outcome would result from interference. The concept of national interest should however be stretched further to lose the adjective 'national.' If nation-states are not the only actors of international politics and they are not the only ones to employ 'power', it follows that they are not the only ones having interests to promote and defend.

Thus, Neo-Realism partially explains how international actors play a role and explains the geo-strategic dimension on which countries are located in terms of 'importance' in the international system. However, many of its tenets do not seem to hold and this profoundly undermines the theory, which sees itself as both parsimonious and highly explanatory.

The other dominant theory of international relations is international liberalism. There are many variants of international liberalism, but there are some elements that are common to all these strands. One of these elements is the emphasis that is put on the spread of democracy across the globe. This promotion of democracy is the product of the belief that democratic governance is not only a value that should be exported for its own intrinsic ideological worth, but also for more selfish interests.

These interests coincide with the finding that democracies do not go to war with each other, and thus the more democracies there are in the world the less the chances that conflicts will arise. Thus, the dominant nation-states in the system, international organisations and even non-state actors such as multinationals, all seem to espouse the notion that democracy should be exported and they devise policies to do precisely that.

While many studies confirm the validity of the proposition that democracies do not fight each other, and that expanding the area of democratic peace ensures that conflicts are increasingly solved through peaceful means, there is considerable room to challenge the view that the promotion of democracy is the most preferred strategy to ensure international peace. First of all, it should be underlined that the 'democracy' we are discussing is one very specific form of it: liberal-democracy. This limits the types of governments that can be included in the area of democratic peace. In fact, the acceptance of a new member is conditional on its fulfilling criteria set out by those who are already in the club. In order to fulfil the criteria, countries in transition see their choices being quite restricted in terms of both economic and social policy-making. Thus, the promotion of democracy is 'selective' to the extent that it only promotes one very specific type, which, coincidentally, is the type that also satisfies the interests of most international actors, be they states or non-state actors. While this distinction of the type of democracy in place was not part of the debate surrounding policy-making towards Algeria, it should nevertheless be emphasised that for most policy-makers in the West, Islamic movements are considered intrinsically incapable of constructing a 'democratic' polity and governing it. A number of Islamic movements are quite comfortable with the procedures of democracy and, when in opposition, they constantly call for free and fair elections to be held in order to legitimise those who rule. The problem however is that there is reluctance to hold these elections in case the winning Islamic movement then decides to get rid of electoral politics. The statements made by Islamic movements regarding their commitment to democratic procedures accompanied by their intention to introduce *shar'ia* law sounds suspicious in the West, as it does not conform to a liberal understanding of what democracy is. Thus, 'Islamic democracy' is dismissed in the same way that 'people's democracy' was dismissed in the past when used by communist regimes.

Secondly, it should be clear from the outset of this discussion on democracy that its promotion abroad is always in contention with other objectives of a different nature, such as economic advantages or regional stability. This means that when transitions occur, it is very likely that external actors will 'measure' the commitment to the values and procedures of democracy of the emerging opposition, particularly if the authoritarian regime had been ensuring stability and advantages to those external actors. It follows that the expansion of the area of democratic peace is conditional on who comes to power. It is better to have an authoritarian regime you can deal with than a democratically elected

government that attempts to change the profitable and advantageous status quo. This undermines the whole concept of democratic peace, because by definition this area includes only those who are willing to submit to the powerful interests supervising this area of peace. Furthermore, it also profoundly undermines the normative value of liberalism, as it promotes authoritarian rule instead of democracy when the democratic procedures throw up antagonistic political movements with radical agendas. The attempt made by liberals to argue that in fact 'true democracy' is ultimately preserved because the victors of democratic procedures would have rid the country of the new democratic institutions fails to be convincing. In the end, liberals have to contend with the fact that an authoritarian system is in place because it ensures that the status quo is not altered. Kalyvas argues that this problem emerges specifically "when powerful religious parties are set to win critical elections in emerging democracies"⁶, but this could be extended to any other powerful radical political movements with non-religious agendas.

This major shortcoming of liberal theory in international relations should not obscure the fact that there are positive contributions that the theory makes for the open model of transitions. First of all, it is helpful in highlighting the impact that non-state actors have on the international system, although an approach more orientated towards international political economy better accounts for the existence and the actions of such actors. Secondly, liberalism is sufficiently flexible to include the international economy as an important part of what goes on in the international system.

From all this, it emerges that an approach based on international political economy may respond better to the challenges that international politics poses. It can deal better with the presence of multiple actors and it has the ability to bring into focus issues such as economic security that other theories seem to neglect. This has obvious methodological implications, as it points in the direction of less parsimonious theorising and instead indicates that complex explanations should be accepted.

8.6 Future Research

It should be admitted, first of all, that generalisations from one case study may not be easily made and this study recognises this shortcoming. However, due to the novel approach utilised, the findings can be used as an indication and a building block for scholars interested in the relationship between the international and the domestic

⁶ Stathis Kalyvas, "Commitment problems in Emerging Democracies. The Case of Religious Parties", *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 32, No. 2, January 2000, p. 379.

environments. In spite of the positive outcomes of many processes of transitions, there are still many authoritarian regimes in place today and there is an even larger number of regimes that can be defined as semi-democracies or liberalised autocracies. It follows that studying transitions is still an important task, and this study suggests that to have a better understanding of regime change we need to examine the links that exist between external and internal factors. For this reason, the cardinal points of the explanatory structure used for Algeria, such as the two dimensions approach, could be applied to other countries that went through a process of transition. This could be done through in-depth case studies or through studies with a larger sample, although a detailed knowledge of the country under scrutiny is a better avenue for understanding. Jeff Haynes recently stated: “there remains an urgent need to understand more widely what happens when the purposive policies of two categories of external actors - international and transnational actors - interact and intertwine with domestic factors”⁷ and lamented the absence of more detailed studies concerning specific regions of the globe. This study goes in the direction pointed by Haynes and, given that it is by no means exhaustive, it should be seen as one attempt to fill this large gap. Other scholars with deep understanding and knowledge of other countries and areas of the world could take this task further.

North Africa and the Middle East, for instance, offer numerous examples of processes of regime change as many countries attempted to move away from authoritarian rule towards democratic governance. The high failure rate in this process is often blamed on ‘cultural’ factors, but more attentive studies may be able to challenge this view and discover that the international environment had a much more prominent role to play, particularly given the nature of the opposition in many of these countries.

At the same time, more emphasis should be paid to the policy of promotion of democracy and its consequences. This topic has attracted a lot of interest in recent years and there are many studies dealing with it. However, as this study shows, there is a case to be made for analysing such policies of democracy promotion more critically, by looking at the impact they have on domestic actors and how these then play the domestic game. Such a policy is usually fraught with contradictions, and the Algerian case highlights how these contradictions played into the hands of those domestic

⁷ Jeffrey Haynes, “Comparative Politics and Globalisation”, European Political Science, Vol. 2, No. 3, Summer 2003, p. 25..

constituencies vying for a return to authoritarian rule with the excuse of protecting democracy for the future.

Future academic research should therefore concentrate on building bridges between international relations (or globalisation studies) and comparative politics, as the main lesson of this thesis is that the two are not separate levels of analysis. The 'flow' and the exchanges are not unidirectional, but are multiple (involving state and non-state actors) and 'polydirectional'. International relations theories, and Neo-Realism in particular, should abandon their aspirations to be all-encompassing parsimonious theories explaining all of international politics. Comparative politics should be open to the notion that the domestic environment is not disconnected from the outside world.

There is also a political and policy-related lesson that emerges quite clearly from this study. Due to their weight and influence, international conditions are decisive in the promotion and consolidation of democracy. It is quite untrue to claim that external actors, particularly powerful ones, can do little to foster change. The instruments are there for this objective to be achieved. Structure is important, but the structure is also a product of actor-led policies. These actors can and should promote real change. If the very notion of democracy is sacrificed on the altar of short-term interests, the concept itself is demeaned. This has dangerous consequences for those who struggle to achieve rights and freedoms purported to be universal.

EPILOGUE

It has been over ten years since the process of democratisation in Algeria came to a crashing fall, and a brief examination of the events following the military's intervention into the country's political process may offer some insights regarding the validity of this research's findings. The basic question that needs to be asked is the following: does the story of Algeria post-1992 support the conclusions drawn concerning the role of external variables in being just as important to domestic political developments as internal factors?

In order to answer this question, it is necessary to examine the actions undertaken by the international actors involved, and to outline how the Algerian elites were (and still are) able to 'exploit' the external environment to solidify their grip on power.

The Rewards

While it would be methodologically unsound to infer the existence of a causal mechanism between the military intervention in the electoral process and policies implemented by international actors following the coup, *ex-post facto* reasoning can be very useful to supplement the argument that external influences played a decisive role in the failure of the transition. What matters in particular is the search for 'stability' on the part of Western powers in the region, but the external support of external non-state actors is also central. In this context, it does not matter very much which type of government can guarantee this stability, as long as the rulers are 'close' to the West and do not attempt to challenge the status quo of the international system. Given that the 'West' did not trust the FIS on this particular issue (and many more for that matter), the Algerian generals were the only credible alternative.

According to the pro-democracy commitments of the West, and of most international organisations, democratic results should be respected and any domestic actor who takes power through non-democratic means should be punished for not respecting the will of the people. In the case of Algeria (and more recently in the case of Pakistan) the termination of democracy and civilian rule did not trigger any sort of sanction. On the contrary, the Algerian generals were considered to be saviours of democracy in North Africa and rewarded for their intervention. It is therefore logical to at least suspect that the military had the perception or knew that they would be rewarded by the international community for their coup instead of being shunned. If this is the case, it becomes evident that external actors played a much stronger and more powerful role than previously thought. As mentioned above, this does not prove the existence of a causal mechanism, but it does indicate at least a degree of

collaboration between the organisers of the coup and the external environment. This suspicion is reinforced by the fact that the positive measures taken in favour of Algeria began immediately after the coup. If the coup had taken place without anyone outside Algeria knowing about it, it is logical to assume that responses to it and measures towards Algeria would have taken some time to elaborate, but this was not the case. Furthermore, support for the generals never subsided over the course of the last twelve years and, aside from very superficial calls to resume the process of democratisation, nothing tangible was done to put pressure on them. On the contrary, support even increased after the attacks on New York and Washington in September 2001.

To conclude, when the democratic rhetoric of the West was put to the test, it failed, and support was thrown behind the military junta. This support strategy was built on three pillars and involved a number of international actors. First of all, “France provided \$ 550 million in aid to help Algeria import food and a Western consortium provided \$1.45 billion in credit.”¹ While this aid may have really trickled down and relieved the population of some of its hardships, given the notorious and extensive corruption of the elites there is also room to speculate that these payments were destined to prop up the new regime. Governmental aid was not the only form of economic support for the generals. As mentioned in the previous paragraphs, since the beginning of the 1990s, just prior to and just after the coup, “the presence of American companies had been substantial and it coincided with the first liberalising measures the Algerian regime implemented.”² Oil and gas multinationals were encouraged to invest in Algeria, as the army guaranteed the security of the oil and gas production apparatus and the transport infrastructure.”³ The myth that foreign investors are always reluctant to invest in countries with an unstable political situation or, even worse, ravaged by a civil war should be dispelled. For certain types of business, insecurity and instability are what it is needed for the investments to be profitable. If a foreign investor receives assurances from one of the actors involved in the struggle that their business will not be affected, and this actor then delivers on the promise, there is a mutual benefit: higher profits for the investors who risk money in an unstable country (other investors may effectively be reluctant to invest and competition would not be as strong) and a source of income for an actor that needs funding to carry on with a war. International organisations also

¹ Anthony Cordesman, “The Military Balance and Arms Sales in North Africa: 1990-1996”, *CSIS Working paper*, September 1996.

² Remy Leveau, “Acteurs et Champs de Force”, *Pouvoir*, No. 86, 3eme Trimestre, Sept. 1998, p. 42.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

backed the regime through financial aid. The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund granted loans and credits to the regime even in the absence of democratic credentials and allowed for the rescheduling of debt twice, thus ensuring that the military had sufficient funds to continue fighting against the rebels.⁴ The European Union as well supported the regime through credits and loans. While it is true that some funds were held back between 1992 and 1994, this was not due to political conditionality. As stated by Roberts, “the real policy of the EC and its successor the EU was to force the Algerian government to accept the rescheduling of Algeria’s debt and all that this entailed.”⁵ This points to the rather cynical use of the Algerian crisis to extract economic benefits, while strengthening links with the new authoritarian rulers. Access to the generals and leverage could have been employed to ‘force’ a peaceful resolution of the crisis post-January 1992, but this was never seriously envisaged.

The second pillar of the strategy of support was military aid. Military links were deepened and they involved the training of Algerian officers in US military schools and the export of weapons. France quickly supplied the regime with new weaponry, provided intelligence and exported the latest surveillance technology to be used against the Islamic movement.⁶ The Army's budget is difficult to quantify, but the high intensity of the conflict suggests that spending on weaponry increased from an already high figure in 1990.⁷ The data collected by the Stockholm Peace Research Institute show that military expenditure as a percentage of GDP increased constantly since 1991 and military spending went from US \$ 622 million in 1991 to US \$ 1,119 million just two years later.⁸ While not all weapons came directly from Western countries, the system of triangulation was used, whereby an Arab state supporting Algeria would buy weapons from a Western country and then ship them to the Algerian government, usually with the full knowledge of the Western government.⁹ In particular, small Gulf States saw Algeria as the place where the global struggle against a challenging fundamentalist movement was being fought and they threw their support behind

⁴ Luis Martinez, *La Guerre Civile en Algérie* (Paris, Editions Khartala, 1998), pp. 276-288.

⁵ Hugh Roberts, “Dancing in the Dark: The European Union and the Algerian Drama”, *Democratization*, Vol. 9, No. 1, Spring 2002, p. 112.

⁶ James Ciment, *Algeria. The Fundamentalist Challenge*, (New York: Facts on File, 1997) states that France was very much involved in the process of delivering weaponry and technology.

⁷ Details of military spending in North African countries can be found in Anthony Cordesman, ‘The Military Balance and Arms Sales in North Africa: 1990-1996’, *CSIS working papers*, Washington DC, September 1996.

⁸ <http://first.sipri.org/non_first/result_milex.php?send>

⁹ For instance, Qatar ordered 7.5 million dollars worth of military equipment from the UK as a gift for the Algerian Army. When asked about British knowledge about this, Qatar’s foreign minister replied that the British government had no objection to the export of arms to Algeria. Associated Press, Doha, Qatar, 19 June 2000.

the generals. In his book about the civil war in Algeria, ¹⁰Habib Souaidia details the weaponry delivered by France and the type of training received in France by the security forces charged with fighting the Islamist insurgents.

The third pillar is the political legitimacy granted to the new regime despite being the result of a military coup. First of all, “the White House first stated that the military intervention fell within the provisions of the 1989 Constitution”¹¹. While another statement calling for respect of international democratic standards was issued later, the US Administration's lenient stance on a military coup at the height of a wave of democratisations around the globe was very telling about US priorities in the area. For its part, the European Union saw the new *junta* as reliable partner and Algeria was included in all Euro-Mediterranean partnership initiatives and even signed an association agreement which will soon come into effect. It is also interesting to note that the Algerian president has already been invited twice to attend the G8 summit, with a few selected leaders from developing countries, to discuss issues concerning the global economy and other problems facing the international community. The choice of the Algerian president as one of the privileged interlocutors for Western leaders is testimony to the degree of recognition that the *junta* enjoys abroad. This behaviour seems to contradict all the policy statements and the principles which the international community is supposed to stand for. Usually, regimes that come to power through force are somehow punished through sanctions or through symbolic acts intended to diminish their prestige, but in the case of Algeria, the standing of the country in the international system actually improved. The political legitimacy of the regime was reinforced by the lack of strong condemnation from large sections of the Western media, and from most French intellectuals, who saw the generals as the lesser of two evils.

All these measures supported the regime in the face of what some would consider a legitimate armed rebellion to reinstate the democratically elected party in power. The economic and military aid in particular increased the resources available to the regime to ‘win’ the civil war against the insurgents. After a couple of years, when the outcome of the civil war hung in the balance due to the strength of the insurgency and the poor performance of the security forces (not trained to fight a guerrilla war), the new resources pouring in from outside had a decisive impact and the balance of power shifted towards the Army.¹²

¹⁰ Habib Souaidia, *La Sale Guerre* (Paris, La Découverte, 2002).

¹¹ Claire Spencer, “Islamism and European Reactions: The Case of Algeria”, in Richard Gillespie (ed.), *Mediterranean Politics Vol. 2*, (London: Pinter, 1996), p. 131.

¹² See again Luis Martinez for details, op. cit.

Façade Democracy and Crony Capitalism

Domestic developments after the military coup can be examined in three different phases. The first phase saw the generals exercising power directly in order to perform the essential task of dismantling the FIS's political structure, imprison its leaders and its most vocal members (to this end prison camps were opened in the desert in the south of the country) and manage the country's affairs. During this phase, the military attempted to legitimise its direct rule by again using the card of 'revolutionary legitimacy'. For this reason, they asked one of the leaders of the war against France to come back to Algeria and lead the country out of its crisis. Mohammed Boudiaf, who had lived in exile for almost 30 years, accepted and returned to Algeria. However, he quickly discovered that the situation was not as simple as it seemed from the outside (fundamentalists versus democratic secularists) and noted that in order to regain the confidence of the population in the political process sweeping reforms were necessary. In particular, Boudiaf set out to stamp out corruption. This was not acceptable to many within the government and he was assassinated in very controversial circumstances. At the beginning it was thought that the insurgents had murdered him, but it was later discovered that the killing of Boudiaf was an 'inside job'. The choice of looking abroad for legitimacy backfired on the generals, and the decision was taken that what was needed after three years of direct rule was the introduction of electoral politics.

The second phase therefore opens with the presidential elections of 1995. This election was quite a surprise in the sense that turnout was high and the result was not pre-determined in numerical terms, although the FIS was not allowed to participate and it was clear that the candidate of the regime was going to win. The candidate, Liamine Zeroual, was a retired general who had been selected by his peers to perform two essential tasks: 1) attempt to politically re-unite the country and 2) show to the outside world that civilian rule had been reinstated and that the country was making some progress towards real democratisation. Zeroual was unable to bring peace to Algeria, although by 1995 (the year of his election) the insurgents had no hope of winning. The violence continued and political progress stalled. The peace initiative sponsored by the Sant' Egidio Community (with links to the Vatican and the Italian government) was accepted by most Algerian political movements including the FIS, but was rejected by the regime.¹³ Zeroual was more successful on the international front, as the international community saw his election as an important step forward. It follows that aid and political support for the regime kept coming.

¹³ For details of the negotiations of the peace agreement, see Marco Impagliazzo e Mario Giro, *Algeria in Otsaggio* (Milano. Ed. Guerini e Associati, 1997)

The third phase opened with the resignation of Zeroual, who had come into conflict with some of his original sponsors. A new presidential election was held, but only the regime's candidate participated. Bouteflika had been a key member of the Boumedienne regime and he was chosen by the military to perform the same tasks as Zeroual. Against all odds, he was able to secure both international legitimacy and a degree of peace in the country without, however, being able to start a new process of democratisation.

In all of this, it should not be forgotten that the real wielders of power are still the generals behind the scene. Although divided on some matters, and in competition for privileges and benefits, they have the common objective of remaining the sole, unchallenged decision-makers in the country. If in order to do so, they have to be seen as accepting democratic procedures, they will do so, as long as they can control the outcome of these procedures.

During all this time, Algeria has been inserted into the world economy through a series of reforms supported by the international financial institutions. Algeria has now almost completely moved away from a planned economy and has, in theory, embraced the market. However, the economic situation for the population is still dire and the reforms have benefited only the ones with connections to the regime. The reforms were easier to implement in this authoritarian context because their introduction cannot be questioned by a muted opposition.

Façade democracy and crony capitalism go hand-in-hand today in Algeria. As long as the international community has more interest in regional stability than democracy, this is unlikely to change.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abderrezak, Ali (2001) "Persistence in Hydrocarbon Shocks: the Algerian Experience", The Journal of North African Studies, Vol. 6, No. 3, Autumn, pp. 11-22

Abderrezak, Ali (2001) "Seignorage and Hydrocarbons in Algeria", The Journal of North African Studies, Vol. 6, No. 4, Winter, pp. 15-26.

Aberbach, Joel and Bert Rockman (2002) "Conducting and Coding Elite Interviews", PS, December, pp. 673-676.

Abootalebi, Ali (1999) "Islam, Islamists and Democracy", Middle East Review of International Affairs, Vol. 3, No. 1, March. Available at <http://meria.idc.ac.il/journal>

Aboud, Hichem (2002) *La Mafia des Généraux* (Paris: JC Lattès).

Aburish, Said K. (1994) *The Rise, Corruption and Coming Fall of the House of Saud* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing).

Aburish, Said K. (2000) *Saddam Hussein. The Politics of Revenge* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing)

Adamson, Kay (1998) "La Seconde Guerre d'Algérie: the Ambivalent Nature of the French State's Response to the Algerian Crisis", Cambridge Review of International Affairs, Vol. 11, No. 2, Spring, pp. 152-165.

Addi, Lahouari (1992) "The Islamist Challenge: religion and modernity in Algeria", The Journal of Democracy, Vol. 2, No. 4, October.

Addi, Lahouari (1992) "Islamicist Utopia and Democracy", Annals AAPSS, No. 524, November, pp. 120-130.

Addi, Lahouari (1997) "Political Islam and Democracy: the case of Algeria" in Axel Hadenius (ed.) *Democracy's Victory and Crisis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

Al-Ahnaf, M, Bernard Botiveau and Frak Frégosi (1991) *L'Algérie par ses Islamistes* (Paris: editions Khartala).

Aissaoui, Ali (2001) *Algeria. The Political Economy of Oil and Gas* (New York: Oxford University Press).

Ait-Challal, Amine (2000) *L'Algérie, les Etats-Unis et la France: des Discours à l'Action* (Paris: Publisud).

Ake, Claude (1997) "Dangerous Liaisons: the Interface of Globalisation and Democracy" in Axel Hadenius (ed.) *Democracy's Victory and Crisis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

Aliboni, Roberto (1995) "The Islamic Factor in International Economic Co-operation", in Laura Guazzone (ed.) *The Islamist Dilemma. The Political Role of Islamist Movements in the Contemporary Arab World* (Reading: Ithaca Press).

Allison, Graham and Robert Beschel (1992) "Can the United States Promote Democracy?", Political Science Quarterly, Vol. 197, No. 1, pp. 81-98.

- Almond, Gabriel (1989) "Review Article: The International-National Connection", British Journal of Political Science, Vol. 19, No. 2, April, pp. 237-259.
- Amirouche, Hamou (1994) "Algeria's Islamist Revolution: The People Versus Democracy?", Middle East Policy, Vol. 5, No. 4.
- Anderson, Benedict (1991) *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso Books).
- Anderson, Ewan and Dominic French (1994) "New Dimensions in Mediterranean Security" in Richard Gillespie (ed.) *Mediterranean Politics* (London: Pinter).
- Anderson, Lisa (1991) "Political Pacts, Liberalism and Democracy: the Tunisian National Pact of 1988", Government and Opposition, Vol. 26, No. 2, Spring, pp. 244-260.
- Armstrong, Karen (2001) *Islam. A Short History* (London: Phoenix Press).
- Baker, James III (1994) "Looking Back on the Middle East", The Middle East Quarterly, Vol. 1, No. 3, September.
- Balta, Paul and Claudine Rulleau (2000) *L'Algérie: les Essentiels* (Toulouse: Editions Milam).
- Beau, Nicolas and Jean-Pierre Tuquoi (1999) *Notre Ami Ben Ali*, (Paris, Editions La Découverte).
- Beblawi, Hazem and Giacomo Luciani (1987) *The Rentier State* (London: Croom Helm).
- Belhassen, Souhayr (1989) "Algérie, Ce que veut Hamrouche", La Jeune Afrique, No. 1500, 2nd October.
- Benachenou, Abdellatif (1993) "Inflation et Chômage en Algérie. Les Aléas de la Démocratie et de Reformes Economiques", Maghreb-Machrek, No. 139, January/March.
- Benissad, Hocine (1994) *Algérie: Restructurations et Reformes Economiques entre 1979 et 1993* (Alger: OPU).
- Bennett, Alexander (1985) "Arms Transfer as an Instrument of Soviet Policy in the Middle East", Middle East Journal, Vol. 39, No. 4, Autumn, pp. 745-774.
- Berry, Jeffrey (2002) "Validity and Reliability Issues in Elite Interviewing", PS, December, pp. 679-682.
- Blunden, Margaret (1994) "Insecurity on Europe's Southern Flank", Survival, Vol. 36, No. 2, pp. 134-148.
- Bounadel, Youcef (2003) "Political Parties and the Transition from Authoritarianism: the Case of Algeria", Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 41, No. 1.
- Braden, Kathleen and Fred Shelley (2000) *Engaging Geopolitics* (Harlow: Pearson Education).

Bratton, Michael and Nicolas van de Walle (1992) "Popular Protest and Political Reform in Africa", Comparative Politics, Vol. 2, No. 4, July, pp. 419-442.

Bromley, Simon (1997) "Middle East exceptionalism: myth or reality?", in David Potter, David Goldblatt, Margaret Kiloh and Paula Lewis (eds.) in *Democratization*, (London: The University Press).

Brown, Carl (1987) "The Middle East: Patterns of Change, 1947-1987", Middle East Journal, Vol. 41, No. 1, Winter, pp. 26-39.

Brumberg, Daniel (2002) "The Trap of Liberalised Autocracy", Journal of Democracy, Vol. 13, No. 4, October, pp. 56-68.

Brumberg, Daniel (2003) "Liberalisation Versus Democratisation. Understanding Arab Political Reform", Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Working Paper, No. 37, May, pp. 3-20.

Brynen, Rex (1992) "Economic Crisis and Post-Rentier Democratization in the Arab World: the Case of Jordan", Canadian Journal of Political Science, Vol. 25, No. 1, pp. 69-97.

Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce (2002) "Domestic Politics and International Relations", International Studies Quarterly, Vol. 46, No. 1, pp. 1-9.

Bunce, Valerie (2003) "Rethinking Recent Democratisation. Lessons from the Post-Communist Experience", World Politics, Vol. 55, No. 1, January, pp. 167-192.

Burgat, Francois (1990) "La Mobilisation Islamiste et les Elections Algériennes du 12 Juin 1990", Maghreb-Machrek, No. 129, Juillet/Septembre, pp. 5-22.

Burgat, Francois (1995) *L'Islamisme au Maghreb* (Paris: Editions Payot et Rivages).

Burgat, Francois, (1995) *L'Islamisme en Face* (Paris: Editions La Découverte).

Brzezinski, Zbigniew (1998), "How Jimmy Carter and I started the Mujahidden", Le Nouvel Observateur, January, 15/21.

Calchi Novati, Giampaolo (1998) *Storia dell'Algeria Indipendente* (Milano: Edizioni Bompiani).

Calies de Salies, Bruno (1992) "Situation et Perspectives en Algérie", Defense Nationale, Vol. 48, Aout/Septembre, pp. 137-146.

Calvo Ospina, Hernando (2000) *Bacardi. The Hidden War* (London: Pluto Press).

Cantori, Louis (2000) "The Limitations of Western Democratic Theory: The Islamic Alternative", Paper presented at the Conference of Middle East Studies Association, in Orlando, Florida, United States, November, pp. 1-6. (cited with author's permission).

Carothers, Thomas (2002), "The End of the Transition Paradigm", Journal of Democracy, Vol. 13, No. 1, pp. 5-21.

Carothers, Thomas (2003), "Is Gradualism Possible? Choosing a Strategy for Promoting Democracy in the Middle East", Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Working Paper, No. 39, June, pp. 5-15.

Cavatorta, Francesco (2001) "Geopolitical challenges to the success of democracy in North Africa: Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco", Democratization Vol. 8, No. 4, Winter, pp. 175-194.

Cesari, Jocelyne (1994/1995) "France-Algérie. L'Effet 'Airbus'", Les Cahiers de l'Orient, No. 36/37, 4 Trimestre/1 Trimestre, pp. 175-191.

Chalmers, Douglas (1993) "Internationalised Domestic Politics in Latin America. The Institutional Role of Internationally Based Actors", unpublished paper, Dept. of Political Science, Columbia University.

Charef, Abed (1994) *Algérie. Le Grand Dérapage* (Editions de l'Aube).

Chase, Robert, Emily Hill and Paul Kennedy (1996) "Pivotal States and US Strategy", Foreign Affairs, Vol. 75, No. 1, January/February, pp. 33-51.

Chaudry, Kiren Aziz (1993) "The Myths of the Market and the Common History of Late Developers", Politics & Society, Vol. 21, No. 3, September, pp. 245-274.

Chaudry, Kiren Aziz (1994) "Economic Liberalisation and the Lineages of the Rentier State", Comparative Politics, Vol. 27, No. 1, October, pp. 1-25.

Chomsky, Noam (1996) *Les dessous de la politique de l'Oncle Sam* (Montréal: Les Editions Ecosociété).

Claverie, Pierre (1994) "Algérie: le Desarroi", Etudes, Vol. 381, No. 3, September.

Ciment, James (1997) *Algeria. The Fundamentalist Challenge* (New York: Facts on File).

Cooley, John (2002) *Unholy Wars. Afghanistan, America and International Terrorism* (London: Pluto Press).

Cordesman, Anthony (1996) "The Military Balance and Arms Sales in North Africa: 1990-1996", CSIS Working paper, September.

Cordesman, Anthony (2001), "The One True US Strategic Interest in the Middle East: Energy", Middle East Policy, Vol. 8, No. 1, March, pp. 117-127.

Corm, Georges (1993) "La Reforme Economique Algérienne: Une Reforme Mal Aimée?", Maghreb-Machrek, No. 139, January/March, pp. 8-27.

Coustillière, Jean Francois (1992) "Une Politique de l'Europe Latine en Méditerranée Occidentale", Defense Nationale, Vol. 48, May, pp. 103-119.

Cox, Michael (1998) "Rebels Without a Cause? Radical Theorists and World System After the Cold War", New Political Economy, Vol. 3, No. 3, pp. 445-460.

Crystal, Jill (1994) "Authoritarianism and its Adversaries in the Arab World", World Politics, Vol. 46, No. 2, January, pp. 262-289.

Dadsi, Driss and Lazhari Doukali (1994) *Algérie: les Années de Tous les Dangers* (Paris: Presse Africaine).

- Daguzan, Jean-Francois (1993/1994) "Les Rapports Franco-Algériens, 1962-1992. Réconciliation ou Conciliation Permanente?", Politique Etrangère, No. 4, Hiver, pp. 885-896.
- Dahl, Robert (1971) *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition* (New Haven: Yale University Press).
- Dalacoura, Katerina (2001) "Islamist Movements as Non-State Actors and Their Relevance to International Relations" in Daphne Josselin and William Wallace (eds.) *Non-State Actors in World Politics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave).
- de La Gorce, Paul-Marie (1994/1995) "La France et le Maghreb", Politique Internationale, No. 4, Hiver, pp. 927-939.
- de La Gorce, Paul-Marie (1996) "L'Algérie et les Grandes Puissances", Recherches Internationales, No. 43/44, Hiver-Printemps, pp. 21-41.
- Denaud, Patrick (1997) *Algérie. Le FIS: sa Direction Parle* (Paris: L'Harmattan).
- Deudney, Daniel and John Ikenberry (1999), "The Nature and Sources of the Liberal International Order", Review of International Studies, Vol. 25, No. 2, April.
- Devoluy, Pierre and Mireille Duteil (1994) *La Poudrière Algérienne* (Paris: Calmann-Levy Editions).
- Diamond, Larry, Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan (1988) *Democracy in Developing Countries* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Press).
- Diamond, Larry and Juan Linz (1989) "Introduction. Politics, Society and Democracy in Latin America" in Larry Diamond, Juan Linz and Seymour Martin Lipset *Democracy in Developing Countries. Latin America* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Press).
- Di Palma, Giuseppe (1990) *To Craft Democracies* (Los Angeles: University of California Press).
- Dillman, Bradford (2000) "Parliamentary Elections and the Prospects for Political Pluralism in North Africa", Government and Opposition, Vol. 35, No. 2, pp. 211-236.
- Dillman, Bradford (2001) "Facing the Market in North Africa", Middle East Journal, Vol. 55, No. 2, Spring, pp. 198-215.
- Do Ceu Pinto, Maria (1998) "European and American Responses to the Algerian Crisis", Mediterranean Politics, vol. 3, No. 3, Winter, pp. 63-80.
- Doyle, Michael (1986) "Liberalism and World Politics", American Political Science Review, Vol. 80, No. 4, December, pp. 1151-1163.
- Eckstein, Harry (1975) "Case Study and Theory in Political Science" in Fred Greenstein and Nelson Polsby (eds.) *Handbook of Political Science, Vol. 1 Scope and Theory* (Reading: Addison-Wesley).
- Ehteshami, Anoushiravan (2003) "Reform from above: the Politics of Participation in Oil Monarchies", International Affairs, Vol. 79, No. 1, January, pp. 53-75

El-Erian, Mohammed (1996), "Middle Eastern Economies' External Environment: What Lies Ahead?", Middle East Policy, Vol. 53, March, pp. 136-147.

Encarnacion, Omar (1998) "The Comparative Study of Democratisation: Transition Politics in Eastern and Southern Europe", South European Society & Politics, Vol. 3, No. 2, Autumn, pp. 134-141.

Enhaili, Aziz and Oumelkheir Adda (2003), "State and Islamism in the Maghreb", Middle East Review of International Affairs, Vol. 7, No. 1, March, pp. 66-76.

Entelis, John (1999) "SONATRACH: the Political Economy of an Algerian State Institution", Middle East Journal, Vol. 53, No. 1, Winter, pp. 9-27.

Entelis, John (2000) "Democracy Denied: America's Authoritarian Approach Towards the Maghreb - Causes and Consequences" Paper presented at the 18th World Congress of the International Political Science Association, Quebec City, Quebec, Canada, August, pp. 1-11.

Entelis, John (2002) "Un Courant Populaire Mis à l'Ecart", Le Monde Diplomatique, No. 589, September, pp.21-22.

Esposito, John and James Piscatori (1991) "Democratization and Islam", Middle East Journal, Vol. 45, No. 3, Summer, pp. 427-440.

Esposito, John and John Voll (2000) "Islam and the West: Muslim Voices of Dialogue", Millenium: Journal of International Studies, Vol. 29, No. 3, pp. 613-639.

Esposito, John (2002) *Unholy War. Terror in the Name of Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press).

Ethier, Diane (2003) "Is Democracy Promotion Effective? Comparing Conditionality and Incentives", Democratization, Vol. 10, No. 1, Spring, pp. 99-120.

Euben, Roxanne (1999) *Enemy in the Mirror. Islamic Fundamentalism and the Limits of Modern Rationalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).

Faqir, Fadia (1997) "Engendering Democracy and Islam in the Arab World", Third World Quarterly, Vol. 18, No. 1, pp. 165-174.

Fauré, Michel (2002) "Washington-Islamistes. Liaisons Dangereuses", L'Express, 20th September, pp. 88-94.

Favier, Pierre and Michel Martin-Roland (1996) *La Décennie Mitterrand. Les Défis. Volume 3* (Paris: Editions du Séuil).

Fishman, Robert (1990), "Rethinking State and Regime. Southern Europe's Transition to Democracy", World Politics, Vol. 42, No. 3, April, pp. 422-440.

Flyvberg, Bent (2001) *Making Social Science Matter. Why Social Inquiry Fails and How it Can Succeed Again* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

Fuller, Graham (1997) *Algérie. L'Intégrisme au Pouvoir* (Paris: Editions Banon).

Gambill, Gary (2003) "Explaining the Arab Democracy Deficit: Part I", Middle East Intelligence Report, Vol. 5, No. 2, February/March.

Gambill, Gary (2003) "Explaining the Arab Democracy Deficit, Part II: American Policy", Middle East Intelligence Report, Vol. 5, No. 8/9, August/September.

Gamble, Andrew (2002) "Political Memoirs", The British Journal of Politics and International Relations, Vol. 4, No. 1, April, pp. 141-150

Garfinkle, Adam (2002) "The Impossible Imperative? Conjuring Arab Democracy", The National Interest, Fall.

Garon, Lise (1994) "Crise Economique et Consensus en Etat Rentier: le Cas de l'Algérie Socialiste", Etudes Internationales, Vol. 25, No. 1, pp. 25-45.

Gazzo, Yves (1988) "Les Economies Arabes Face à la Crise", Maghreb-Machrek, No. 120, Avril/Juin, pp. 58-67.

Gerges, Fawaz (1999) *America and Political Islam. Clash of Cultures or Clash of Interests?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

Gillespie, Richard and Richard Youngs (2002) "Themes in European Democracy Promotion", Democratization, Vol. 9, No. 1, Spring, pp. 1-16.

Glasser, Bradley (1995) "External Capital and Political Liberalisations: a Typology of Middle Eastern Development in the 1980s and 1990s", Journal of International Affairs, Vol. 49, No. 1, Summer, pp. 45-73.

Goddard, Hugh (2002) "Islam and Democracy", Political Science Quarterly, Vol. 73, No. 1, January/March, pp. 3-9.

Goldstein, Kenneth (2002) "Getting in the Door: Sampling and Completing Elite Interviews", PS, December, pp. 669-672.

Golub, Philippe (1994/1995) "Etats Unis-Algérie. Les Ambiguités d'une Politique", Les Cahiers de l'Orient, No. 36/37, 4 Trimestre/1 Trimestre, pp. 193-203.

Gould, St. John B. (1996) "Political Liberalisation in the Maghreb: an Optimistic Review", The Journal of North African Studies, Vol. 1, No. 2, Autumn 1996, pp. 123-137.

Goomeziane, Smail (1994) *Le Mal Algérien. Economie Politique d'une Transition Inachevée* (Paris: Fayard).

Grimaud, Nicole (1991) "Prolongements Externes des Elections Algériennes", Les Cahiers de l'Orient, No. 23, Troisième Trimestre, pp. 29-40.

Hafez, Mohammed (2000) "Armed Islamist Movements and Political Violence in Algeria", Middle East Journal, Vol. 54, No. 4, Fall, pp. 572-591.

Haggard, Stephan and Robert Kaufman (1997) "The Political Economy of Democratic Transitions", Comparative Politics, Vol. 29, No. 3, April, pp. 263-283.

Halliday, Fred (1995) "The End of the Cold War and International Relations: Some Analytic and Theoretical Conclusions" in Ken Booth and Steve Smith (eds.) *International Relations Theory Today* (Penn State University Press).

- Halliday, Fred (1995) "Review Article: the Politics of Islam - A Second Look", British Journal of Political Science, Vol. 25, No. 3, July, pp. 399-417.
- Halliday, Fred (1996) *Islam and the Myth of Confrontation: Religion and Politics in the Middle East* (London: I.B. Tauris).
- Hamann, Kerstin (1997) "The Pacted Transition to Democracy and Labour Politics in Spain", South European Politics and Society, Vol. 2, No. 2, Autumn, pp. 110-138.
- Hamarneh, Mustafa (2000) "Democratisation in the Mashreq: the Role of External Factors", Mediterranean Politics, Vol. 5, No. 1, pp. 77-95.
- Hamilton, Lee (1992) "A Democrat Looks at Foreign Policy", Foreign Affairs, Vol. 71, No. 3, Summer, pp. 32-51.
- Hartshorn, J.E. (1996) *Oil Trade: Policies and Prospects* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- Hawkins, Derek (2001) "Democratisation Theory and Nontransitions: Insights from Cuba", Comparative Politics, Vol. 34, No. 4, July.
- Haynes, Jeffrey (2001) "Transnational Religious Actors and International Politics", Third World Quarterly, Vol. 22, No. 2, pp. 143-158.
- Haynes, Jeffrey (2003) "Comparative Politics and 'Globalisation'", European Political Science, Vol. 2, No. 3, Summer, pp. 17-26.
- Henry, Clement and Robert Springborg (2001) *Globalisation and the Politics of Development in the Middle East* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- Herb, Michael (2002) "Does Rentierism Prevent Democracy?", Paper presented at the 2002 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, August-September, pp. 1-36. (Cited with author's permission).
- Hibbard, Scott and David Little (1997) *Islamic Activism and US Foreign Policy* (Washington DC: United States Institute of Peace Press).
- Hidouci, Ghazi (1995) *Algérie: la Libération Inachevée* (Paris: Editions La Découverte).
- Hitchens, Christopher (2002) *The Trial of Henry Kissinger* (London: Verso Books).
- Holm, Ulla (1998) "Algeria: France's Untenable Engagement", Mediterranean Politics, Vol. 3, No. 2, Autumn, pp. 104-114.
- Hudson, Michael (1988) "Democratisation and the Problem of Legitimacy in Middle East Politics", Middle East Association Bulletin, Vol. 22, No. 2, December, pp. 157-171.
- Hudson, Michael (1991) "After the Gulf War: Prospects for Democratisation in the Arab World", Middle East Journal, Vol. 45, No. 3, Summer, pp. 407-426.
- Hudson, Michael (1995) "Arab Regimes and Democratization: Responses to the Challenge of Political Islam" in Laura Guazzone (ed.) *The Islamist Dilemma. The Political Role of Islamist Movements in the Contemporary Arab World* (Reading: Ithaca Press).

Huntington, Samuel (1984) "Will More Countries Become Democratic?", Political Science Quarterly, Vol. 99, No. 2, Summer, pp. 193-218.

Huntington, Samuel (1991) *The Third Wave. Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press).

Huntington, Samuel (1991/1992) "How Countries Democratise", Political Science Quarterly, Vol. 106, No. 4, pp. 579-615.

Huntington, Samuel (1993) "The Clash of Civilisations?", Foreign Affairs, Vol. 72, Summer, pp. 22-49.

Hurrell, Andrew (1996) "The International Dimensions of Democratization in Latin America: the Case of Brazil" in Laurence Whitehead (ed.) *The International Dimensions of Democratization* (New York: Oxford University Press).

Imle, John Jr. (1999) "Multinationals and the New World of Energy Development: a Corporate Perspective", Journal of International Affairs, Vol. 53, No. 1, Fall, pp. 263-280.

Impagliazzo, Marco and Mario Giro (1997) *Algeria in Ostaggio. Tra esercito e fondamentalismo, storia di una pace difficile* (Milano: Ed. Guerini e Associati).

Jacobsen, John Kurt (1996) "Are All Politics Domestic? Perspectives on the Integration of Comparative Politics and International Relations Theory", Comparative Politics, Vol. 29, No. 1, October, pp. 93-115.

Jervis, Robert (2002) "Theories of War in an Era of Leading Power Peace", American Political Science Review, Vol. 96, No. 1, March.

Joffé, George (1994) "The European Union and the Maghreb", in Richard Gillespie (ed.) *Mediterranean Politics* (London: Pinter).

Joffé, George (2002) "The Role of Violence within the Algerian Economy", The Journal of North African Studies, Vol. 7, No. 1.

Kalyvas, Stathis (2000) "Commitment Problems in Emerging Democracies. The Case of Religious Parties", Comparative Politics, Vol. 32, No. 2, January, p. 379-398.

Kamrava, Meharan (1998) "Frozen Political Liberalisation in Jordan: the Consequences for Democracy", Democratization, Vol. 5, No. 1, Spring, pp. 138-157.

Kamrava, Meharan (1998) "Non-Democratic States and Political Liberalisation in the Middle East: a Structural Analysis", Third World Quarterly, Vol. 19, No. 1, pp. 63-85.

Karam, Azza (1997) "Islamist Parties in the Arab World: Ambiguities, Contradictions and Perseverance", Democratization, Vol. 4, No. 4, Winter, pp. 157-174.

Karam, Azza (2004) "Transnational Political Islam and the USA: an Introduction" in Azza Karam (ed.) *Transnational Political Islam. Religion, Ideology and Power* (London: Pluto Press).

Karl, Terry Lynn (1990) "Dilemmas of Democratisation in Latin America", Comparative Politics, Vol. 23, No. 1, October, pp. 1-21.

Karsh, Efraim (1997) "Cold War, post-Cold War: Does it Make a Difference for the Middle East?", Review of International Studies, Vol. 23, No. 2, pp. 271-291.

Keohane, Robert and Joseph Nye Jr. (1977) *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition* (Boston: Little and Brown).

Kepel, Gilles (1997) *Allah in the West* (London: Polity Press).

Kepel, Gilles (2000) *Jihad: Ascesa e Declino* (Roma: Edizioni Carrocci).

Kepel, Gilles (2003) *Bad Moon Rising. A Chronicle of the Middle East Today* (London: Saqi Books).

Khennas, Ismail and Mustapha Mekideche (1995) "Les Hydrocarbures en Algérie: Politiques Internes et Rapports Avec le Marché Mondial" in Martine Verlet (ed.) *Coopère Avec l'Algérie: Convergences et Solidarités* (Paris: Publisud).

King, Gary, Robert Keohane and Sidney Verba (1994) *Designing Social Inquiry. Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).

King, Russell (1998) "The Mediterranean: Europe's Rio Grande", in Malcom Anderson and Eberhard Bort (eds.) *The Frontiers of Europe* (London: Pinter).

Kohli, Atu (1986) "Introduction" in Atu Kohli (ed.) *The State and Development in the Third World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).

Kopecky, Petr and Cas Mudde (2000) "What has Eastern Europe taught us about the democratisation literature (and vice versa)", European Journal of Political Research, Vol. 37, No. 4, June, pp. 517-539.

Labat, Séverine (1995) *Les Islamistes Algériens. Entre les Urnes et les Maquis* (Paris: Editions du Seuil).

Laipton, Ellen (2002) "The Middle East's Demographic Transition: What Does It Mean?", Journal of International Affairs, Vol. 56, No. 1, Fall.

Laitin, David (2003) "The Perestroika Challenge to Social Science", Politics & Society, Vol. 31, No. 1, March, pp. 163-184.

Lamchichi, Abderrahim (1991) *L'Algérie en Crise* (Paris: L'Harmattan).

Lamchichi, Abderrahim (1997) *Le Maghreb Face à l'Islamisme* (Paris: L'Harmattan).

Laver, Michael (2002), "Is Political Science Science? And If Not, Should It Be?", Research Notes, Seminar held at Trinity College Dublin, October 4th.

Layachi, Azzedine (1994) "Algerian Crisis, Western Choices", Middle East Quarterly, Vol. 1, No. 3, September. Freely available on line at <http://www.meforum.org/meq/issues>

Layachi, Azzedine (2000) "Reform and the Politics of Inclusion in the Maghrib", Journal of North African Studies, Vol. 5, No. 3, Autumn, pp. 15-42.

Leca, Jean (1998) "Paradoxes de la Démocratisation. L'Algérie au Chevet de la Science Politique", Pouvoirs, No. 86, pp. 7-28.

Lesser, Ian (1996) "Southern Europe and the Maghreb: US Interests and Policy Perspectives", Mediterranean Politics, Vol. 1, No. 2, Autumn, pp. 231-242.

Leveau, Rémy (1994) "Algérie. Les Pièges de l'Aide Internationale", Politique Internationale, No. 24, pp. 171-192.

Leveau, Rémy (1994) "Crise des Etats et Transitions Incertaines" in Raymond Benhaim, Youssef Corbage and Rémy Leveau (eds.) *Le Maghreb en Suspens* (Paris: Les Cahiers du CERI, No. 8).

Leveau, Rémy (1995) "Des Crises à la Guerre" in Rémy Leveau (ed.) *L'Algérie dans la Guerre* (Bruxelles: Editions Complexe).

Leveau, Rémy (1998) "Acteurs et Champs de Force", Pouvoir, No. 86, Troisième Trimestre, September.

Leverrier, Ignace (1993) "Le Front Islamique du Salut Entre la Hâte et la Patience" in Gilles Kepel (ed.) *Les Politiques de Dieu* (Paris: Editions du Seuil).

Levy, Jack (1989) "Domestic Politics and War" in Robert Rotberg and Theodore Rabb (eds.) *The Origins and Prevention of Major Wars* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

Lewis, Bernard (1990) "The Roots of Muslim Rage", The Atlantic Monthly, February (available on line at <http://www.theatlantic.com/issues/90sep/rage.htm>).

Lewis, Bernard (2001) "Revolt of Islam", The New Yorker, November 19th, pp. 50-63.

Lewis, Bernard (2002) *What Went Wrong? Western Impact and Middle Eastern Responses* (London: Phoenix Press).

Limbert, John and Mark Gasiorowski (2002) "Islamic Republic of Iran" in David Long and Bernard Reich (eds.) *The Government and Politics of the Middle East and North Africa* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press).

Lipset, Seymour Martin (1959) "Some Social Requisites of Democracy", American Political Science Review, Vol. 53, March, pp. 69-105.

Lipset, Seymour Martin (1983) *Political Man. The Social Bases of Politics* (London: Heinemann).

Lipset, Seymour Martin (1994), "The Social Requisites of Democracy Revisited", American Sociological Review, Vol. 59, No. 1, February, pp. 1-22.

Little, Daniel (1991) *Varieties of Social Explanation. An Introduction to the Philosophy of Social Science* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press).

Londregan, John and Keith Poole (1996) "Does High Income Promote Democracy?", World Politics, Vol. 49, No. 1, October, pp. 1-30.

Luciani, Giacomo (1994) "The Oil Rent, Fiscal Crisis of the State and Democratization" in Ghassan Salamé (ed.) *Democracy Without Democrats? The Renewal of Politics in the Muslim World* (London: I.B. Tauris).

Maddy-Weitzman, Bruce (2003), "Islamism, Moroccan-Style: The Ideas of Sheikh Yassine", Middle East Quarterly, Vol. 10, No. 1, Winter. Freely available at <http://www.meforum.org/pf.php?id=519>.

Mainwaring, Scott (1992) "Transitions to Democracy and Democratic Consolidation: Theoretical and Comparative Issues" in Scott Mainwaring, Guillermo O'Donnell and Samuel Valenzuela (eds.) *Issues in Democratic Consolidation* (Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press).

Makram-Ebeid, Mona (1989) "Political Opposition in Egypt: Democratic Myth or Reality?", Middle East Journal, Vol. 43, No. 3, Summer, pp. 423-436.

Malley, Robert (1996) *The Call from Algeria. Third Worldism, Revolution and the Turn of the Century* (Los Angeles: University of California Press).

Malti, Djallal (1999) *La Nouvelle Guerre d'Algérie* (Paris: la Découverte).

Maniruzzaman, Talukder (1992) "Arms transfers, Military Coups, and Military Rule in Developing States", Journal of Conflict Resolution, Vol. 36, No. 4, December, pp. 733-755.

Martinez, Luis (1998) *La Guerre Civile en Algérie* (Paris: Editions Khartala).

Mayall, James (2000) "Democracy and International Society", International Affairs, Vol. 76, No. 1, January, pp. 61-75.

McLean, Ian (1994) "Democratisation and Economic Liberalisation: Which is the Chicken and Which is the Egg?", Democratization, Vol. 1, No. 1, Spring, p. 27-40

Menon, Anand (1995) "Explaining Defence Policy: the Mitterrand Years", Review of International Affairs, Vol. 21, No. 3, July, pp. 279-299.

Miller, Judith (1993) "The Challenge of Radical Islam", Foreign Affairs, Vol. 72, No. 3, Spring, pp. 43-56.

Milner, Helen and Robert Keohane (1996) "Internationalisation and Domestic Politics: an Introduction" in Robert Keohane and Helen Milner (eds.) *Internationalisation and Domestic Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

Milton-Edwards, Beverley (1996), *Islamic Politics in Palestine* (London: I.B. Tauris).

Moravcsik, Andrew (1997) "Taking Preferences Seriously: a Liberal Theory of International Politics", International Organization, Vol. 51, No. 4.

Morisse-Schlibach, Melanie (1999) *L'Europe et la Question Algérienne* (Paris: PUF, 1999).

Mortimer, Robert (1991) "Islam and Multiparty Politics in Algeria", Middle East Journal, Vol. 45, No. 4, Autumn.

Mortimer, Robert (1995) "Les Etats-Unis face à la Situation Algérienne", Maghreb-Machrek, No. 149, July-September, pp. 3-22.

Mortimer, Robert (1996) "Islamists, Soldiers and Democrats: the Second Algerian War", Middle East Journal, Vol. 50, No. 1, Winter.

- Moss, Todd (1995) "US Policy and Democratisation in Africa: the Limits of Liberal Universalism", Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 33, No. 2, pp. 189-209.
- Moussali, Ahmad (1998) "Introduction" in Ahmad Moussali (ed.) *Islamic Fundamentalism. Myths and Realities* (Reading: Ithaca Press).
- Moutadayene, Abdellatif (2001) "Economic Crisis and Democratisation in Morocco", Journal of North African Studies, Vol. 6, No. 3, Autumn, pp. 70-82.
- Nafa, Hasan (1992) "Le Nouvel Ordre International et l'Avenir de la Démocratie dans le Monde Arabe", in *Dossiers du CEDEJ. Démocratie et Démocratisation dans le Monde Arabe* (Cairo: CEDEJ Press).
- Nair, Sami (1992) *Le Différend Méditerranéen* (Paris: Editions Kimé).
- Najem, Tom (2001) "Privatisation and the State in Morocco: Nominal Objectives and Problematic Realities", Mediterranean Politics, Vol. 6, No. 2, Summer, pp. 51-67.
- Neumann, Robert (1995) "Conventional Arms Exports and Stability in the Middle East", Journal of International Affairs, Vol. 49, No. 1, Summer, pp. 183-203.
- Nezzar, Khaled (1999) *Memoires du Général* (Alger: Chihab Editions).
- Nicholson-Crotty, Sean and Kenneth Meier (2002) "Size Doesn't Matter: In Defence of Single-State Studies", State Politics and Policy Quarterly, Vol. 2, No. 4, Winter, pp. 411-422.
- Nonneman, Gerd (2001) "Rentiers and Autocrats, Monarchs and Democrats, State and Society: the Middle East Between Globalisation, 'Human agency', and Europe", International Affairs, Vol. 77, No. 1, January, pp. 141-162.
- Nye, Joseph Jr. (2002/2003) "Limits of American Power", Political Science Quarterly, Vol. 117, No. 4, pp. 545-559.
- O'Donnell, Guillermo and Philippe Schmitter (1986) *Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies* (Baltimore: the Johns Hopkins University Press).
- Okruhlik, Gwenn (1999) "Rentier Wealth, Unruly Law, and the Rise of Opposition", Comparative Politics, Vol. 31, No. 3, April., pp. 295-315.
- Opello, Walter Jr. (1991) "Portugal: a Case Study of International Determinants of Regime Transition" in Geoffrey Pridham (ed.) *Encouraging Democracy. The International Context of Regime Transition n Southern Europe* (Leicester: Leicester University Press).
- Parenti, Christian (2002) "America's Jihad: a History of Origins" in Phil Scraton (ed.) *Beyond September 11* (London: Pluto Press).
- Parrott, Bruce (1997) "Perspectives on Post-Communist Democratisation" in Karen Dawisha and Bruce Parrott (eds.) *Politics, Power, and the Struggle for Democracy in South-East Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- Pellegrini, Charles (1992) *Le Fis en France. Mythe ou Réalité* (Paris, Editions 1).

Péroncel-Hugoz, Jean-Pierre (1990) "Les Islamistes sur la Route du Pouvoir", Politique Internationale, No. 49, Autumn, pp. 125-137.

Perthes, Volker (1994) "Stages of Economic and Political Liberalisation" in Eberhard Kienle (ed.) *Contemporary Syria. Liberalisation between Cold War and Cold Peace*, (London: British Academic Press) pp. 44-71.

Petras, James and Morris Morley (1974) *How Allende Fell* (Nottingham: Spokesman).

Petras, James and Morris Morley (2000) "Contesting Hegemons: US-French Relations in the 'New World Order'", Review of International Studies, Vol. 26, No. 1, January, pp. 49-67.

Phillips, James (1995) "The Rising Threat of Revolutionary Islam in Algeria", Backgrounder, Washington DC, The Heritage Foundation, November.

Pinkney, Robert (2003) *Democracy in the Third World* (London: Lynne Rienner).

Pinto-Duschinsky, Michael (1991) "Foreign Political Aid: the German Political Foundations and the US Counterparts", International Affairs, Vol. 67, No. 1, pp. 33-63.

Pipes, Daniel (1981) *Slave, Soldiers and Islam: the Genesis of a Military System* (New Haven: Yale University Press).

Pipes, Daniel and Patrick Clawson (1996) "Anwar Haddam: An Islamist Vision for Algeria", The Middle East Quarterly, Vol. 3, No. 3, September. Freely available at <http://www.meforum.org/meq/issues>

Piscatori, James (1991) "Religion and Realpolitik: Islamic Responses to the Gulf War" in James Piscatori (ed.) *Islamic Fundamentalisms and the Gulf Crisis*, (Chicago: The American Academy of Arts and Sciences).

Pollack, Detlef (2002) "Mass Pressures, Elite Responses - Roots of Democratization: the Case of the GDR", Communist and Post-Communist Studies, Vol. 35, pp. 305-324.

Pridham, Geoffrey (1991) "International Influences and Democratic Theory: Problems of Theory and Practice in Linkage Politics" in Geoffrey Pridham (ed.) *Encouraging Democracy. The International Context of Regime Transition in Southern Europe* (Leicester: Leicester University Press).

Pridham, Geoffrey (1995) "Democratic Transition and the International Environment" in Geoffrey Pridham (ed.) *Transitions to Democracy* (Aldershot: Dartmouth).

Pridham, Geoffrey (1997) "The International Dimension of Democratisation: Theory, Practice and Inter-Regional Comparisons" in Geoffrey Pridham, Eric Herring and George Sandford (eds.) *Building Democracy? The International Dimension of Democratisation in Eastern Europe* (London: Leicester University Press).

Provost, Lucille (1996) *La Seconde Guerre d'Algérie. Le Quiproquo Franco-Algérien* (France: Flammarion).

Przeworski, Adam and Fernando Limongi (1997) "Modernisation. Theory and Facts", World Politics, Vol. 49, No. 2, January, pp. 155-183.

Quandt, William (1989) "The Superpowers and the Middle East Crises", Middle East Studies Association, Vol. 23, No. 1, pp. 1-8.

Quandt, William (1998) *Between Ballots and Bullets* (Washington DC: Brookings Institute Press).

Quandt, William (1998) "Algeria: How Pivotal Is It? And Why?" in Robert Chase, Emily Hill and Paul Kennedy (eds.) *The Pivotal States: A New Framework for US Policy in the Developing World* (New York: Norton).

Ram, Haggay (1997) "Exporting Iran's Islamic Revolution: Steering a Path Between Pan-Islam and Nationalism" in Bruce Maddy-Weitzman and Efraim Inbar (eds.) *Religious Radicalism in the greater Middle East* (London: Frank Cass).

Rashid, Ahmed (1999) "The Taliban: Exporting Extremism", Foreign Affairs, Vol. 78, No. 6, November/December, pp. 25-35.

Remmer, Karen (1986) "The Politics of Economic Stabilisation. IMF Programs in Latin America, 1954-1984", Comparative Politics, Vol. 19, No. 1, October, pp. 1-44.

Remmer, Karen (1991) "New Wine or Old Bottlenecks? The Study of Latin American Democracy", Comparative Politics, Vol. 23, No. 4, July, pp. 479-495.

Rich, Paul (1998) "The Algerian Crisis and the Failure of International Mediation", Cambridge Review of International Affairs, Vol. 11, No. 2, Spring, pp. 134-151.

Roberts, Hugh (1988) "Radical Islamism and the Dilemma of Algerian Nationalists: the Embattled Arians of Algiers", Third World Quarterly, Vol. 10, No. 2, April, pp. 556-589.

Roberts, Hugh (1991) "A Trial of Strength: Algerian Islamism" in James Piscatori (ed.) *Islamic Fundamentalisms and the Gulf Crisis*, (Chicago: The American Academy of arts and Sciences).

Roberts, Hugh (1994) "Doctrinaire Economics and Political Opportunism in the Strategy of Algerian Islamism", in John Reudy (ed.) *Islamism and Secularism in North Africa*, (New York: St. Martin's Press).

Roberts, Hugh (1995) "Algeria's Ruinous Impasse and the Honourable Way Out", International Affairs, Vol. 71, No. 2, pp. 247-267.

Roberts, Hugh (1998) "The International Gallery and the Extravasation of Factional Conflict in Algeria", Cambridge Review of International Affairs, Vol. 12, No. 1, Summer/Fall, pp. 209-246.

Roberts, Hugh (2002), "Dancing in the Dark: The European Union and the Algerian Drama", Democratization, Vol. 9, No. 1, Spring, pp. 106-134.

Romeo, Isabel (1998) "The European Union and North Africa: Keeping the Mediterranean 'Safe' for Europe", Mediterranean Politics, Vol. 3, No. 2, Autumn, pp. 21-38.

Romero, Federico and Renzo Guolo (2003) *America/Islam. E Adesso?* (Roma: Donzelli Edizioni).

- Rose, Gideon (1998) "Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy", World Politics, Vol. 51, No. 3, October, pp. 144-172.
- Roy, Olivier (1991) "Les Mouvements Islamistes à l'Epreuve de la Guerre du Golfe", Revue du Monde Musulman et de la Méditerranée, Numéro Spécial 'Crise du Golfe', Printemps, pp. 71-74.
- Roy, Olivier (1992) *L'Echec de l'Islam Politique* (Paris: Editions du Seuil).
- Rowlands, Ian (2001) "Transnational Corporations and Global Environmental Politics" in Daphne Josselin and William Wallace (eds.) *Non-State Actors in World Politics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave).
- Ruf, Werner (1997) "The Flight of Rent: The Rise and Fall of a National Economy", Journal of North African Studies, Vol. 2, No. 1, Summer, pp. 1-15.
- Russett, Bruce (1993) *Grasping the Democratic Peace: Principles for Post Cold War World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).
- Rustow, Dankwart (1970) "Transitions to Democracy: Towards a Dynamic Model", Comparative Politics, Vol. 2, No. 3, April, pp. 337-363.
- Sadiki, Larbi (1997) "Towards Arab Liberal Governance: from the Democracy of Bread to the Democracy of the Vote", Third World Quarterly Vol. 18, No. 1, pp. 127-148.
- Sadiki, Larbi (2000) "Popular Uprisings and Arab Democratization", International Journal of Middle East Studies, Vol. 32, No. 1, pp. 71-95.
- Sadiki, Larbi (2002) "Political Liberalisation in Bin Ali's Tunisia: Façade Democracy", Democratization, Vol. 9, No. 4, Winter, pp. 122-141.
- Sadiki, Larbi (2002) "The Search for Citizenship in Bin Ali's Tunisia: Democracy Versus Unity", Political Studies, Vol. 50, No. 2, pp. 497-513.
- Sadiki, Larbi (2002) "One 'Islam', Many 'Islams': Understanding the Arab-Islamic Perspective on 11 September in a Globalising World", Irish Studies in International Affairs, Vol. 13, pp. 43-60.
- Sakwa, Richard (1999) "Introduction. The Democratic Experience" in Richard Sakwa (ed.) *The Experience of Democratisation in Eastern Europe* (London: Macmillan Press).
- Salah Tah, Mohand (1992) "The Arduous Democratisation Process in Algeria", The Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 30, No. 3.
- Salamé, Ghassan (1994) "Introduction: Where are the Democrats?" in Ghassan Salamé (ed.) *Democracy Without Democrats? The Renewal of Politics in the Muslim World* (London: I.B. Tauris).
- Salla, Michael (1997) "Political Islam and the West: a New Cold War or Convergence?", Third World Quarterly, Vol. 18, No. 4, pp. 729-742.
- Schlumberger, Oliver (2000), "The Arab Middle East and the Question of Democratization: Some Critical Remarks", Democratization, Vol. 7, No. 4, Winter, pp. 104-132.

Schmitter, Philippe (1986) "An Introduction to Southern European transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Italy, Greece, Portugal, Spain and Turkey" in Guillermo O'Donnell, Philippe Schmitter and Laurence Whitehead (eds.) *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Southern Europe* (Baltimore: the Johns Hopkins University Press).

Schmitter, Philippe and Terry Lynn Karl (1991) "What Democracy Is...and Is Not", *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 2, pp. 75-88.

Schmitter, Philippe (1996), "The Influence of the International Context Upon the Choice of National Institutions and Policies in Neo-Democracies" in Laurence Whitehead (ed.) *The International Dimensions of Democratization* (New York: Oxford University Press).

Schumpeter, Joseph (1954) *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (London: Allen and Unwin).

Scott, Bruce (2001) "The Great Divide in the Global Village", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 80, No. 1, pp. 160-177.

Seddon, David (1991) "Politics and the Gulf War Crisis: Government and Popular Responses in the Maghreb" in Haim Bresheeth and Nira Yuval-Davis (eds.) *The Gulf War and the New World Order* (London: Zed Books).

Seddon, David (1999) "Unequal Partnership: Europe, the Maghreb and the New Regionalism" in Jean Grugel and Wil Hout (eds.) *Regionalism Across the North-South Divide. State Strategies and Globalisation* (London: Routledge).

Segal, George (1991) "International Relations and Democratic Transition" in Geoffrey Pridham (ed.) *Encouraging Democracy. The International Context of Regime Transition in Southern Europe* (Leicester: Leicester University Press).

Sereni, Jean Pierre (1992) "L'Algérie, le FMI et le FIS", *Les Cahiers de l'Orient*, No. 25-26, Premier et Deuxième Semestre.

Shahin, Emad Eldin (1997) *Political Ascent. Contemporary Islamic Movements in North Africa* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press).

Shambayati, Hootan (1994) "The Rentier State, Interest Groups and the Paradox of Autonomy", *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 28, No. 2, April, pp. 307-331.

Sheetz, Mark (1997/1998) "Debating the Unipolar Moment", *International Security*, Vol. 24, pp. 168-172.

Shin, Doh Chull (1994) "On the Third Wave of Democratization. A Synthesis and Evaluation of Recent Theory and Research", *World Politics*, Vol. 47, No. 1, October, pp. 135-170.

Shirley, Edward (1995) "Is Iran's Present Algeria's Future?", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 74, No. 3, May-June.

Sid Ahmed, Abdelkader (1995) *Un Projet pour l'Algérie: Elements pour un Réel Partenariat Euro-Méditerranéen* (Paris: Publisud).

Sislin, John (1994) "Arms as Influence. The Determinants of Successful Influence", *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 38, No. 4, December, pp. 665-689.

- Slisli, Fouzi (2001) "The Western Media and the Algerian Crisis", *Race & Class*, Vol. 41, No. 3, pp. 43-57.
- Sorensen, George (1993) *Democracy and Democratization* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press).
- Sorkin, Jerry (2001) "The Tunisian Model", *Middle East Quarterly*, Vol. 8, No. 4. Freely available at <http://www.meforum.org/article/107>
- Souaidia, Habib (2001) *La Sale Guerre. Témoignage d'un Ancien Officier des Forces Spéciales de l'Armée Algérienne, 1992-2000* (Paris: Editions la Découverte).
- Soudan, Francois (1989) "Algérie. Adieu au socialisme", *La Jeune Afrique*, No. 1469, 1st March.
- Soudan, Francois and Samir Gharbi (1991) "Interview: Saddam Hussein, les hypocrites et nous", *La Jeune Afrique*, No. 1572, 13th/19th February.
- Soudan, Francois and Samir Gharbi (1991) "Les Islamistes, Victimes de la Guerre", *La Jeune Afrique*, No. 1578, 27th March/2nd April.
- Soudan, Francois (1991) "Mitterand contre les Islamistes", *La Jeune Afrique*, No. 1594, 17th/23rd July.
- Spencer, Claire (1996) "Islamism and European Reactions: the Case of Algeria", in Richard Gillespie (ed.) *Mediterranean Politics Vol. 2* (London: Pinter).
- Sreberny-Mohammadi, Annabelle (1998) "The Media and Democratization in the Middle East: the Strange Case of Television", *Democratization*, Vol. 5, No. 2, Summer, pp. 179-199.
- Stiglitz, Josph (2002) *Globalisation and Its Discontents* (London: Penguin Books).
- Stone, Martin (1997) *The Agony of Algeria* (London: Hurst and Company).
- Stora, Benjamin (1990), "Algérie. Huit Clés pour comprendre", *La Jeune Afrique*, No. 1539, 27th June/3rd July.
- Stora, Benjamin (2001) *La Guerre Invisible. Algérie, Années 90* (Paris: Presse de Sciences Po).
- Strange, Susan (1992) "States, Firms and Diplomacy", *International Affairs*, Vol. 68, No. 1, pp. 1-15.
- Szulc, Tad (1975/1976) "Lisbon and Washington: Behind the Portuguese Revolution", *Foreign Policy*, Vol. 21, Winter, pp. 3-62.
- Tehami, Amine (1999) "Partisan Islamists in Algeria: a Case of - and for- Malleable Identities", *The Journal of North African Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 1, pp. 102-127.
- Testas, Abdelaziz (2002) "Political Repression, Democratization and Civil Conflict in Post-Independence Algeria", *Democratization*, Vol. 9, No. 4, Winter, pp. 106-121.
- Thomas, Caroline (2001) "Poverty, Development and Hunger" in John Baylis and Steve Smith (eds.) *The Globalisation of World Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).

- Tibi, Bassam (2000) "Post-Bipolar Order in Crisis: the Challenge of Politicised Islam", Millenium: Journal of International Studies, Vol. 29, No. 3, pp. 843-859.
- Tlemcani, Rachid (1990) "Chadli's Perestroika", Middle East Report, No. 163, pp. 14-18.
- Tovias, Alfred (1984) "The International Context of Democratic Transition", West European Politics, Vol. 7, pp. 158-171.
- Utley, Rachel (2002) "Not to do less but to do better'. French Military Policy in Africa", International Affairs, Vol. 78, No. 1, January.
- Valenzuela, Samuel (1992) "Democratic Consolidation in Post-Transitional Settings: Notion, Process and Facilitating Conditions" in Scott Mainwaring, Guillermo O'Donnell and Samuel Valenzuela (eds.) *Issues in Democratic Consolidation* (Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press).
- Van der Pijl, Kees (1993) "Soviet Socialism and Passive Revolution" in Stephen Gill (ed.) *Gramsci, Historical Materialism and International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- Vanderwalle, Dirk (1991) "Qadhafi's 'Perestroika': Economic and Political Liberalisation in Libya", Middle East Journal, Vol. 45, No. 2, Spring, pp. 216-231.
- Viorst, Milton (1997) "Algeria's Long Night", Foreign Affairs, Vol. 76, No. 6, November/December, pp. 86-99.
- Volpi, Frédéric (2003) *Islam and Democracy. The Failure of Dialogue in Algeria* (London: Pluto Press).
- Wallerstein, Immanuel (1996) "The Inter-State Structure of the Modern World System" in Steve Smith, Ken Booth and Marysia Zalewski (eds.) *International Theory: Positivism and Beyond* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- Wallerstein, Immanuel (2002), "The Eagle Has Crash Landed", Foreign Policy, July/August, pp. 60-68.
- Walton, John and Charles Ragin (1990) "Global and National Sources of Political Unrest: Third World Responses to Debt Crisis", American Sociological Review, Vol. 55, No. 4, December, pp. 876-890.
- Walton, John and David Seddon (1994) *Free Markets and Food Riots. The Politics of Global Adjustment* (Oxford: Blackwell Press).
- Waltz, Kenneth (1979) *Theory of International Politics* (London: Addison-Wesley).
- Waltz, Susan (1991) "Making Waves: the Political Impact of Human Rights Groups in North Africa", Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 29, No. 2, pp. 481-504.
- Wendt, Alexander and Michael Barnett (1993) "Dependent state Formation and Third World Militarization", Review of International Affairs, Vol. 19, No. 3, July, pp. 321-347.
- Whitehead, Laurence (1986) "International aspects of Democratisation" in Guillermo O'Donnell, Philippe Schmitter and Laurence Whitehead (eds.) *Transitions from*

Authoritarian Rule: Comparative Perspectives (Baltimore: the Johns Hopkins University Press).

Whitehead, Laurence (1991) "Democracy by Convergence and Southern Europe: a Comparative Politics Perspective" in Geoffrey Pridham (ed.) *Encouraging Democracy. The International Context of Regime Transition in Southern Europe* (Leicester: Leicester University Press).

Whitehead, Laurence (1996) "Democracy by Convergence: Southern Europe" in Laurence Whitehead (ed.) *The International Dimensions of Democratization* (New York: Oxford University Press).

Whitehead, Laurence (1996) "The Imposition of Democracy: the Caribbean" in Laurence Whitehead (ed.) *The International Dimensions of Democratization* (New York: Oxford University Press).

Whitehead, Laurence (1996) "Three International Dimensions of Democratization" in Laurence Whitehead (ed.) *The International Dimensions of Democratization* (New York: Oxford University Press).

Whitehead, Laurence (2000) "Some Significant Recent Developments in the Field of Democratisation", Paper presented at the 18th World Congress of the International Political Science Association, Quebec City, Quebec, Canada, August.

Wohlforth, William (1998) "Revising Theories of International Politics in Response to the End of the Cold War", *World Politics*, Vol. 50, No. 4, July, pp. 650-680.

Wohlforth, William (1999) "The stability of a Unipolar World", *International Security*, Vol. 24, Summer, pp. 5-41.

Woods, Ngaire (2001) "IMF and World Bank: Questions of Accountability", *International Affairs*, Vol. 77, No. 1, January, pp. 83-100.

Wright, Robin (1992), "Islam, Democracy and the West", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 71, No. 3, Summer, pp. 131-145.

Wright, Robin (1996) "Two Visions of Reformism", *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 7, No. 2, April.

Wright, Robin (2000) *The Last Great Revolution. Turmoil and Transformation in Iran* (New York: Vintage Books).

Yachir, Faycal (1996) "Algérie: l'Ajustement Inachevé" in Samir Amin (ed.) *Le Maghreb: Enlèvement ou Nouveau Départ* (Paris: L'Harmattan).

Yilmaz, Hakan (2002) "External-Internal Linkages in Democratization: Developing an Open Model of Democratic Change", *Democratization*, Vol. 9, No. 2, Summer, pp. 67-84.

Yin, Robert (1994) *Case Study Research. Design and Methods* (London: Sage).

Zakaria, Fareed (1997) "The Rise of Illiberal Democracy", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 76, No. 6, November/December, pp. 22- 43.

Zartman, William (2001) "Islam, the State and Democracy: the Contradictions" in Charles Butterworth and William Zartman (eds.) *Between the State and Islam* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

Zéghidour, Slimane (1990) "Entretien avec Abassi Madani. Pour Une Nouvelle Legalité Islamique", *Politique Internationale*, No. 49, Automne, pp. 177-191.

Zoubir, Yahia (1995) "Stalled Democratization of an Authoritarian Regime: the Case of Algeria", *Democratization*, Vol. 2, No. 2, Summer, pp. 109-139.

Zoubir, Yahia and Youcef Bouandel (1998) "Islamism and the Algerian Political Crisis: International Responses", *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 11, No. 2, Spring, pp. 117-133.

Zoubir, Yahia (2002) "Algeria and US Interests: Containing Radical Islamism and Promoting Democracy", *Middle East Policy*, Vol. 9, No. 1, March, pp. 64-80.

Newspapers and Magazines

Le Monde

Libération

Le Figaro

Le Nouvel Observateur

Le Monde Diplomatique

La Jeune Afrique

L'Express

El Ribat

El Watan

The New York Times

The Washington Post

La Repubblica

L'Espresso