COMPATIBILITY BETWEEN DEMOCRACY, ISLAM
AND THE ARAB CULTURE

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(This document will constitute the first page of the Thesis)
Compatibility between Islam, the Arab culture and democracy is a topic I insisted to observe since people around me have been advocating their incompatibility. I have been intrigued to find the sources of these assumptions. That is why I have undertaken extensive researches that might allow me to find a possible answer to my question: is Islam and the Arab culture compatible or not with Democracy?

When I started studying the issue, it became clearer to me that politicians as well as intellectuals have the accountability of diffusing a certain belief within civil society. I have discovered that most of our beliefs and thoughts are opinionated and subjective, and no matter how strongly I believe in what I have in hands today, this will only be a moderate and objective attempt to explain my views.

The thesis of this research is refuting Orientalist views as well as public opinion claiming that Arab culture and Islam are incompatible with democracy. If it is not a matter of culture and religion, then how is it that Arab and/or Muslim countries have a low level of democracy?
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INTRODUCTION

Since 2005, the Middle East has become the center of interests of the international community which engendered unique opportunities for the region, ones that have been missing for a long time. In early 2005, prospects for democracy and peace were detected in Afghanistan, Iraq, Palestine, Lebanon, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia. Signs of autocratic regime decentralization were even spotted in Libya, Sudan, and Syria. However, are these prospects a simple facade of democracy, which will collapse into the familiar picture of a status-quo? Or are we witnessing a new and authentic wave of democracy? To answer that question, we must raise the issue of the compatibility between Arab countries, Islam, and democracy.

Five themes will be examined respectively in order to answer the very debatable question: are Arab/Islamic countries compatible with democracy? We will first approach the concept of democracy in regards with the idea of an Arab and/or Islamic “Exceptionalism”. In this section, we will concentrate on the Freedom House, an institution that measures democracy and advocates in its quantitative and qualitative analysis the thesis of the “Arab Exceptionalism”. Then, we will counter the latter theory focusing on the uniqueness of each Arab country while showing how Arabs, themselves, understand, imagine and view democracy. The third chapter will study the link between democratization and economic development. Through this section we will be able to answer two questions: Can we consider that economic development is a pre-condition to democratization? If yes, can we assert that economic under-development is a reason for the lack of democracy in Arab countries? In a fourth chapter, we will look into the correlation between religion and democracy, or more specifically between Islam and democracy. This section will define the aspects of globalised democracy and “globalised Islam” (Olivier Roy) while discussing the place and role of Islamists in the emerging political systems of the Arab world. In the fifth and last chapter we
will look closely into democratization and the electoral process by examining the Algerian example and analyzing local presidential and legislative elections.

Statement of thesis and Importance of Topic

My central thesis is to refute “Orientalists” views claiming that the Arab culture and Islam are incompatible with democracy. When explaining the lack of democracy in the majority of Arab countries, Orientalists advocate that there is something imimical to democracy in the Arab culture and Islam. From my point of view, the lack of democracy in the majority of Arab countries is not a matter of incompatibility between Arab culture, Islam (or rather interpretations of Islam) and democracy, especially that these three concepts have changed and evolved throughout history, similarly to the reasons behind the lack of democracy in the Arab region, which have also changed. Indeed, this study will uncover that economic under-development was and still is a reason for the lack of democracy in Arab countries. However, the recent emergence of Islamism worries the secular forces in the Arab region, who fear for democratic practices.

To explain my argument, I will proceed through five chapters: 1- democracy and the idea of an Arab and/or Islamic “Exceptionalism”; 2- the uniqueness of each Arab country; 3- the relation between democratization and economic development; 4- the correlation between religion and democracy, or more specifically between Islam and democracy; and, 5- democratization and elections, setting on the Algerian example.

Arab countries’ experience of democracy has always been the center of controversies. Indeed, the history, scope and rare successes of the democratization process in the Arab world - as only few countries have achieved and then failed to sustain democracy - make it
worthwhile writting this thesis, not only in an attempt to examine the reasons behind these failures but also because of the current debate about democracy and its relation to Islam and the Arab culture: on the one hand, we are witnessing and for the first time, a general Arab movement for democracy as Arabs claim to want democratic political regimes; on the other hand, the US government has declared its will to democratise the Arab region. Of course, many stakes are behind such a commitment and efforts, yet the USA wouldn’t have taken such a leap if they didn’t believe the Arab and Muslim world were capable of becoming democratic.

Methodology

Many intellectuals and researchers have previously tried to answer the question of compatibility between Islam, Arab countries and democracy. My thesis is another attempt in this direction. Throughout my study, I will be comparing what has been already said about democracy, Arab countries and Islam by different intellectuals, while taking examples from books, articles, newspapers, and institutions that measure democracy. My concern has been to study the subject from perspectives I believe are the most relevant in proving the compatibility between Arab and Muslim countries and democracy that is why I have chosen five themes to support my argument. In parallel, the dissertation will comprise five chapters, through which I will try to demonstrate that Arab and Muslim states are capable of being democratic, and vice versa, that democracy can exist and function in Arab states. Consequently, Chapter One will be devoted to explaining the concept of the Arab and Muslim Exceptionalism, advocated by Orientalists. In fact, I have chosen to start my thesis by examining this particular concept because the following chapters will aim to refute the Orientalist approach. That is why Chapter two will directly dispute the Arab Exceptionalism concept while explaining that every Arab country is unique. Chapter three dismisses the
prejudice that the lack of democracy in Arab states is a matter of culture. Instead it focuses on
the issue of economic development and its relation to democracy, in an attempt to find out a
possible correlation between Economic growth and prosperity on the one hand, and Arab and
Muslim countries on the other. As for Chapter four, it will be dedicated to inspect whether or
not Islam is a reason for the lack of democracy in the Arab world. Finally yet importantly,
Chapter five will be built around a case study on Algeria, which will shed more light on the
fact that Muslim countries are capable of democracy as I believe that the Algerian example
embodies the cultural, institutional, and national levels, the latter being crucial in
demonstrating my thesis.

What is Democracy?

Knowing that democracy hasn’t been factually established in the Arab region, but
more or less is in the process of being established, I would rather define the term
“democratization”.

There are many theories defining this concept. The one I have chosen is the notion of
“political pact”, which was revived by the “Transition from Authoritarian Rule” series1 using
Kirchheimer’s and Rustow’s insights2. In that the latter, a pact is defined as:

“An explicit, but not always publicly explicated or justified, agreement among a
select set of actors which seeks to define rules governing the exercise of power on the basis of
mutual guarantees for the ’vital interests’ of those entering into it.”3

According to Jean Leca in “Democracy without Democrats?”

“A ‘political pact’ is not a coalition organized to propose a definite ‘political supply’.
It sets rather the preconditions for different political supplies to be self-restrained and
compatible enough not to be considered by the other party, or parties, as an unacceptable
threat that would justify the breach of ‘democratic rules’. The meaning of ‘democratic rules’
usually takes on, prima facie, a legal-organizational dimension. (...) But it also has a
normative dimension, the core of which is pluralism. (...) The term ‘democratic rules’ also

1 O’Donnell, Schmitter & Whitehead, 1986, IV, p.37
2 Kirchheimer in 1969, and Rustow in 1970
has a power dimension: the sharing of power within the system, the emergence of different centres of power, and the accountability of power-holders to elected representatives and to public opinion.\textsuperscript{4}
CHAPTER I

DEMOCRACY AND THE IDEA OF AN ARAB AND/OR ISLAMIC EXCEPTIONALISM

Exceptionalism is a central theme of Orientalism. It is hard to study democracy in Arab and/or Muslim countries without understanding exceptionalism, discussing Orientalist views regarding the political behavior of Muslims and Arabs with respect to democracy, and considering the implications of quantitative analysis in comparative politics.

Understanding Exceptionalism: the break between the “West” and the “East”

The idea of exceptionalism comes from the writings of anthropologists about the break between the West and the East. According to them, this break exists since the year 600 as a result of “the rapid and unexpected advance of Islam.”5 Today, anthropologists differentiate the East from the West – or the Occident and the Orient - by drawing heavily on the concepts of culture and religion. Indeed, many people are currently wondering whether or not we are living “the Clash of Civilizations” as announced by Samuel Huntington. However, this concept is becoming further controversial as many Asian and non-Asian anthropologists are refuting it.

It would be only realistic to say that the West influences the East and inversely so. Douglas Little emphasizes on the representations of the East in American culture. He affirms that “Hollywood blockbusters such as The Sheik (1921), the Thief of Bagdad (1924), [...] reinforce popular stereotypes of the Arabs as a culturally backward, sexually depraved, and congenitally violent people.”6 Douglas also evokes the confrontation between Arab and Jew.

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and embodies this hostility by saying that since the founding of Israel in 1948 and up until the 1990’s, the US public and policymakers as well as the media giants, gradually see and represent “a Middle East in which Israel was cast as an occidental David while Arabs, and Muslims in general, were depicted as oriental Goliaths.”

From his end, Edward Said says that “the Orient was almost a European invention”, and that Europeans relate the Orient to the Middle East whereas Americans tend to associate the Orient with the Far East (China and Japan, mainly). Said adds that “the Orient is an integral part of European material civilization and culture.” In other words, Europe understands the Orient as the source of its civilizations and cultures. However, Americans haven’t colonized the Orient which makes it hard for them to understand the Middle East, as their civilization and culture haven’t been exposed to that of the Orient. With this lack of understanding, Said accuses the West of stereotyping the East. As a matter of fact, he also accuses Orientalism, the knowledge of Orient, of reducing the Orient to its essential traits. Indeed, he notes that anti-Semitism and Orientalism are very similar. He goes even further by claiming that Orientalists imply that Westerners are rational, peaceful, liberal, logical, capable of holding real values without natural suspicion, while Arab-Orientals have none of these attributes. Said criticizes Orientalists’ view of the Orient and wonders about the source of all these accusations.

Nevertheless, Sadik Jalal al-Azm accuses Said of being anti-scientific while Al Azm thinks that Said “deals with orientalism in the more restricted sense of a developing tradition of disciplined learning whose main function is to ‘scientifically research’ the Orient.”

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7 Ibid, p41.
9 Ibid, p2.
10 Ibid, pp 27,28.
also evokes the fact that Said tends to reduce the Occident to its essential traits, in the same way that he accuses the orientalists of essentialising the Orient.

From another end, Huntington’s view of the West and the East seems more debatable. His hypothesis is that the next pattern of conflict will not be economic or ideological but cultural. He believes in the Clash of civilizations and claims that the main clash over global politics will occur between groups affiliated with different civilisations. Huntington takes it further and says that the “fault lines between civilizations will be the battle lines of the future”. He evokes the “Civilization Identity” and claims that the world will be divided “among seven or eight major civilizations”. Thus, we can say that culture and identity are concepts that influence politics. At a certain point, Huntington states that today, the West is at its peak of power, and that in the past the elites in non-western countries were adopting western values. Now however, and maybe as a consequence of the superior attitude of the West, “a return to the roots phenomenon is occurring among non-Western civilizations”, even if Western (usually American) cultures have become more popular among the non-Western’s masses of people. We hear of returns towards “Asianization” in Japan, the end of the Nehru legacy and the ‘Hinduization’ of India, the failure of Western ideas of socialism and nationalism and hence ‘re-Islamization’ of the Middle East. Nevertheless, the return to ethnic values is not restricted to natives; in fact, many cultures have adopted and appreciated others’ ethnic heritage. For instance, nowadays, yoga is becoming a popular sport all over the world.

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14 Ibid.
15 Ibid, pp 3.4.
16 Ibid, p.5.
17 Ibid.
18 Ibid.
Huntington also emphasises on the Western superiority over the East, and agrees that "Western civilization is the Universal Civilization that fits all men"\textsuperscript{19}. Roy Mottahedeh is one Islamicist who disputes Huntington’s Clash of Civilizations. He doesn’t agree on Huntington’s idea of civilization that all Muslims, Arabs and non-Arabs, countries should behave in the same way and should have the same political culture in order to facilitate the relations between them and the West. He gives the examples of Pakistan, Bangladesh and Turkey which have been led by women prime ministers. He believes that Muslims countries do have “individual political cultures” and should keep it that way\textsuperscript{20}. In fact, democracy promotes tolerance, yet the West doesn’t tolerate and respect the East’s different cultures and evolution; this is one of the main problems Islamicists find with Huntington’s beliefs. Abul Kalam also disputes Huntington’s point of view, asserting that the dominant source of conflict is not cultural but economic. He notes:

“The most striking feature of the current global order is the change of the system itself into economic and trade orientation from the political-military pattern of the past decades, and it is this economic aspects which continue to govern state-to-state relations than ever before”\textsuperscript{21}.

We can easily agree with Kalam’s claim. Indeed, if we take the example of Iraq, It can be fairly said that the Iraqi War broke out for economic purposes. The politico-cultural pretext used by the United States announcing its will to abolish dictatorship and install democracy, is mainly a cover up for the US oil strategy.

Civilizations are not abstract entities. They are led by people’s ambitions and will to dominate. Furthermore, civilizations have always been interacting and influencing one another. The humanity has always been in conflict. The Clash of Civilizations is not a new phenomenon. It has always existed and engendered new eras. Today, rather than talking about

\textsuperscript{19} Ibid, p17.
\textsuperscript{20} Mottahedeh, Roy, « The Clash of Civilizations : An Islamicist’s Critique », p134, 2002
\textsuperscript{21} Kalam, Abul, “The Clash of Civilizations?: Asian responses”, chapter 3, p60.
the Clash of Civilizations, we should insist on the differences in the values’ perception. There are universal values that people fit to their context, which is why each should respect others’ evolution to avoid a conflict. The East and the West, the Orient and the Occident, will always be in the process of constructing themselves, politically, militarily, economically and culturally. There will always be changes, evolutions and declines. The intellectuals’ mission is to spread tolerance and above all objectivity throughout their texts so that maybe future leaders might deal with each other with more diplomacy. Who is objective and who is not? Who is able to analyse most objectively the political behavior of Muslims and Arabs with respect to democracy? Orientalists or Arabs themselves?

The political behaviour of Muslims and Arabs with respect to democracy: Orientalists views

Before examining the Orientalists’ views about the political behavior of Muslims and Arabs with respect to democracy, we have to shed a light on the issue of objectivity regarding culture, since culture and politics have always been related. How and what are the political uses of culture? Let’s give one example: every state uses a certain language to reinforce itself and keep its national harmony. As Michael Herzfeld states it clearly, there is a “cultural intimacy”. He claims that “like social actors who use ‘the law’ to legitimize self-interested actions, the state, conversely, uses a language of kin, family, and body to lend immediatly to its pronouncements”. In other words, individuals use the language of law, the state, conversely, uses iconography, the language of intimacy.

There are some problems related to the concept of culture, one of objectivity for instance. A question should be raised: how could an anthropologist stay objective when

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talking about his own culture? Lila Abu-Lughod focuses on this issue and on the “self/other relationship”. She says: “anthropologists, whose goal is ‘to make sense of differences’, also constitute their ‘selves’ in relation to an other, but do not view this other as ‘under attack’”.

She also indicates that “the relationship between the West and the non-West, at least since the birth of anthropology, has been constituted by Western domination”. This explains why many non-Western communities are shown as inferior and resistant to the Western communities. Abu-Lughod is convinced that one cannot be objective about one’s own society that is why she calls upon anthropologists to be more specific when they talk about culture. In fact, the lack of objectivity cultivates the lack of knowledge. The main consequence of these weaknesses is the difficulty for a community to understand another group which leads to different kinds of clashes.

In the end, referring to Orientalists or not is a matter of beliefs. If we decide to follow Abu-Lughod’s argument, then we must refer to Orientalists’ views when examining Arab culture and Islam. In parallel, if we stand for Said’s critique of Orientalism, and if we think that Arab Exceptionalism is an old stereotype, we should also study and understand Orientalists views to be able to refute them. One would think that the lack of objectivity exists anyhow. However, I believe that there is one way to stay objective: keeping ‘distance’ regarding a certain topic. This is how I will be trying to work throughout my thesis.

Adrian Karatnycky, president of Freedom House and general editor of Freedom in the World states that the 2001-2002 Freedom House Survey of Freedom “shows a dramatic gap between the levels of freedom and democracy in the Islamic countries – particularly in

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24 The Freedom House is an Institution that measures democracy.
25 The Freedom in the World survey provides an annual evaluation of the state of global freedom.
their Arabic core – and in the rest of the world". He says that Islamism and its extremist ideas represent a threat to the spread of political freedom in the Islamic world, and that the Islamic world - its Arabic core in particular - was not concerned by the third wave of democratization which started in the early 1970s. Karatnycky gives numbers as evidence of his assertions: as far as the democracy gap is concerned, of the 192 countries in the world in 2001-2002, 121 “are electoral democracies”. In Islamic majority’s countries, only 11 out of 47 have democratically elected governments, or 23%, whereas in the non-Islamic world, there are 110 electoral democracies out of 145 states, over 75%. There are no electoral democracies among the 16 Arabic states of the Middle East and North Africa. According to Karatnycky, the gap is even more dramatic when it comes to freedom:

“In countries in which there is an Islamic majority, there is just 1 Free country, Mali, while 18 are rated Partly Free and 28 are Not Free. By contrast, among the non-Islamic countries, 84 are Free, 41 are Partly Free, and 20 are Not Free” (in 2001-2002).

Karatnycky believes that the factors preventing democratization and freedom in the Muslim and Arabic world are as follows: economic under-development, the second-class status of women, the Islamic tradition in which the State must follow religion, the oil and natural gaz reserves ruled by elites, and the historical legacy that many of the Arabic States remain monarchies or authoritarian regimes which engender fundamentalism. Finally, he claims that while there is a clash between the Islamic world and its Middle Eastern core, there is also a conflict between the non-democratic Islamic/Arabic world and the rest of the world.

Karatnycky has proved with numbers that there is a democracy gap, a clash, a disparity

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27 Ibid
28 The freedom House assigns the designation “electoral democracy” to countries that have met certain minimum standards. The presence of certain irregularities during the electoral process does not disqualify a country from being designated an electoral democracy.
30 Ibid
31 Ibid
32 Ibid
between Western cultures and Islamic/Arabic ones. However, if we further examine the issue, and conduct a comparative study combining the cultural norms and institutions of both cultures, would we still be using the words “gap”, “clash”, and “disparity”?

Alfred Stepan and Graeme B. Robertson are intellectuals who advocate the idea of Arab Exceptionalism. They analyse the democracy gap in the 16 Arab countries (all of which have predominantly Muslim populations) and compare it to the world’s 31 Muslim majority but non-Arab countries\textsuperscript{33}. Their findings show that the non-Arab countries with Muslim majorities are “overachievers” (achieving significant political rights relatively to the level of Gross Domestic Product per Capita) when it comes to the holding of competitive elections, while the Muslim-majority countries, which are predominantly Arab, are “electoral underachievers” despite a higher level of GDPpc\textsuperscript{34}. Their results also show a gap in “electoral competitiveness”\textsuperscript{35} when one divides the world’s 47 Muslim-Majority countries into those which have Arab majorities and those which do not, and their conclusions indicate that “the non-Arab Muslim world has been, for the last thirty years, much more electorally competitive than the Arab Muslim world”\textsuperscript{36}. Stepan and Robertson believe that Arabs have increasingly become a distinctive political community. According to them, Arab States are geographically and culturally homogeneous, this is why they are also politically identical. The 16 Arab States form the Arab League. However, do they all agree politically and can we really speak of an Arab community?

\footnotesize
\begin{itemize}
  \item\textsuperscript{34} Ibid
  \item\textsuperscript{35} Electoral competitiveness is present if 1) the government springs for reasonably fair elections; 2) the elected government- and not some other power center –is able to fill the most important political offices
  \item\textsuperscript{36} Ibid
\end{itemize}
From their end, Daniel Brumberg and Larry Diamond inspect the level of democracy in the non-Arab Muslim World and in the Arab world\textsuperscript{37}. They shed light on the fact that “the presence of large Muslim majorities in most Middle Eastern states is not, statistically, a persuasive explanation” why Islam is incompatible with democracy: of the 43 countries in the world with a Muslim majority, 27 are outside the Arab world including seven democracies\textsuperscript{38}. Yet, is there a persuasive explanation why Islam is incompatible with democracy? And, is there a persuasive explanation why democracy is inimical to Arab culture? Like Stepan and Robertson, Brumberg and Diamond assert that, examining “the level of democracy in the non-Arab Muslim world in relation to the level of economic development”, shows “an unusual number of ‘great electoral overachievers’ (...) despite falling below the level of economic development that is usually thought necessary to sustain democracy”\textsuperscript{39}. Brumberg and Diamond dispute the assumption that Islam represents an obstacle to democracy\textsuperscript{40}. They also advocate the idea of an Arab exceptionalism in studying several cases of autocratic regimes in the Arab world. No breakthrough has been noted as they give the same factors mentioned earlier by Karatnycky to explain the lack of democracy in the Arab world. As for the others, they never had a comparative approach of the Western and Islamic cultural behavior experiences.

I have chosen Karatnycky, Stepan and Robertson, Brumberg and Diamond since they best represent the Cultural Essentialism, Exceptionalism, and Democracy trends. I chose them because they all refer to the Freedom House tables, rankings and judgements. It is crucial to highlight that “the Freedom House thesis maintains that Muslim states in general and Arab

\textsuperscript{37} Daniel Brumberg and Larry Diamond, Introduction in “Islam and Democracy in the Middle East”, Johns Hopkins University press, 2003
\textsuperscript{38} Ibid, p.10
\textsuperscript{39} Ibid
\textsuperscript{40} Ibid, p.11
countries in particular show a greater deficit than states, which adhere to other cultures. This takes us back to the problem of objectivity. Is it fair and credible to rely on institutions which advocate Exceptionalism in quantitative and qualitative analysis? What are the implications for comparative politics?

**Advocating Exceptionalism in quantitative analysis: the implications for comparative politics**

Since we must consider the implications of quantitative analysis for comparative politics in general, I will concentrate on the main institution that measures democracy, the Freedom House, which advocates in its quantitative and qualitative analysis the thesis of an Arab Exceptionalism. How relevant is the Freedom House to our work? It will be interesting to see whether the Freedom House’s ratings and judgements are credible, knowing that a large number of politicians, decision-makers and intellectuals refer to these data as their sources. In this section, I will examine the role of the Freedom House, and the effect of its studies on the thesis of cultural essentialism and/or exceptionalism of the Muslim and Arab worlds. The main issue is to reveal whether or not the methodology used by institutions such as the Freedom House has been properly applied. In parallel, I will try to find out whether this kind of researches on democracy and democratization has brought something new to the political science field.

What are the techniques that the Freedom House uses to measure democracy?

“...The survey, which includes both analytical reports and numerical ratings of countries and select territories, measures freedom by assessing two broad categories: political rights and civil liberties. Political rights enable people to participate freely in the political process. (...) Civil liberties include the freedom to develop opinions, institutions, and personal autonomy without interference from the state.”

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41 Iliya Harik, « Democracy, 'Arab Exceptionalism', and the Social Sciences », 2005
42 www.freedomhouse.org/methodology
What of the rating process?

"Each country and territory is awarded from 0 to 4 raw points for each of 10 questions grouped into four subcategories in a political rights checklist, and for each of 15 questions grouped into four subcategories in a civil liberties checklist. The total raw points in each checklist correspond to two final numerical ratings of 1 to 7. These two ratings are then averaged to determine a status category of ‘Free’, ‘Partly Free’, or ‘Not Free’. Those whose ratings average 1-2.5 are considered Free, 3-5.5 Partly Free, and 5.5-7 Not Free"43.

According to the 2005 Table of Independant Countries of the Freedom House, Lebanon got 6 for political rights (PR) and 5 for civil liberties (CL)44. As a matter of fact, in terms of Freedom rating, Lebanon was considered “Not Free” in 2005 (conclusions for year X refer to the preceding year). For the year 2006, Lebanon is stated “Partly Free”, as it got 5 for PR and 4 for CL45.

It is essential to retain that “one of the distinctive features of this genre of cross-national analysis is its disaggregative nature, which is necessary when comparing a large number of cases"46. In other words, this method separates each democratic attribute within a certain regime. Then, it assigns a numerical value to each democratic attribute. Finally, the ranking is established by taking the average score of all the considered attributes. This method allows a supposedly non-democratic country to have one or more democratic attributes. For instance, a regime may highly score on freedom of expression, while getting a low score on independence of the judiciary, and a medium score on electoral competitiveness47. Beside providing quantitative and qualitative political data, the Freedom House has the advantage of helping international organizations which promote democracy to focus on the democratic components - which got low or medium scores – that further need reinforcement.

43 Ibid
44 http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=278&year=2005
The Freedom House survey appears to be objective in using this disaggregative approach, but is the theory used reliable for such a methodology? What are the underlying problems of theory and methodology?

The first issue we must raise is the tendency to judge performance by standards derived from one culture rather than another. The Freedom House uses the theory which presumes that the West embodies the democratic ideals and determines the standards by which others are judged. Because they have shown greater achievement through long years of practice, the democratic systems of North America and Western Europe have the advantage of guidance and leadership in this field. However, with the emergence of multiculturalism, there has been a tendency to believe that the basics of democracy may be more relative that it had been thought, and that no one has the monopoly claim on the meaning of democratic practices. Theoretical issues aside, comparative cross-national analysis require standardized measures in accordance with the prevailing wisdom. As a matter of fact, the Freedom House and other similar institutions, follow the theory of the prevailing wisdom. Does theory fit properly the method? We have to look at some of the methods and conclusions of numerical representation analysis. An examination of the Freedom House annual surveys and the derivative studies conducted by political scientists we have mentioned in part B, Alfred Stepan and Groeme Robertson, may contribute to answer this question. We have seen that the pattern used by the Freedom House for the measurement of democratic practices using two categories, PR and CL, ranges from 1 to 7, where 1 represents a fully free country, while 7 stands for a country that is fully undemocratic. An assessment of some cases should tell us whether or not the measurement (or the quantitative account) supports the judgments (or the qualitative account) made by the Freedom House regarding various regimes.

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48 This theory was already assessed in the 1960's, see Almond and Verba. "The Civic Culture", Princeton, 1963, p.8-9
Examining the case of Turkey and Albania, it may be pointed out that assigning the rank of 4 on a scale of 7 for PR in Turkey in 2001 is a disputable judgment. It places Turkey (a Muslim secular country), which had enjoyed a lively democratic experience, with ups and downs, since 1946 behind Albania (a European country)\textsuperscript{50}, a country that had been long ruled by a single party dictatorship, turned into multiparty politics in the early 1990’s, but continues to be dominated by the old communist party turned socialist (PSS).

The Freedom House refers to its assessments as the “definitive annual comparative assessment of the state of freedom in 192 countries”\textsuperscript{51}, yet we have seen with the above example - as it will be confirmed with others - that statistical approaches representing the status of democracy remain problematical. Now, if we compare the Freedom House’s rating of Algeria, an Arab country, with Uganda, a sub-saharian African country, we may also notice the misapplication of measurement standards. It is also significant with respect to the Arab exceptionalism thesis. According to the 2006 table of Independant Countries of the Freedom House, Algeria got 6 for PR and 5 for CL whereas Uganda got 5 for PR and 4 for CL. In terms of Freedom Rating, Algeria is stated ‘Not Free’ whereas Uganda is granted the ‘Party Free’ status. The definition on the basis of which the Freedom House made its evaluations states that PR refers to “the free participation of the people in the political process”. The score of 6 for PR implies that Algeria is ruled by “military junta’s or one-party dictatorship or religious hierarchies or autocrats”\textsuperscript{52}. Is is really the case today? The score of 6 may be valid for 1999 when the military and the bureaucracy orchestrated the elections to such an extent that citizens had no real ability to change their government. But the situation has changed since then, and in 2004 the presidential elections were competitive. It is debatable to claim that the political arena in 2004 was controlled by the army. As a matter of fact the score of 6

\textsuperscript{50} Look up Turkey and Albania in the FH survey, www.freedomhouse.org

\textsuperscript{51} Introduction to the 2004 Survey report

\textsuperscript{52} www.freedomhouse.org/methodology
for PR is controversial. CL refers to “freedom to develop opinions, institutions, and personal autonomy without interference from the state”. The score of 5 for CL implies that Algeria has a high level of oppression particularly in the areas of censorship and/or political terror and/or the prevention of free association. The rate of 5 is also controversial since journalists have been noting the growing freedom of the press in Algeria in 2004. Year after year, journalists are freer to do their job correctly. The Freedom House didn’t take into consideration the Algerian competitive presidential elections of 2004 or the growing freedom of the press. Thus, is the Freedom House fair and credible in its measurements?

Examining the Uganda example along with its ‘no-party’ system emphasises the doubtful nature of the ranking given to Algeria by the Freedom House. First of all, a no-party political system signifies that there is no fair competition in general elections. In other words, the presidential elections are not competitive. The ‘no-party’ system is in reality a ‘one-party’ system. It guarantees the dominance of the party’s leaders over the country’s political arena. To sum up, the competitiveness in the Uganda election exists within the ‘one-party system’, as several candidates are chosen all from the same party: it is a highly restricted competition. As far as the CL is concerned, Uganda got 4, which is better than Algeria. This score is really suspicious as we know that President Museveni’s regime systematically repressed, obstructed and intimidated opposition activists, which indicates the presence of political terror.

The comparison between Algeria and Uganda has demonstrated that the Freedom House’s ratings and judgements are not completely convincing. Furthermore, such discrepancies are not unusual when comparing other Arab countries with sub-saharian African countries or European countries. The issue is not that Arab countries have an exceptional record of

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53 Le Monde, « Qui gouverne à Alger », 08/08/04
democratization, while in reality they don’t. It is rather a matter of whether or not the Freedom House is capable of measuring it.

The concept of Arab exceptionalism seems to be the Freedom House’s favourite claim. Out of 122 countries of the world qualified as electoral democracies in the 2006 survey, not a single Arab state is included. Central African Republic and Lebanon have the same ratings (5 for PR, and 4 for CL), yet the former is included in the so-called electoral democracies’ category whereas Lebanon is not. In fact, the Freedom House has several criteria to determine an electoral democracy. In addition to “minimum standards for free and fair elections”, these criteria include: a) considerable space for opposition movements, b) access to the media by opposition parties and viewpoints, c) a minimum standard of a relatively fair vote count, and d) secret ballots. The Freedom House states that “the presence of certain irregularities during the electoral process does not disqualify a country from being designated an electoral democracy”. In those circumstances, Lebanon should have been qualified as an electoral democracy.

By examining some of the Freedom House’s existing discrepancies, we have seen that frequently the descriptive account does not support the quantitative one. To avoid further inconsistencies, it is important that scholars and intellectuals apply additional inspection to those surveys especially that they have acquired considerable influence in academic and official circles in the United States.

55 see FH methodology
56 Ibid
57 Ibid
Finally, I have to emphasize on the recognition of the Exceptionalism thesis by comparativists. Encouraged by the Freedom House’s results, Stepan and Robertson compare the electoral competitiveness of Muslim and Arab countries. We have seen in part B that according to Karatnycky the democracy gap is mostly detected among Muslim countries, mainly in the Arab countries. As for Stepan and Robertson, who focused on the same Freedom House research results on which Karatnycky relied (plus the ratings from Polity IV Project, another measurement institution), they came up to the conclusion that the democracy gap was limited to Arab states, while Muslim countries belonged to the developing countries’ group. The authors advocate the Arab exceptionalism thesis, which may be defined as “the tendency of a group of states sharing the same culture and/or ethnicity to be resistant to democracy. That is, a condition of ‘non-democracy’ is associated with being Arab”.

I strongly agree with Iliya Harik who asserted that in the Freedom House, more attention has been payed to the political behavior of Muslims and Arabs with respect to democracy than to the methodology and research, which have produced the results. Furthermore, we still need to know what to do with regimes which have great political life, free and fair elections, but turn out to be monarchies. Maybe, this genre of survey should consider other standards when assessing monarchies. The fact is that societies and political systems in the Arab world enjoy unique traits. I believe that the concept of Arab Exceptionalism is a historical stereotype, which has long been a camouflage for European Christian rivalry felt towards its neighbours to the east and south. Having examined the idea of an Arab and Muslim Exceptionalism, I have decided to revisit this thesis in chapter two, stressing on the distinctiveness of every Arab country.

60 Ibid
CHAPTER II
EXCEPTIONALISM REVISITED:

UNITY OF THE ARAB WORLD OR UNIQUENESS OF EVERY ARAB COUNTRY?

This second theme will counter the Arab and Muslim exceptionalism thesis, with the intent of placing the Arab world within a non-orientalist framework. In this chapter, I suggest stressing on the comparability between Western and Arab/Islamic countries rather than speaking of an Arab and/or Muslim exceptionalism.

Premises for the Comparability thesis: the Paradoxes of Secularism

“If the Middle East is exceptional, the question is, relative to what? (...) we must constantly distinguish what factors are peculiar to the Middle East and what characteristics it may share with regions or countries in which democracy is practised.”^62

Ghassan Salamé in “Democracy without Democrats” questions this presumed exceptionalism. The author and other contributors to the book do not refute exceptionalism but they believe that: “the reasons for its existence may not be the ones which are most frequently suggested: in religion (as suggested by many), in culture, in a specific combination of socio-historical factors or in the permanence of intractable conflicts.”^63

Today, the trend is to speak and write about the gaps between Western and Middle Eastern cultures and politics. If we take a quick look at the international scene today, we will observe two ideologies struggling to take over the world: the ‘Western Liberal Democracy’ with its values and principles, a trend that literally transcends an ideology to form ‘a new religion’, and a ‘Contemporary Islam’, which transcends the religion to become an ideology.

We have been taught that there is only a “bad” or a “good” ideology, of course relatively to

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^62 John Waterbury for Ghassan Salamé in “Democracy without Democrats?”, 1994, p.25
^63 Ghassan Salamé in “Democracy without Democrats?”, 1994, p.2
the one we believe in. We submissively admit that this Western-Middle Eastern clash explains
the current conflicts in the Arab world as well as terrorism in both ‘worlds’. This exaggeration
in underlining the differences between both cultures is further complicating politics and
negotiations between these two worlds. Worse, it brings both populations to fear and feel
threatened by each other. Only politicians have a role to play in pacifying this problematic
situation. However, not all politicians are willing to play an efficient role, each being
entrenched in his/her own power struggle. Consequently, our politicians (I am referring to
those who are leading the two ‘blocs’) are teaching their people about the presumed ‘very
deep gap’, instead of cultivating the similarities between both cultures, which would probably
be a good start for common grounds. Surely, I am not denying that both cultures are indeed
different in some ways; instead, I seek to compare Western and Arab/Islamic cultural
behaviours only to prove that they are more alike than contradictory.

First, we have to highlight the main principles that constitute the ‘Western democracy’
ideology and see whether or not these principles are exclusive to the West. According to Iliya
Harik, “secularism, individualism, and an egalitarian distribution of deference⁶⁴, are
considered as conditions for liberal democracy⁶⁵. There is a common belief that these
variables are not respected in non-Western cultures, particularly in Muslim countries. This
presumption should be re-examined if we consider Western culture’s history. The latter shows
that “democracy co-existed, at one time or another, with non-secular institutions, societies
with authoritarian patterns of behavior, and predominantly communal values”⁶⁶.

Secularism represents values shared by both democracies and authoritarian regimes,
East and West. The fact that secular principles have been reflected in two historical

⁶⁴ An egalitarian distribution of deference refers to the principle of reciprocity in attitudes among individuals
⁶⁶ ibid, p.12
democratic outbursts, such as the French Revolution of 1789 and the United States constitutional Convention of 1787-1791, explains why secular principles are associated with democrats and modernists. Furthermore, the unity between church and State did not diminish democracy in Northern Europe; neither did it prevent secularism from leading to democracy in the Soviet Union or in the Turkish Republic founded by Kemal Ataturk. However, if we admit that secularism is a sign of democracy, one can prove that it already clashed with some core democratic values such as representation or free expression. For instance, on the basis of laicity, Muslim women in France as well as in Turkey are not allowed to wear a head scarf in school or in the work place. We can argue here that this prohibition is a violation of the right to freedom of expression.

A cursory look on Western democracies' history shows two main patterns of relationship between the State and the Church: “The Franco-American and the Anglo-Nordic”. The first pattern is formally characterized by very sharp separation between the two entities. In contrast, the Anglo-Nordic pattern is totally un-American and institutionally not secular. There is a belief that the British break with the Catholic Church of Rome was a secularizing measure, yet knowing that “the British replaced the Pope as the head of the Church by the English Crown, hence the Anglican Church, which is still the official Church of England”, would bring us to consider the measure as nationalistic more than secular.

As Karl Marx said, men don’t know in advance the history they are making, which only make the following question reasonable: did the Western democracies really intend, in their history, to separate the State from the Church institution or was it a matter of adjustment

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69 Ibid
or a matter of circumstance? Furthermore, can we really speak of a separation? According to Harik, "with minor variations, the structural pattern of state-church relationship in most Western democracies is basically one of integration and/or accommodation, rather than separation". Three types exist but our interest here is to focus on one: the "state sponsored church" as in the cases of Britain, Denmark, Norway and Greece, among others, where the church is contained within the institutions of the government, like a department. This type is Anglo-Nordic, and very interestingly, has been the dominant pattern in many contemporary Islamic states, and previously in the Ottoman Empire, as Harik recalls it.

If the "state sponsored church" variant co-exists with democracy in the countries mentioned above, why claim the contrary in Islamic states? Culturalists generally think that Islam is organically different from all other religions. Is it because the Prophet revealed a religion and founded a state at the same time that it is said, according to the Islamic law, that the state must follow the religion, or does this come from divine origin? In other words, is the law separate from the religion in Muslim states, or is the state originally religious? As asserted by Harik, the law in Islamic states "is far from being religious, but mostly of imperial and customary origins, except in family matters". He adds that modern jurists such as Abd al Razzak al Sanhury or Yusuf al Qardawi indicate clearly that very little of the ‘shari’ah’ comes from divine origin, that is the Qur’an, and that most of the ‘shar’iah’ is man made law. In other words, if a state claims to be observing the ‘shari’ah’, which very few do, it does not mean that state law is equivalent to religious law.

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70 Ibid
72 Ghassan Salamé, "Democracy without Democrats?", 1994, p.3
Culturalists think that a specific culture and/or religion could itself be an obstacle to experimentation with democracy
If it is assessed by accredited Muslim jurists that state law is not equivalent to religious law in Muslim countries, then why is it that the Muslim exceptionalism argument still works so well? The rise of fundamentalism and visibility of religious extremists may answer the question.

Last but not least, the issue we must raise about secularism is whether or not it is always compatible with democracy. As indicated earlier, the conflict between secularism and democracy does exist. Let’s take the case of France. Nearly ten percent of the French population is Muslim. Debates about laicity are paramount in this Republic today, considering the difficulties this country is facing with Islam and a majority of Muslim immigrants. French intellectuals think that after one century of separation between the State and the Church, France is loosing its laicity for the sake of freedom of expression and rights of political participation, which grants expression to religious preferences. In France, current politics find itself involved with religion. The controversial issue is whether or not we can criticize a religion when it is involved with politics. The problem is that legislating religious preferences in a democratic country means suppressing freedom of expression and participation. Thus, it is legitimate to say that an exclusive preference for secularism is anti-democratic, considering the whole population and country. Democracy in Turkey also suffers from a similar conflict: “the strong objection to the involvement of religion in politics cannot be derived from democratic theory, but rather from the sentiments expressed by nationalists’ mandarins partial to such principles as national unity, uniformity, and political centralism.”

Advocating secularism (the Franco-American pattern) is not necessarily the solution for democratization. This comparative approach has shed a light on the flawed presumption

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74 Ibid, p.17, 18
that while in Western countries the church and the state are separate, in Islamic countries religion and states are inseparable. However, we did figure out common characteristics between the Western and the Middle Eastern cultures that allow a fair questioning of the exceptionalism theory. It is true that in the Muslim world religion prevails; yet, patterns are so diverse, and contexts are so different. Patterns and contexts, norms and values, vary from one Muslim country to another as they vary from one Western country to another. For instance, what is institutionally secular in the United States has no meaning in Denmark or Norway, where there is a national church that constitutes an integral part of the government. One last question comes to mind: in respect with the mentioned institutions, how is it that the Ottoman Empire was less secular than the British Empire during the 19th century? or how is the governments of Spain, Greece, Norway, Britain, and the Netherlands today more secular than Turkey, Egypt, Tunisia, Indonesia, or Lebanon?

Democracy in the Arab context: what about Authoritarianism, and Communalism?

"It has been put forward (...) that the Arab states are distinguished by a particularly socio-political structure described as ‘neo-patriarchy’". (Sharabi 1988)

According to Sharabi, neo-patriarchy’s main attributes are: social fragmentation, meaning that the family clan and religious or ethnic group, as opposed to the nation or civil society, constitutes the basis of social relations and organizations; authoritarian organization in which all relations, from the micro-structure of the family to the macro-structure of the state, are characterized by domination, coercion, and paternalism as opposed to co-operation, mutual recognition and equality; absolutist paradigms and ritualistic practices.  

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75 Jean Leca for Ghassan Salamé in “Democracy without Democrats?”, 1994, p.61
Authoritarian characteristics, as mentioned above, are seen as obstacles to democratization in developing countries. However, history has shown many cases where authoritarian patterns were not obstacles for the implementation of democracy. We cannot deny the fact that some authoritarian patterns of behavior existed in Western countries for the last two centuries. For instance, the male head of the household in America, Britain, and France had great powers over his family during the 19th and early 20th century. The husband was the house lord and decision maker; he had control over his wife and owned her property. The male head enjoyed greater authority than in many Asian and African societies, where a husband rarely had the right to control his wife’s property. Indeed, wives in Islamic countries were free to own property independently from their husbands. Women served as head political executives in Indonesia, Philippines, Pakistan, Turkey, and more recently in Lebanon and Bahrein (where 75% of the population is Shi’a). In short, significant authoritarian characteristics did not prevent America, Britain or France to become great democracies. Moreover, for a long time, authoritarian traits have co-existed socially with democratic values such as freedom, equality, and tolerance. As a matter of fact, the same coexistence, which exists nowadays in many developing countries, Arab countries inclusive, could be a stage for democratization, and pave the way for democracy. “Social forces of modernization, political struggle, and ideological advocacy helped diminish authoritarianism in the West, and the same could happen elsewhere under comparable pressures. In fact, it has already taken place in many less developed countries.”

77 Roger Owen for Ghassan Salamé in “Democracy without Democrats?”, 1994, p.194
although some authoritarian traits haven’t completely disappeared as they are still present socially. As a result, whatever the country is, whether Latin American or Arab, democratic and authoritarian practices have been coexisting for years. Furthermore, and as Owen states clearly, it is not the failure of authoritarianism that engenders democracy, but rather a modernization of authoritarianism which does.

Furthermore, according to Harik:

“It is not necessarily authoritarian attitudes that preclude the implementation or consolidation of democracy in developing countries, but a complex set of conditions, prominent among which are the weakness of regular countervailing forces and the inexperience of leaders in maintaining peaceful government in pluralist settings.”

In fact, given no countervailing forces, even a president or a prime minister elected in a Western democracy may abuse of its authority, just as any autocrat would do. Moreover, it is important to recall that in a democracy just as in an authoritarian state, elites share a common background completely different that that of voters. Whatever the country, elites develop a culture of reciprocity in attitudes and cooperation among each other. They are only equals towards their peers. The imparity between government and civil society, which often appears to be the issue in authoritarian states, exists in both political structures: power is only distributed among the leaders, among people of equal social status. As a matter of fact, the real issue is “the extent of sharing, which could be limited to the few (autocratic), or extensive (democratic). Naturally, the larger the number of equals in a group makes for a greater degree of democracy.”  

We have seen that the cultural cleavage between Western societies and Arab/Muslim societies is not as wide as it is being promoted. In a last comparison between both societies,

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we will focus on communalism, which is considered to be adverse to democracy. I believe that communalism in all its forms is not always irreconcilable with democracy.

Under the concept of citizenship, individuals are equals. They share equal rights and obligations. Each and every one is a free agent capable to reach his/her conclusions and to make different choices from those of other citizens. Accordingly, ethnic, regional, or sectarian attachment is considered as incompatible with liberal democracy. However, the core democratic values have taught us that ‘free to be’ cannot be discriminatory. Consequently, one can consider that an individual is free to belong to any community or group. Indeed, to live in freedom is to respect differences, not only among individuals, but also among communities. Furthermore, both the preferences expressed by individuals and the opinions of a specific group are legitimate. To abide by the democratic principles is to tolerate all types of solidarities: religious or atheists, racists or integrationists, standing against the death penalty or for it, etc. Discrimination against any of the solidarities is undemocratic. A clash between liberal individualism and communalism exists in all countries, especially in non-Western societies. Though, communalism is not incompatible with democracy as we can speak of a democratic communalism. Harik raises a very interesting point about the act of voting. It illustrates very well the idea of democratic communalism. He says: “while a free vote is an individual act, it makes sense only in a communal context. (...) An act of voting is a supremely individual expression, but its function is communal.”

Furthermore, despite being democratic, the act of voting is not as innocent as it appears to be:

“By itself, the principle of individualism could lead to a voting system encorising tyranny of the majority. (...) Unless voters share a binding feeling or a civic bond, an intrusive act such as voting could generate hostility and a feeling of injustice. It becomes an act of cultural violence. Need we remind ourselves of how African-Americans feel on Election Day in Southern states and in the aftermath, or how Kurds feel during Turkish elections?

79 Samuel Huntington, « Democracy’s Third Wave », p.15
80 Harik, Democracy and the Paradoxes of Cultural Diversity, in “Lettres de Byblos”, Vol 3, 2003, p. 27
Democratization is clearly not as simple as the introduction of preferred norms in one society upon another.\textsuperscript{81}

One can conclude that in order to prevent cultural violence, a national policy should be based on communal rights rather than individual ones. This clearly questions the foundations of democracy. It also interrogates the following dichotomy: communalism versus individualism, a leitmotiv used by the Western modern ideology to define the gap between the West and the East.

Communalism is seen as prevalent in developing countries, and more specifically in Arab and/or Muslim countries, but according to Harik, communalism is actually an integral part of modern Western thought.\textsuperscript{82} Indeed, we have clearly seen how individualism is not exclusive to the intellectual space of the Western culture, and how communalism has its advocates in Western democracies.\textsuperscript{83}

This discussion about communalism and democracy brings us to explore the view of the Arab community and its relation to democracy. The first question often asked about democratizing the Arab world is whether or not there are strong socio-political forces committed to democratic practices and values. Is the Arab world ready for democracy? Can we speak of an ‘Arab democracy’? We will try to answer these questions in the next part.

\textbf{Is there a Political Arab Unity?}

In overemphasizing the Arab State, Nazih Ayubi questions the political Arab unity, and counters the thesis of an Arab Exceptionalism. I do agree with Ayubi’s belief that Arab politics should no longer be perceived as being peculiarly and uniquely Arab. We will follow

\textsuperscript{81} Ibid. p.28
\textsuperscript{82} Ibid. p.30
\textsuperscript{83} Patchen Markell, « Making Affect Safe for Democracy », in Political Theory, vol.28, issue 1, (February 2000)
Ayubi’s reasoning which is to verify that Middle Eastern issues may be specific to the Arab world but that they are not particularly unique.

The Arab world is made of twenty different states. Even though they all call themselves Arabs, every Arab state is unique. The Arab league exists, but in fact, Arab states always fail to manoeuvre any attempt toward political unification. The Arab League has appeared throughout the years to be an illusion. The Taef agreements are maybe the only achievement the Arab League can be proud of, and yet it has not found the ultimate solution for the Lebanese issue. One can argue that it was not up to the League to find solutions, but rather up to the Lebanese themselves. If we accept this assumption, then how can we define the Arab League? How do Arabs themselves understand, imagine and view democracy? Do Arabs see democracy differently from the rest of the world? What are the possibilities for democratization in the Arab world? What is the role of the state in the Arab world? Democracy, Islam and Arab culture are not fixed categories; they have changed and evolved throughout history. In this perspective, Islam itself did not change it is rather the interpretations of Islam that were altered, similarly to any culture which is subject to constant change. In parallel, democracy and the Arab culture have been moulded by regimes to fit the needs, goals and vision of each state. It is hard to evaluate the Arab world, the Arab League and its politics without tackling the ideology of Pan-Arabism. As Ayubi recalls it, the ideology of Pan-Arabism failed to achieve its main goal of Arab unity because of some concrete social and political factors. What is paradoxal is that the forces which have driven the idea of Pan-Arabism were of social and political natures. Arabs share the same culture, in terms of language, literature, and history, but they do not share the same political vision, nor do they share the same vision of democracy. Societies of the Arab world are so distinct;

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84 Nazih Ayubi, “Over-Stating the Arab State”, 1995, p.1
85 Ibid, p. 135, 136
they do not form a whole to be able to speak of an unified Arab understanding of democracy. And even within the same country, people have different views of democracy. Hence, it is preferable to speak about different Arab cultures instead of one and exceptional Arab culture.

If the Arab world is indeed exceptional, then comparing to what? I consider the Arab world exceptional in reference to its culture, simply because Arab countries share the same history, language and literature. However, Arab regimes do not adopt the same political culture. The Arab world has exceptional traits just as the Incas’ culture in South America, the concept of ‘non-violence’ that first emerged in India, or the very famous American ‘way of life’, but it also shares characteristics with other cultures from other parts of the world. For instance, paternalism and ritualistic practices, which are present in the Arab cultures, also exist in South America. The American ‘way of life’ is taken as an example to follow, and established in societies in many parts of the worlds. The Arab cultures as well can be engaged in democracies outside the Arab world. Furthermore, sharing the same culture (in terms of history, language, and literature) does not mean sharing the same political structure. From another perspective, countries from different cultures can share the same political system. For instance, the United Kingdom and Bahrain have the same political structure despite their entirely different cultures. Both countries are constitutional monarchies and have a bicameral parliament. In 2001, a referendum was held in Bahrain calling for amendments to the Constitution to make the country a constitutional monarchy with a democratically elected Parliament. Sheikh Hamad allowed both men and women the right to vote and run for office. He also gave his royal approval to a constitutional amendment changing his own title from emir to king, making Bahrain a kingdom. In November 2006, the first Bahraini woman was elected deputy. One can argue that it is not the structure that matters but its content, which makes the whole difference. It is true that the King of Bahrein has much more power than the Queen of the United Kingdom, which brings us to consider the latter as being more
democratic. Indeed, Bahrain is constantly moving towards political freedom and is further using democratic practices, which can be a clear indicator of a genuine democratization process.

All politicians take into consideration parts of a nation’s culture and legacy in a state formation, but it doesn’t mean that one culture is more compatible with democracy than the other. Once again, it would be discriminatory to claim that. The fact is that, in spite of sharing the same culture (common traits vary from one Arab country to another), state formation differs from one Arab country to another. The twenty Arab states are very distinct politically. As a matter of fact, they are not exceptional in their politics. The most significant example we can give in this matter concerns the countries of the Arabian Peninsula. In the latter, Arab cultural characteristics remain intact, with the exception of Yemen, yet political systems vary largely. In all the countries of the Arabian Peninsula, with the exception of Yemen, the state is ruled by a traditional leadership. The titles vary (kingdom, sultanate, emirate, etc.), but the essence is always hereditary and patriarchal. There are also significant variations in the level of social and political control. Bahrain is usually regarded as the most socially liberal (with a number of women working, relatively open entertainment, etc.); while Kuwait is (or was) usually regarded, comparatively speaking, as the most open politically. On the other hand, Oman has the reputation for being the most oppressive in terms of politics, while Saudi Arabia is said to be the most oppressive socially.\footnote{Nazih Ayubi, “Over-Stating the Arab State”, 1995, p. 230, 231}

What about women and politics of the Arabian Peninsula? We have seen that women have started participating in the political arena in Koweit and Bahrain, but how do they really understand democracy in this region? And how do they relate it to Islam? According to Sadiki, “these women activists agree on the necessity of democratic rule” yet “they may
disagree on the king of modernity that must be promoted in the Arab Middle East".\footnote{Larbi Sadiki, “The Search for Arab Democracy”, 2004, p. 307} He adds that, locally, both secular and Islamist women understand democracy in ways that do not bypass Islam or challenge its place in Arab societies. In other words, religion comes first for both secular and Islamist women, but it does not prevent democratic practices. The difference between the two groups is not over the place of Islam, but rather over whose’ Islam it is, how much Islam and what type of Islam best serve the visions of modernity and society? Both types of women unite against authoritarian orders.\footnote{Ibid, p. 307, 308} As far as women’s rights in Saudi Arabia are concerned, these rights are still very debatable in the country despite the fact that the demands for more freedom started to emerge even before Desert Storm, Ayubi says. The demands include for example, the women’s right to drive cars, or the need to restrain the growing power of the moral police (mutawwi’s).\footnote{Nazih Ayubi, “Over-Stating the Arab State”, 1995, p. 427}

I believe that one of the main reason why Arab countries, and especially those from the Arabian peninsula, does not share the same political system is because they do not adhere to the same objectives, economically speaking. They mould their political scheme so it could fit their economic development. From this perspective, we will try to define in chapter three, the relationship between democratization and economic development.
CHAPTER III

DEMOCRATIZATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

What is the relation between economic development, democracy and democratization? This theme is crucial to the thesis considering the following questions we have to answer: Does economic development have an effect on democracy and democratization? Since when have we been aware of a possible connection? What are the forms of economic development and which form is needed to engender democracy and sustain it?

Democracy: outcome or condition of economic development?

Can we consider that economic development is a pre-condition to democratization? According to A.Leftwich "democracy is a necessary prior or parallel condition of development, not an outcome of it"\(^90\). Sadiki in *The Search for Arab Democracy* advocates this claim and points out that "democracy does not have to be a sequel to economic development"\(^91\). In other words, he says that democracy should not be a consequence of economic development but rather a condition of it. As far as Samuel Huntington is concerned, the correlation probably varies according to the time and space variables.

Does a country need to reach a certain level of economic development for the democratizing process to begin, or is there a specific pattern of economic development which is necessary to build democratic practices? Is economic development just a part of democratization, or is democracy a product of economic development? Can we really tell whether it is democracy or economic development that comes first?

\(^{91}\) Larbi Sadiki, "The Search for Arab Democracy", 2004, p.343
Economic development is a criterion of development which is defined by the United Nations as a combination of economic, social, and cultural progress for which people aspire. The latter is the meaning of “sustainable human development”. According to Boutros Boutros Ghali, the concepts of democracy and development have stayed apart for a long time. Theorists who attempted to establish a link between both concepts, in the 60’s and the 70’s, are very few⁹². During the same period, we can note within the developing countries, several states, which are governed by authoritarian regimes yet registering an acceptable growth rate. From the 70’s onward, interrogations about the subject have began to be raised, in particular when theorists started to be aware of the complexity of development as a phenomenon. They became conscious that this concept cannot be reduced to its economic and financial aspects, and that its social, cultural, political and environmental dimensions are also crucial to its accomplishment. Indeed, the concept of democracy cannot be reduced to economic development as other variables of development are necessary to reach and sustain it.

Examining the relationship between politics and economy isn’t a recent issue. In fact, most of the greatest modern theorists like Tocqueville, Marx or Weber associated a certain economic and social value to political regimes. However, it seems that point four of the 1949 Truman declaration has set the modern conception of “development”, asserting that progress and development must be exported and diffused, and that the democratic model is the only one that can realize this mission. In other words, only democracies will ensure development in countries and regions that lack of it...

From another perspective, we can also say that democracy and development are complementary and reinforce each other. In fact, if democracy wants to consolidate itself, it has to find its continuity in economic and social measures which privilege development. In the same way, every strategy of development needs, for its achievement, to be validated and fostered by the democratic contribution. Furthermore, there is interdependence between democracy, development, and human rights, a connection clearly mentioned in the Vienna Declaration of 1933. This interdependence is reflected in the right to democracy and the right to development, and it has been confirmed by the United Nations Charter, the international pacts, the 1986 Declaration on the right to development, and the Convention for the elimination of every form of discrimination towards women. However, the implementation of these rights, preserved by the international law, needs a wider solidarity from the international community, and the respect, by the states, of their international duties.\textsuperscript{93}

The rule of law, which implies an independant justice, is often mentioned when the relationship between development and democracy is evoked. According to Larry Diamonds, in order to promote democracy and to support development in authoritarian regimes, external democratic actors need to enhance the rule of law. To do this, Diamonds recommends the support of human rights organisations.\textsuperscript{94} As for Boutros Boutros Ghali, the rule of law is the thread that can link the establishment and reinforcement of democracy to those of development, as well as the means to reinforce what they have in common: the respect of human rights.\textsuperscript{95}

\textsuperscript{94} The rule of law is one of the four points needed to promote democracy. These four points come from Larry Diamond, Beyond Authoritarianism and Totalitarianism, p.242-245
“Governance” is another concept tied to economic development and democracy. The World Bank introduced this term when discussing development, blurring the boundaries between the political and the economic. This new concept stresses that governance participates in two dimensions, political and economic, deemed indispensable to reach “good governance”.

"Good governance is epitomized by predictable, open and enlightened policy-making, a bureaucracy imbued with professional ethos acting in furtherance of the public good, the rule of law, transparent processes, and a strong civil society participating in public affairs. Poor governance (on the other hand) is characterized by arbitrary policy making, unaccountable bureaucracies, unenforced or unjust legal systems, the abuse of executive power, a civil society unengaged in public life, and widespread corruption."

The political dimension focuses on democratic institutionalisation and reforms, while the economic dimension underlines the necessity of an organisational and an administrative transparency. According to Sadiki, “this new thinking has not only influenced the policy discourse (...) but also brought a revision of the meanings of development and democracy”.

Looking back at when political theorists used to be aware of a possible connection between democracy and economic development, I found out one counter-argument of the modern belief that a wealthy country is highly democratic, or vice versa. In fact, Huntington points out that during the 18th century, political theorists argued that wealthy countries were likely to be monarchies, while poor countries would be republics or democracies. He adds that industrialization has reversed the relation between the level of wealth and the nature of the political system, and that in the 19th century, a positive correlation between wealth and democracy was born. In other words, in the 18th century, when societies were agrarian, the correlation between wealth and democracy was negative. Today still, there are wealthy

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96 Larbi Sadiki, “The Search for Arab Democracy”, 2004, p.342
97 This is the definition of Governance provided by the World Bank, which has special relevance for the developing world.
98 Larbi Sadiki, “The Search for Arab Democracy”, 2004, p.342
countries which are also monarchies. How can we explain this phenomenon? Are societies still agrarian in these countries?

**Economic development in the Arab world**

Can we assert that economic under-development is a reason for the lack of democracy in Arab countries? Huntington has been famous for discussing many characteristics of democratic stabilization and the opportunities of consolidation in fledgling third wave democratic countries. He says that “economic factors have significant impact on democratization but they are not determinative” and that “no level or pattern of economic development is in itself either necessary or sufficient to bring about democratization”\(^\text{100}\). Saying that most wealthy countries are democracies and that most democratic countries are wealthy is asserting that economic development provides the basis for democracy. What about wealthy countries which are not democratic? Most of them are Arab and oil exporters’ countries. Why are Arab countries, also classified as “high income” countries, anti-democratic? In the following section, we will focus on the development pattern in the Arab world: what are the factors that promoted growth for the past four decades and how come highly economically developed Arab countries haven’t achieved democracy yet?

First, I decided to insert tables and graphs that will allow a general view pertaining to the evolution of growth in the Arab world during the past four decades. The first table\(^\text{101}\), displaying the real GDP per capita growth from the 70’s and until 2005, shows a regression in growth in the Arab world. It also shows that the growth gap, between the MENA oil producers and non-oil producers is shrinking with decades. The first graph of the annual

\(^{100}\) Samuel Huntington, “The Third Wave”, 1991, p. 59

\(^{101}\) See Appendix 1, Table 1
growth rate from 1963 and until 2003\textsuperscript{102} clearly reveals that when the oil exporting Arab countries’ growth rate is up, the non-oil Arab countries’ growth rate is down, and vice versa. They are never evolving according to the same trend, except for the years 1976 to 1978, and 1980. We can also notice, with graph 1, 2, and 3\textsuperscript{103} that the annual growth rate in the Arab world follows the oil-exporting Arab countries’ growth rate. As a matter of fact, one can assert that the region’s economic growth is largely influenced by that of the oil-exporting countries.

To better understand the variables of growth, we need to categorize the economic, institutional, and political characteristics that are the most relevant. These indicators should be closely examined to show how their evolution has given rise to the country’s pattern of economic growth.

What are the economic indicators of growth, and which ones do Arab countries benefit from?

First of all, resources: they establish the potentials for production, and determine the kind of incentives needed to attain efficiency. Arab countries benefit from natural resources that come directly through endowments (oil and gas), and indirectly through remittances. They are also abundant in terms of publicly owned resources which turn taxation into an unnecessary source of income. However, the conflict remains in the distribution not the extraction of public rents. It also engenders vulnerability in terms of trade fluctuations, and it has an impact on policy outcomes and the evolution of public institutions.\textsuperscript{104} As far as the human capital is concerned, its role is to help in the detection of growth problems and find out

\textsuperscript{102} See Appendix 1, Graph 1
\textsuperscript{103} Appendix 1, Graph 1, 2, and 3
\textsuperscript{104} Hadi Salehi, Esfahani, “Reexamination of the political economy of growth in the MENA countries”, 2002, publication of the Institute of Financial Economics, AUB
fast, practical and effective solutions for them. “The investment in physical capital will not
take place in economies with low-quality human capital”. The Arab world development in
terms of human capital shows positive and negative tendencies. In fact, while this part of the
world has managed to reduce infant mortality, raise life expectancy, and ensure better
enrollment rates, it still suffers from socio-economic discrepancies: low enrollment rates,
average quality of the educational system which mismatches the market needs, and no
preparation for real world dynamics.

In second place comes investment. In fact, “The investment rates in the Arab world are
not particularly low”. However, empirical findings show that “private investment in the
Arab world is both insufficient and inefficient”.

The third indicator for development is related to economic policies: not only openness
but also an evolving macroeconomic environment. Openness as defined by Sachs and
Warner in 1995 relates to the fraction of years during 1970-1990 in which a country satisfies
several criteria.

Last but not least, is the impact of the price of oil. Limited diversification of exports
and imports make some of the countries particularly susceptible to sudden fluctuations in
terms of trade and foreign demand shocks.

105 www.columbia.edu
106 Xavier Sala, Elsa Artadi, “Economic growth and investment in the Arab world”, publication, 2003
107 www.columbia.edu, and see Appendix 1, Graph 4
108 Ibid, and see Appendix 1, Graph 5
109 Samir Makdessi, Veki Fattah, Imed Limam, “Determinants of growth in the MENA countries”, publication,
2000
110 Ibid, and see Appendix 1, Graph 6
From another aspect, what might be the institutional and political indicators of development? How is this Arab world doing in terms of institutions? Bad economic policies cause slow growth. The primary reason behind slow growth is the contractual problems between interest groups and policymakers. In the Arab world, there is a lot of bureaucracy which focuses on controlling resources rather than supporting private sector initiative, and thus is in need for political openness and liberalization. What about the business environment? Administrative and judicial institutions are highly ineffective in the Arab world. In fact, international investors are faced with complex registrations, licenses, bureaucracy and distortions. Furthermore, investors who are not discouraged by the environment have to pay high bureaucratic costs or resort to bribery and corruption. All of this causes the deterioration of competition and business environment. Also, when a conflict is taken to the court for settlement, it takes a long time before getting a fair and wise decision, as the large audience seem to believe the jurisdiction to be impartial and incompetent.\textsuperscript{111}

Politics are all the more complex. On the one hand, we have geopolitical threats. In the MENA region, military expenditure is very high as a percentage of GDP compared to the rest of the world. The demand for those military expenditures is a consequence of the international conflicts in the region, and is provided by superpower rivalries that offer rents to strategic MENA countries. Following the international conflicts, the military establishments in the MENA region have been further developed and gained control over resources such as weapons, personnel and economic activities. They are now an economic force that has influence on trade and industrial policies.

\textsuperscript{111} Hadi Salehi, Esfahani, “Reexamination of the political economy of growth in the MENA countries”, 2002, publication of the Institute of Financial Economies, AUB
On the other hand, the Arab world is characterized by a paradox that is of its homogeneity and heterogeneity. MENA countries enjoy a high degree of ethno-linguistic homogeneity, a factor that contributes to better representation and harmonization in policymaking. But some MENA countries suffer from ethnic divisions which cause major conflicts. (Examples: Kurdish minorities, Lebanon’s civil war, etc.). Ethnic divisions, along with international conflicts, have somehow provided a justification for authoritarian government policies. However, some economists, like Bates (1999), argue that ethnic divisions don’t engender conflicts; they might rather have a positive effect on economic performance under some circumstances.

Finally, it is essential to shed light on the autocracy’s omnipresence: MENA countries suffer from lack of representation and extreme centralization of decision-making which have caused a poor quality of many policies. Foreign and domestic businesses in MENA countries complain of changing policies without due process. Clearly, natural resource rents, internal and external conflicts have reinforced the survival of autocracy in the region; however there are other socio-cultural causes that support the repressive regime.

At this point, three main ideas need to be recalled. First, growth collapsed in the Arab World since the mid-eighties.

“Despite that the Arab world displays substantial heterogeneity in its economic growth performance; there is a common behavior that needs to be analyzed: the large growth rates of the 1960s and 1970s disappeared after 1980. For some countries, the growth rate became negative on average, for some countries it declined but remained positive. Overall, however, we can say that the growth performance of the Arab world after 1980 was disappointing across the board”[112].

[112] www.columbia.edu
Second, we have been able to identify several conditions for maintaining sustainable development in the Arab world. The achievement of sustainable high growth in the region will require more clarity on the future directions of policies and considerable domestic and external liberalization. Educational systems in MENA countries should be reformed to be in line with the requirements of modern market economies. MENA wide educational gender gap and illiteracy among women should also be reduced. This has to be a priority on the agenda of policy makers to develop human capital’s quality in the future. Besides, strategies of larger openness and integration in the world economy ought to be pursued strongly and simultaneously with proper domestic economic and institutional reforms113. Another crucial condition for the development of the Arab world is to maintain the reform in the banking sector. A well established and well sustained Economy is not possible without an appropriate channeling of savings and resources into productive and efficient investment114.

Last but not least are the economic development and its link to democracy in the Arab world. Some evidence above has shown that the Arab oil dependency has been a drag on the region democracy. Although, inter-state wars and violent conflicts usually lead to democratic transformation, the Arab region remains an exception. The uniqueness of the Arab world might be caused by the great influence of external forces which have played a key role in setting and changing the Arab regional environment (both positively and negatively) in the struggle towards democratization.115 What could be done to have a sustainable growth in the MENA countries today? Some people might think that the first thing to do is to resolve the Arab conflict, while others believe the solution is to adopt and implement real and considerable democratic transformations. What remains sure is that the success of

113 www.arab-api.org/wps0301.pdf
114 www.columbia.edu
115 Moore, Pete W. « The international context of liberalization and democratization in the Arab world », Arab Studies Quarterly, 16, n3, Summer 1994
democratization in the MENA countries highly depends on the establishment of strong and efficient institutions that ensure coordination at a macro level.

**Economic development and electoral competition in the non-Arab Muslim world**

Daniel Brumberg and Larry Diamond in *Islam and Democracy in the Middle East* note the surprising fact that the level of economic development is not a condition to sustain democracy in the non-Arab Muslim world. They examine the thesis that the non-Arab Muslim states are electorally competitive despite falling below the level of economic development that is usually needed to maintain democracy.\(^\text{116}\) Thus, what is it that distinguishes the non-Arab Muslim world from the Arab Muslim countries as far as economic development and democracy are concerned?

There appears to be 43 countries in the world which are predominantly Muslims, 27 of which are outside the Arab world and 7 among them (Bangladesh, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Indonesia, Turkey, and Albania) are democracies\(^\text{117}\). Stepan and Robertson’s studies have shown that the non-Arab Muslim world, and in regards to the level of economic development, have an unusual number of great electoral overachievers, meaning that their political systems are electorally competitive.\(^\text{118}\)

Stepan and Robertson’s quantitative findings demonstrate that nine of the non-Arab Muslim majority countries are described by both, the Freedom House and Polity IV, as having practised at least three consecutive years of substantial political rights. Seven of these nine

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\(^\text{117}\) See Appendix 2, Table 1: ‘Democracy and Freedom by Region, 2002’

countries are overachievers. Surprisingly, five (Bangladesh, the Gambia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria) of these nine countries have an income of less than $1,500 per capita, yet are still classified as great overachievers\textsuperscript{119}. Moreover, Stepan and Robertson’s findings show that Senegal and Indonesia are considered as electorally non-competitive\textsuperscript{120}, while in table 1 and in 2002, both countries were evaluated as “democracies”. If we examine the 16 Muslim-majority states predominantly Arab, a different picture emerges. Seven of them exceed the 5,500 GDP per capita level, but have never - during 30 years - achieved significant political rights for three consecutive years. These countries are considered as electoral underachievers.\textsuperscript{121} These findings reinforce the argument according to which economic development by itself is not sufficient to establish and reinforce democracy. In fact, as we have previously observed, social, cultural, political, and environmental criteria are also of paramount importance to achieve development.

Quantitative findings are not so relevant if we don’t observe the qualitative ones. An assessment prepared by Stepan\textsuperscript{122} and reminded by Brumberg and Diamond\textsuperscript{123}, shows that as of 2000, competitive, relatively fair elections had produced the current governments in at least six of the non-Arab Muslim-majority countries. In Turkey, the Islamic-influenced Justice and Development Party, most feared by the military, won the 2002 parliamentary elections, and remains until this day the governing party. In the Senegalese presidential election of 2000, the government’s candidate lost even though his party had been in power for around forty years. In Mali, the 2002 presidential race also led to the loss of the governing President at the polls. If we retain the case of Senegal (GDPpc of 1,317$) and Mali (GDPpc of 692$), it appears that

\textsuperscript{119} See Appendix 2, Table 2: ‘Experience and non-experience of moderately robust political and electoral rights for at least three consecutive years between 1972-2000 in Muslim-Majority countries by GDPpc’
\textsuperscript{120} Ibid
\textsuperscript{121} Ibid
\textsuperscript{122} Ibid
\textsuperscript{123} Daniel Brumberg and Larry Diamond in “Islam and Democracy in the Middle East”, John Hopkins university press, 2003
electoral competition is clearly possible at low levels of development. Therefore, does the developmental thesis need to be reviewed?

How is the Arab Muslim world different from the non-Arab Muslim world in terms of development and its relation to democracy? I believe the issue has a lot to do with geopolitics and oil. As we saw in Part B, external forces contribute to the support of authoritarianism in the Arab non-Muslim world in many ways, and for many reasons. For instance, the United States accept to support authoritarian regimes by subsidizing some Arab states such as Egypt (two billion dollars a year) in order to maintain peace with Israel or to sustain the U.S. geopolitical influence in the Arab-Israeli conflict. Have we ever heard of a superpower’s intrusion in Mali or in Senegal?

Patterns in oil states suggest that wealth resulting from the sale of oil does not contribute to democratization in contrast to broad-based economic development involving significant industrialization. In fact, the oil-producing State accumulate oil revenues, and according to Huntington:

“They therefore increase the power of the state bureaucracy and, because they reduce or eliminate the need for taxation, they also reduce the need for the government to solicit the acquiescence of its subject to taxation. The lower the level of taxation, the less reason for publics to demand representation.”

Thus, it appears that economic development is working inversely for democratization in the Gulf States. The more there is wealth, the less there is democracy.

A common belief stipulates that peace and stability are reached when a country enjoys a democratic system together with an acceptable level of economic development. What is really important is the development of a country as a whole, no matter what kind of political


\[125\] Huntington, Samuel P., « The Third Wave : Democratization in the late Twentieth Century », 1995, p.55
system this country complies with. If we take the example of the “Federal Constitutional Monarchy” of the United Arab Emirates we can clearly observe that this is a country living in peace; it is also stable and witnessing a full-fledged development on all levels.

Throughout this chapter, we have been able to prove that the non-Arab Muslim world is electorally competitive despite its low level of economic development. This crucial finding allows us to question that the existence of intrinsic patterns in Islam which prevent a country of becoming democratic. In the next chapter, we will examine the correlation between Islam and democracy, which will help us find out whether or not these two complex concepts are compatible.
CHAPTER IV
THE CORRELATION BETWEEN ISLAM AND DEMOCRACY

The fourth major issue we have to address is that of the correlation between Islam and democracy. This section will define the aspects of globalised democracy and "globalised Islam". Does religion affect democracy or the process of democratization? Does Islam contain patterns which are not compatible with democracy? Can we be a democrat and a Muslim at the same time? Another crucial challenge which the Arab world must face is the integration of Islamists in the political system. Thus, we will also examine the Islamists' place and role in the emerging political systems in the Arab world.

Globalised democracy versus globalised Islam?

Today, there is no doubt about the existence of a globalised democracy and a "globalised Islam". In this context, it is worthwhile to highlight a question that is still controversial: Is it a globalised democracy versus a globalised Islam or a globalised democracy compatible with a globalised Islam? Olivier Roy in Globalised Islam explains the way in which Muslims use Islam today. He inspects in detail the fact that Islamic neofundamentalism is not a simple reaction against westernisation but a consequence of globalisation. We will be concerned in seeing why and how contemporary Islam is a product of globalisation, keeping in mind the clash among Muslims themselves.

Globalisation relatively weakened boundaries between countries. The world turned into a rather open space, where constant interaction occurs between different cultures, nationalities, affiliations, etc. With globalisation, emerged new state-of-the-art communication technologies serving as extremely efficient tools to vehicle principles,
ideologies and visions of the world. In fact, in today’s world, propaganda is a major weapon to be used to strengthen one’s position and image while weakening and disfiguring the others’. Thus, it is due to propaganda and amplified media exposure that we can talk about globalised Islam and globalised Democracy. Groups of people having a certain way of living, a specific structure will seek to import their mode of thinking and their practices to other cultures because they now have the mean to expand their authority and power outside their territory: indoctrination through intensive media and efficient propaganda.

How can we describe globalised democracy? In the same way the relationship of Muslims to Islam is being reshaped by globalisation, the relation between the democrats and democracy is also being altered by the effects of globalisation, fundamentalism, and the belief that democracy is the ultimate political system.

Global Islam as defined by Olivier Roy “refers to the way in which the relationship of Muslims to Islam is reshaped by globalisation, westernisation and the impact of living as a minority”. Roy adds that the out coming Islam is not a different one as it is consistent with the general Muslim theological knowledge, yet it takes several forms including fundamentalism which stresses the need to return to a ‘pure’ Islam.

Thus, if there is a global Islam, who exactly are the global Muslims?

“By global Muslims we mean either Muslims who settled permanently in non-Muslim countries (mainly in the West), or Muslims who try to distance themselves from a given Muslim culture and to stress their belonging to a universal ummah, whether in a purely quietist way or through political action.”

Globalised Islam takes the Muslim religion beyond the borders of a certain Islamic country as it stipulates the affiliation of all Muslims in the world to an ideal “Ummah”, that

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127 Ibid
Globalisation allows Muslims to interact, communicate as well as strengthen their cause in front of a wider audience which gives them a chance to persuade potential adepts of Muslim practices.

In parallel, globalised democracy is an ideal principal gathering under one umbrella all adepts of democracy, who believe in freedom of expression, of practice as well as in equality and justice, regardless of their nationality, religious or political affiliations. Globalisation allows this category of people to promote their cause and spread democratic principles as they see them fit.

Indeed, going through a war under the pretext of installing democracy has been the mainstream since the United States declared war on terrorism and Bush first took the opportunity to go after Al-Qaida in Afghanistan and to break up the Taliban regime. After September 11th, the principal aim of American foreign policy has been to bring a change of regime in so-called “undemocratic” countries. Many authors and intellectuals have studied the way in which Muslims use Islam today but very few have done the same about democracy. The latter, as Islam, is being exploited in many ways in Western and Eastern countries. Some people may believe that democracy and Islam are two opposite concepts which could never function together, yet they have common grounds: fighting to impose their teachings. Acts of terrorism as well as starting a war in order to impose a certain structure can be defined as extremism, thus, extremist democrats resemble radical Islamists; both believe in a cause which in their eyes, is rightful. With what globalisation has to offer in terms of expansion, both parties seek to promote their vision of the world, regardless of whether this vision genuinely embodies what Islam or democracy is or isn’t.
In reality, globalised Islam is not to be opposed to globalised Democracy because there is nothing inherent in Islam that is directly incompatible with democracy. Islam is not a negation by default to Democracy as there is no direct cause/effect relation between these two terms: the presence of Islam in a country does not necessarily mean that this country is undemocratic and vice versa. According to Robin Wright, “Resistance to political change associated with the Islamic bloc is not necessarily a function of the Muslim faith. Neither Islam nor its culture is the major obstacle to political modernity; even if undemocratic rulers sometimes use Islam as their excuse”\textsuperscript{128}.

In fact, the issue is not if there is a globalised Islam versus a globalised democracy; it is more a question of globalised secularism versus a globalised religious sense. Indeed, renowned French writer and thinker André Malraux, said “the 21st century will be a religious one, or will not be at all”\textsuperscript{129}. In this sense, it can be said that globalised Islam might be perceived as opposed to globalised Democracy because all religions, whether Islam, Christianity, Judaism, or any other, impose certain constraints to humans which sometimes obstructs the full and perfect implementation of the ideal democracy. But is Islam really incompatible with secularisation and democracy?

\textbf{Relativism and the relationship between Islam, secularisation and democracy}

In the West, secularisation is seen as a prerequisite for democratization, but in the Middle East, it is often associated with dictatorship. Is Islam an obstacle to secularisation and democracy? Is democracy relative to each population or is it applicable everywhere? In


\textsuperscript{129} http://www.ajadona.com/content/view/62/111/
examining Muslim History and few cases in the modern Arab world and the Middle East region, we will be able to better understand how well secularisation and democracy are related or opposed to Islam. From a historical point of view, Islam has proven, since its establishment, to be a religion that praises democratic practices and not the contrary. In fact, Islam highly promotes equality and freedom and thus plays a major role in promoting democracy.

The first example is the approach Islam has regarding slavery and equality amongst people. In fact, at a time when Arabs traded slaves and considered them less than human, Islam refused to adopt this practice and worked on freeing slaves. The first “moua’zzen” in Islam, was Bilal Ibn Ribah, an African Ethiopian slave bought and freed by the prophet Mohamed around 618 a.d while his master, Umayya ibn khalaf, was beating him. According to Islam, slavery is to be abolished because all people are born equal as mentioned in the Qur’an. Furthermore, equality between people is symbolically represented when Muslims go to Saudi Arabia to fulfill their pilgrimage duty. They will all have to go through the same phases, wearing the same white outfits, no matter what nationality, race or social status they belong to; all are equal.

The second example on how Islam promoted democratic practices is equality between men and women and this could be demonstrated through several case studies. A common ritual amongst Arab tribes was to kill girls at birth. However, Islam refused this tradition and prohibited the murder of new-born female. Another case of how Islam enhanced the woman’s status was by mentioning polygamy in the Qur’an. Even though this might sound contradictory but the truth is otherwise. Islam does not promote polygamy as many might

130 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bilal_ibn_Ribah
131 http://saaid.net/female/bayan.htm
132 http://www.islamawareness.net/Polygamy/why.html
think; it rather organizes and disciplines a practice that was already existent. Indeed, Islam only allows a man to marry more than one woman in case he is able to treat them all equally giving them their rights to the fullest. Regardless of the judgment we might have about polygamy, Islam appears to be setting in this case an institutional frame and disciplinary boundaries to protect women and allow them to get their rights.

A third example of how Islam relates to Democracy is “temporary marriage”\textsuperscript{133} or what is known as “marriage of pleasure”, a practice only recognized by the shia’a confession. In this sense, democracy is taken as a state of mind where the biological and social needs of a person are respected. The temporary marriage practice has been historically condemned for being immoral and unethical while in fact, it is a liberating experience as it allows a woman and a man to get married without having to assume large responsibilities such as household income, raising children, etc. and which are to be taken into consideration when it comes to permanent, traditional marriage. This kind of marriage resembles to a contract where concerned parties can state their conditions and limit their responsibilities. As a practice, it has been established by reformist Muslims who came to the conclusion that young men and women, living in modern societies, attain their sexual maturity long before they acquire their socio-economical independence. Thus, it came as an orthodox solution to allow individuals to satisfy their biological needs within boundaries. In addition, temporary marriage is used as a medium phase which allows a person to better know his/her partner before stepping into the institution of long-lasting marriage, especially in terms of sexual harmony and acceptance.

Another example is related to pluralism which is a pillar of democratic regimes. Indeed, when Islam started to be revealed in 610 a.d, it acknowledged the two already existing

\textsuperscript{133} http://www.alhikmeh.com/arabic/mktba/quran/ alnarea/n08.html
religions: Christianity and Judaism. Moreover, in many Qur'anic verses we can find references to other prominent religious figures such as Prophet Abraham, Prophet Joseph and Prophet Issa (Jesus Christ) as well as the Virgin Mary. Islam recognizes the importance of the “other” and stresses the need to respect him/her regardless of his/her affiliations.

These examples, and many more, show that Islam intrinsically does not reject democracy as one may think, and that it can be compatible with democratic and liberal practices. However, it is the attitude of rulers, their understanding of democracy and democratic principles that vary. Therefore, the understanding of democracy is relative to each and every opinion leader or authority figure in the world in general, and in the Arab world in specific, and it is them who transfer a different conception of democracy.

In Turkey, for example, the Muslim ruler Mustapha Kemal (Ataturk) believed in secularism and democracy to such extent that he set the fundamentals of today’s Turkish regime which is based on the separation of powers and the non interference of religion in public and political affairs (1919-1920). Although Islam is the official religion in Turkey, people are free to practice or not their rituals.

Another example can be examined in the Islamic Republic of Iran where it is legal and legitimate to implement a gender-change surgery allowing a man to become a woman and vice versa. This right has been officially granted to transsexuals in the eighties and was originally stipulated in 1963 by Ayatollah Rouhollah Khomeini – leader of the Islamic Revolution in Iran - and later approved by the Supreme guide Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. These two cases underline the fact that democracy and secularization can coexist with Islam.

135 http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transsexualit%C3%A9_en_Iran
However, other cases might prove the contrary. For instance, in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Islam is the religion and Monarchy is the political regime. There is little rights of expression and daily life is widely conditioned by strict “Interpreted” Muslim practices which leave no room for secularization. In the Arab Republic of Egypt, homosexuals are still condemned to the death penalty when their sexual affiliation is uncovered; moreover, any protestor against the government is rapidly punished and oppressed.

These last two examples show that in countries where Islam is largely adopted as a religion by the population, regardless of whether the political regime in this country is based on Islam or not (the regime in KSA is based on Islam while in Egypt it’s not), democracy and secularization seem to be almost non-existent. Hence, and according to what have presented above, we can safely say that it is not a question of whether or not Islam is compatible with democracy in these particular countries, because Islam, as shown previously, is a religion that demonstrates signs praising democracy. Furthermore, Islam is definitely not the criterion which allows us to detect the absence or presence of democracy in a country. Therefore, the more adequate question is whether the rulers of these countries use Islam to promote democracy or, to the contrary, misuse it - through personalized interpretations - to prohibit democratic practices. Furthermore, not only the implementation or not of democracy is related to the rulers’ vision of their countries, but also, in case of imported democracies, to the nature of the environment that this democracy is being implanted in. According to the Brazilian statesman Ruy Barbosa, the worst of democracies is by far preferable than the best of dictatorships. This is to say that the concept of democracy is relative: if freedom brought happiness to the American people, this does not mean that this same freedom would bring happiness to Iraqis living in total chaos. Indeed, between Sadam Hussein’s dictatorship and
the so-called “freedom” and “democracy” imported by the Americans and which have brought civil war, terrorism and instability, the choice of hundred of thousands of Iraqis would surely go for old times’ stability, in opposition to the present chaos.

The truth is that democracy and secularization are not to be opposed to Islam. These concepts might align together to serve one cause as well as they can be deadly opponent; the matter is relative because the implementation of Islam and Democracy lay in the hands of mankind which means that it is bound to constant change and variations. As shown in the many cases mentioned, a Muslim can adopt and implement democratic principles while freely participating to the political life. However, in many Arab countries today, we can witness the emergence of Islamists, who can also be referred to as Radical Muslims, in the political sphere. Thus, if a Muslim can indeed be a democrat at the same time, can a Radical Muslim be a democrat as well?

**A challenge for the Arab world: the integration of Islamists in the political system**

There is a clear difference between Muslims and Islamists, whereby the first group designates the group of adepts to Islam by birth, who may or may not practice the Muslim rituals or show their Muslim affiliation, while the second category represents all radical Muslims who have chosen their religion not only to be their mode of living and being but also as their political system. A definition of Islamism could be as follows:

“Islamism is a term used to denote a set of political ideologies holding that Islam is not only a religion but also a political system. Islamism holds that Islamic law (sharia) must be the basis for all statutory law of society; that Muslims must return to the original teachings and the early models of Islam; and that western military, economic, political, social, or cultural influence in the Muslim world is un-Islamic.”

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There is no doubt that some Arab countries are facing a political challenge to tolerate and integrate Islamists in their political structure, especially that Islamist Parties are gaining weight in the Arab countries. Similar cases can be spotted in three countries among others, namely: Lebanon, Palestine and Egypt.

In Lebanon, Islamists are not a unified bloc. Instead, each Muslim confession, has its own Islamist Party: Hizbullah for the Shia’a and Al Jama’a Al Islamiyah for the Sunni. They both have entered the political sphere and become prominent within certain regions in Lebanon, establishing charitable and educational institutions. They both enjoy a relatively wide popular support which led one of them, namely Hizbullah, to be represented in the Lebanese Government lately. However, the emergence of such parties in a multi-confessional country like Lebanon, have alarmed some categories of Lebanese who fear for Democracy and believe that this participation will lead to the adoption of the sharia as the only way of governance in Lebanon, whereby Muslim practices like wearing the veil will be generalized to include all the Lebanese people. I believe this is not a possible scenario in Lebanon, whereby even if Muslim Shia’a groups became as powerful as it can be in terms of legal and state authority, there will never be a general consensus among them to adopt an orthodox Muslim structure to be imposed on all Lebanese. Why? Because not all the shia’a in Lebanon have the same political views. In fact, most recently, a new political party was established by some shia’a families like the Asa’ads and the Kamels. This party, baptized the “third option”, offer new prospects to shia’a who do not want to be associated with the image of Hizbullah or Amal’s Movement (another shia’a party), whether this image was negative or positive. This indeed shows that pluralism exists amongst the Lebanese shia’a rows and that not all Muslims are members of one big stagnant and rigid bloc. In addition, it is crucial to mention that both Hizbullah and Al Jama’a Al Islamiyah are mainly anti-American as they refuse to import
Anglo-Saxon traditions and practices to be adapted in the Arab society. Furthermore, a clear opposition has been noted between the United States, supposedly incarnating Democracy, and Hizbullah - perceived by the US as a terrorist radical group - an opposition which climaxed during the Israeli-Lebanese war in the Summer of 2006. This clash has helped widen the gap between Democracy and Islam, which originally appeared after the Al Qaeda 9/11 attack on US soil.

Another case of Islamists can be examined in Egypt where the Islamist group “Al Ikhwa El Muslimin” or the Muslim Brotherhood, are gaining more popular support and that clearly manifested when the latter group obtained 19% of the seats at the Egyptian Parliament seats in the legislative elections of 2005\textsuperscript{137}. The opposition between Islamists and Democracy in Egypt is well highlighted in an article of the Daily Texan stating:

“Under U.S. pressure to bring about democratic reform, President Hosni Mubarak gave the Brotherhood unusual leeway in the campaign, but his security forces cracked down after the first round of polling on Nov. 9 when it became evident the Islamic group had unexpectedly strong popular support”\textsuperscript{138}.

What is far more interesting in this quote is the fact that the Egyptian President, pro-democratic and an ally to the American political administration, oppressed the “undemocratic” group of Islamists while they seem to have a large popular support, the main pillar to any Democratic Regime.

A similar scenario is presented in Palestine were after holding democratic elections (encouraged and sponsored by the Americans) leading to the arrival of Hamas - the Palestinian Islamist party - to power, Hamas has been accused by the Americans and their allies in the Palestinian Government, of being a terrorist and “undemocratic” group, though its

\textsuperscript{138} Ibid 7
representatives were directly elected by the people. Today, Palestinians are paying a high price for the democratic choice they have taken as they are enduring horrific consequences: Chaos in Gaza, collective penalty from the international community, disintegration and a never-seen division of the territories. This is the daily lot of a population who is discovering the ‘benefits’ of a new born democracy.

Accordingly, the general opposition between Islam and Democracy is rather to be narrowed down to an opposition between the so-called “undemocratic” Islamists groups, perceived by the US as such, and the concept of “Democracy” as understood by the American politicians in power.

Today, classification has become a trend: Developed countries versus under developed ones, terrorist regimes versus peace seekers, Democracy versus Tyranny, etc... any country in the world is to be classified in one categories or another, while the other countries become of the other category by default. If western countries claim that they seek democracy, this means that eastern countries seek tyranny. By transition, if western countries are mainly Christian in faith, and eastern countries are Muslim, that means that western Christian countries seek democracy while eastern Muslim ones seek tyranny. Hence, what is the correlation between Islam and democracy? The direct answer is that Islam is compatible with democracy and nothing inherent to Islam prevents Islamic regimes from becoming democratic. It is the wrongful exercise, understanding and use of democracy or Islam that can turn these two concepts into two extremes. According to American writer and ex-reporter for the most renowned American dailies like the Washington post, Robin Wright states in her book Islam and Liberal Democracy: Two visions of Reformations that “Islam is not lacking in tenets and practices that are compatible with pluralism. Among these are the traditions of ijihad
(interpretation), ijma (consensus), and shura (consultation)." Therefore, Islam contains no evident instruction going against democracy or democratic principles and practices.

Many examples in the history of Islam can back up the statement that Islam is compatible with democratic principles. However, other examples can prove this statement wrong. In fact, while Islam as a Religion promotes democratic acts and deeds, the interpretation of Islamic teachings remains highly subjective. If we go back in history, we can observe that the differences between the Muslim Sunni and the Muslim Shia’a have their roots in various interpretations of almost the same teachings. It is true that in Islam, God has the supreme power over everything and a good Muslim would obey to God’s word and teachings as well as to the Sunna of the Prophet Mahomet, which might in some cases oppose to some democratic and laic principles - similarly to what happened in France with school girls wearing veils and expressing their religious affiliations. When a father compels his 10 year old daughter to wear a veil because it is God’s will, this practice is surely anti-democratic because it deprives the daughter from expressing her own mind. However, when an adult woman chooses to wear a veil out of conviction, this coincides directly with democratic practices as it promotes freedom of choice, belief and expression. In this same direction, some Jihadists, like Al Qaeda, have disfigured the democratic image of Islam in the world. People tend to forget that throughout history, all religions have killed in the name of God and Religion. It is most famous that Christian kings led the crusades to spread Christianity and free other populations from slavery and injustice while spreading freedom and enlightenment to the lands they conquered. Radical Muslims like Al Qaeda kill today in the name of Islam, praising Allah and justifying their “legitimate” practices as a mission to purify the soul and gratify Islam.

Therefore, Islam is not to be isolated from other religions, as a Christian or a Jew country might not be democratic in practice. The main confusion comes from the fact that Islam proposes itself not only as a religion, but also as a political regime as stated in the Qur’an “Islam is a religion and a political State”, and Muslim practices might as well work as general social and political practices. Taking into account the Arab culture, economic development, and Islam; and in order to comprehend clearer how can an Arab and Muslim country deal with democracy, I thought it helpful to carry out a case study. I have chosen the case of Algeria since there have been a lot of controversies about its democratization. The next chapter will show whether or not there is a democratic process in Algeria.
CHAPTER V

DEMOCRATIZATION AND ELECTIONS: THE CASE OF ALGERIA

Is the Arab world emerging into a new wave of democratization or is it just a facade of democracy? Since elections are the ideal tool to exercise democracy, we cannot speak of democracy in the Arab world without studying elections in the region. As it is impossible to deal with all categories of Arab countries, I will only focus on Algeria.

I settled my choice on the Algerian example because the elections in this country have been the center of controversies since January 1992 when the military cancelled the second round of the legislative elections, which the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) was supposed to win. This example best illustrates how in most Muslim countries secularisation has run against democratisation. Why did the military cancel the second round of the legislative elections? Why is it that the FIS was supposed to win those same elections? And what happened since then? Assertions concerning Algeria’s process of democratisation are mixed.

As noted by Alfred Stepan and Graeme Robertson, using the Freedom House (FH) and Polity IV Project sources, Algeria is not qualified as an electorally competitive state. Besides, none of the Muslim-majority states who are part of the Arab League are considered as electorally competitive, which is ‘always a necessary condition for democracy’. Thus, it seems that Algeria does not pave the way for democracy. However, there are views suggesting that Algeria is producing a democratic order. This is indeed an exciting debate that I will try to examine through three parts. The first part questions the existence of a democratisation process in Algeria by combining comparative judgements on the last two presidential and parliamentary elections. The second part tries to demonstrate the existence of

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140 http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/polity/
141 Alfred Stepan and Graeme B. Robertson, “Arab, Not Muslim, Exceptionalism”, Journal of Democracy, April 15, 2004
a real potential for Algeria to become a democracy. The third and last part explores Algeria’s political challenges and its ability to deal with problems in a globalized world order.

**Elections in Algeria: Democratization or facade of democracy?**

What do the Freedom House and Polity IV Project have to say about elections in Algeria? I will also examine a combination of what the French newspapers published about the Algerian elections.

According to the 2004 table of Independent Countries of the Freedom House, Algeria got 6 for Public Rights (PR) and 5 for Civil Liberties (CL). In terms of Freedom Rating, Algeria is stated as ‘Not Free’. Polity IV Country Report 2003 gives Algeria a score of -3 on a 21 point scale and classifying countries between strongly democratic and strongly non-democratic Muslim majorities’ countries. Are these surveys fair and credible in their judgements? Let’s examine Algeria’s last two parliamentary (1997 and 2002) and presidential elections (1999 and 2004). Political Rights refer to ‘the free participation of the people in the political process’. The score of 6 for PR implies that Algeria is ruled by ‘military juntas or one-party dictatorship or religious hierarchies or autocrats’. Civil Liberties refer to ‘freedom to develop opinions, institutions, and personal autonomy without interference from the state’. The score of 5 for CL implies that Algeria has a high level of oppression particularly in the areas of censorship and/or political terror and/or the prevention of free association.

Regarding the legislative elections of June 1997 and May 2002, Freedom in the World 2003 asserts that:

143 www.freedomhouse.org/research/freeworld/2003/methodology.htm
144 www.freedomhouse.org; Freedom in the World, Survey Methodology
145 www.freedomhouse.org/research/freeworld/2003/methodology.htm
146 www.freedomhouse.org; Freedom in the World, Survey Methodology
147 Ibid
Although the last two rounds of parliamentary elections were free of systematic fraud and vote-rigging, the government’s refusal to license FIS (Islamic Salvation Front) and other radical Islamist groups limited the choices of voters to panoply of regime-approved parties.\footnote{http://freedomhouse.org/research/freeworld/2003/countryratings/algeria.htm}

‘Are the legislative representatives elected through free and fair elections?’\footnote{www.freedomhouse.org: Question two of the Electoral Process in the Political Rights Checklist, Freedom in the World, Survey Methodology} The answer is yes, according to FH assessment, despite the banning of the FIS and other radical groups. The Freedom House stated that in 1997, ‘the main result of the elections was a transfer of seats from one political vehicle of a regime to another’, underlining that the results may have reinforced Bouteflika’s position vis-a-vis the regime without provoking the creation of a real and strong parliamentary opposition.\footnote{http://freedomhouse.org/research/freeworld/2003/countryratings/algeria.htm} Also, according to FH 2004 findings, the turnout rate in the 2002 elections was the lowest in Algerian history. Moreover, the Berber electoral boycott and the governmental banning imposed on the FIS and Wafa parties, restricted the voters’ choices. This implies that in Algeria there is political pluralism, yet not all parties can participate in the electoral process. If we answer questions one, ‘does the Algerian people have the right to organize in different political parties (...)?’ and two, ‘is there a significant opposition vote, de facto opposition power (...)?’\footnote{www.freedomhouse.org: Freedom in the World, Survey Methodology} the successive answers would be yes and no. As a matter of fact, we can’t really presume that the Freedom House descriptive views support the quantitative ones in terms of political rights.

If we compare the FH findings to French newspapers’ views, one can notice discrepancies concerning the issue of fraud. French dailies \textit{Le Monde} and \textit{Le Figaro} agreed that fraud clearly characterised the 1997 parliamentary elections. \textit{Le Monde} stated that ‘Algeria doesn’t pave the way for democracy [...] As far as the presidential ballot or the constitutional referendum is concerned, the electoral results have been protested by the
opposition and fraud marked the June 5 parliamentary elections\textsuperscript{152}. Moreover, \textit{Le Figaro} asserted that the reorganisation of the electoral scene has put aside the democratic opposition while the June 5 parliamentary elections’ conditions have been denounced by the opposition and criticized by the UN\textsuperscript{153}.

The 2002 parliamentary elections have been characterized by the Berber boycott which disturbed the ballot. This boycott seems to be the result of the 1997 electoral fraud. \textit{Le Figaro} noted that President Abdelaziz Bouteflika gave transparency guaranties only because he wanted to be the one who paves the way for regular elections. However, his message is not getting through to the people\textsuperscript{154}. From its end, French daily \textit{Libération} underlined the lack of participation in a so-called multi-pluralist system and declared: if 23 parties and 123 lists are engaged in the electoral campaign, the results won’t surprise anyone. The parliament will remain largely dominated by the three parties which benefit from the government support, the National Rally for Democracy (NRD), the ‘Front de Libération National’, and the ‘Mouvement pour la Société pour la Paix’ (MSP). \textit{Libération} also reminded the massive fraud during the 1997 parliamentary elections\textsuperscript{155}, and \textit{Le Monde} stated that the leaders of the opposition, who strongly believed that the ballot was marked by fraud, feel that neither the results are relevant, nor will they bring solutions for political, economic and social problems storming in the former French colony\textsuperscript{156}.

What about the presidential elections of April 1999 and 2004? President Abdelaziz Bouteflika, who represents the RND party, was first elected in April 1999 with 73.8\% of the votes, and was later re-elected in April 2004 with 83.5\% of the votes. Let’s first examine the

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\textsuperscript{152} \textit{Le Monde}, June 9, 1997
\textsuperscript{153} \textit{Le Figaro}, August 31, 1997
\textsuperscript{154} \textit{Le Figaro}, May 31, 2002
\textsuperscript{155} \textit{Libération}, May 30, 2002
\textsuperscript{156} \textit{Le Monde}, May 31, 2002
Polity IV Project institution’s approach in measuring democracy in Algeria. Polity IV stated that Bouteflika is ‘widely viewed as Algeria’s most sincere politician’ and as a negotiator (with the FIS) who sought to put an end to the conflict between Islamists and secularists that erupted in 1992. Polity IV added that although Bouteflika was the chosen candidate of the military establishment in 1999, ‘his election signals a general weakening of direct military control over the political process’ because he ‘has shown independence from the military in the past’. Also, Polity IV noted that the 1999 elections reflected an increased openness in the Algerian political process despite of the boycott of the opposition’s majority, and concluded that the voting process was relatively clean and press censorship was limited. Yet, Polity IV still ranks Algeria as a non-democratic Muslim majority country. In this respect, the descriptive view of this institution does not support the quantitative one. Polity IV tone contrasts with that of the Freedom House. The latter affirms that the 1999 presidential election was severely flawed, citing government fraud and manipulation. As a matter of fact, one can note discrepancies between these two institutions. However, Polity IV Project and Freedom House overviews on the 2004 presidential elections didn’t come out yet.

Comparison with French newspapers will show controversies. Libération noted that despite a so-called competition during the 1999 presidential elections, the results were known in advance. It added that for François Hollande (the first secretary of the French Socialist Party back then), Bouteflika won’t be able to pull a legitimacy out of this ballot, even if the latter would appear as being legal. What about the 2004 presidential elections? Le Monde underlined the relatively high participation rate of voters (57.78% against 46% for the legislative in 2002). Analysts explained this phenomenon claiming that most of the voters

157 http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/polity/country_reports/2003/algeria
158 Ibid
159 Ibid
161 Libération, April 16, 1999
have perceived these elections as the most transparent Algeria had ever witnessed. *Le Monde* also published that the military establishment had publicly promised not to interfere in the election results. Army commander Mohamed Lamari declared repeatedly that his institution would not ‘support’ or ‘wasn’t against’ any of the candidates.\(^{162}\) As for the French daily *Le Figaro*, it was rather interested in “behind the scene” happenings during the re-election of Bouteflika. The daily confirmed that this re-election was entirely manipulated by General Toufik Médiène, the secret services commander, who announced the future victory of Ali Benflis. The latter was Bouteflika’s main opponent and was introduced as the army protégé. This strategy was to validate the thesis of a ‘Bouteflika dropped by the army’ and to legitimize Bouteflika’s re-election.\(^{163}\) Algerians, politicians and private journalists had bet on a ‘military miracle’ to block the dictator’s path. This manipulation was a successfull operation since a majority of the public opinion was convinced that Bouteflika ‘was re-elected by the people, against the will of the military hierarchy’.\(^{164}\) From another angle, *Libération* wrote that the 2004 presidential elections in Algeria were ‘real-fake’ pluralist elections. If Algerians had the choice between six candidates, Bouteflika’s victory was probable.\(^{165}\) In terms of civil liberties, *Le Monde* defends Algeria’s freedom to develop opinions and personal autonomy without interference from the state. The score of 5 that Freedom House gave to Algeria has to be reviewed. In *Le Monde* a journalist narrates that when she was in Algeria during the 2004 elections, she was surprised to see the massive number of people who rushed to vote. While being there she interrogated some women about the elections’ process, asking them: ‘why are you voting, what are your motivations?’ The women answered: ‘we are voting because today, we feel that we have the choice between two candidates.’ The journalist also noted the growing freedom of the press in today’s Algeria. A time goes by, Algerian and Foreign

\(^{162}\) *Le Monde*, April 9, 2004

\(^{163}\) *Le Figaro*, April 20, 2004

\(^{164}\) *Le Figaro*, April 10, 2004

\(^{165}\) *Libération*, April 8, 2004
journalists are obtaining further rights which entitle them to do their job correctly. This has to be taken seriously into consideration by the Freedom House as well as by the Polity IV Project.

What about the international press? According to the Middle East Economic Digest (MEED), "the 5 June 1997 poll leaves President Zeroual with lower power in the house of parliament in which parties created by the regime have a secure, but not overwhelming majority". Zeroual welcomed the 1997 elections' results as a justification of his strategy. However, a report by UN observers reported the following:

"The majority of observers who supervised the elections share the opinion that the process did not provide sufficient guarantees of neutrality and transparency. Election observers suggested that the military-backed establishment has used the conflict with radical Islam as a pretext for holding onto power and depriving rival groups of influence."

What is the international community judgement? The conclusions of international observers are mixed. However, the Arab League's reaction remains the most intriguing of all. According to its spokesman, "all Arab brothers are proud that Algeria was able to carry out the path to multipartism. We didn't observe any irregularities during the voting and the counting of the votes. Even if there are errors, this is normal considering the Algerian situation."

In a UN press release, discrepancies between the opinions of the different UN members almost directly jump to the eye: "many observers estimated that in some places the regime used the security situation as a pretext to limit their room for manoeuvre, while others have considered that their responsibilities could have been practised without constraints."

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166 Le Monde, April 8, 2004
167 Marks, Jon Blum, Charlotte. "Algeria's generals bid for legitimacy", Middle East Economic Digest, June 20, 1997
168 Ibid
169 At a press conference held at the CIP (Centre International de Presse), June 7, 1997
170 El Watan, June 9, 1997
Frédéric Volpi, author of *Islam and Democracy*, states that during June 1997 parliamentary elections:

"The rigging operation was clearly observed – it was even captured on French TV crews – and the popular outrage that followed the announcement of these results produced the most important street demonstrations since the 1992 military putsch (...) The visibility of the electoral trafficking and the ensuing public display of anger undermined rather than consolidated the position of the regime".171

*Africa News Service* stated that on the eve of the 1999 presidential elections:

"Six of the candidates withdrew in an illegal move. The candidates were aware that Bouteflika was going to win. He had a national coalition, including four of the main parties, behind him. Bouteflika put the populism of the 1960s and 1970s in his talks, and the people liked it. This was the first time in the 'Arab world' where a presidential candidate met with the people in the streets".172

The newspaper added that Algeria's image as a terrorist country may change due to Bouteflika's approach. The MEED said: "the hard core of generals simply nominated Bouteflika in the place of Zeroual".173 However, it further wrote that positive aspects have unexpectedly been noticed from the opposition: "Ibrahim, who had the support of the banned Islamic Salvation Front, has said that the experience has been worthwhile because it has shown that a wide range of opposition forces can work together".174 As far as the international community is concerned, the United States and France were disappointed with respect to the elections. Officials of the two countries noted that an opportunity for democracy has been missed. Yet, they have also remarked the existence of a relatively fair degree of openness and freedom of expression, advocating that the cause of democracy was not totally lost. Volpi reminds in his book that on the eve of the 1999 presidential elections:

"The early polling organised for the security forces was marred by irregularities (...) on the international scene the immediate reactions to the election were muted. The French

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171 Volpi, Frédéric, « Islam and Democracy », 2003, p.77
172 "Bouteflika and Third Worldism: Algeria's Transition to Democracy" in *Africa News Service*, September 9, 1999
173 Butter, David. "Not all lost after bogus poll!", *Middle East Economic Digest*, April 30, 1999
174 Ibid
Foreign Minister declared that he was worried by this turn of events, whilst US State Department said it was disappointed by the allegations of election rigging.175

For the 2004 presidential elections, the *African Business daily* exposes Bouteflika’s massive public backing: “by all accounts, Algeria's presidential elections last month were above board and incumbent leader Bouteflika's huge majority was a strong demonstration of public confidence in him”176. It also noted that international observers seemed to approve the vote. Bruce George, of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, told the press: “I know there are criticisms, but in my view this was one of the best conducted elections, not just in Algeria, but in Africa and much of the Arab world”177. *The Middle East Journal* compares the 2004 presidential elections to the 2002 parliamentary elections178. It notes that Bouteflika’s victory is surprising if we take into consideration the expectations based on the May 2002 legislative elections. It also asserts that the 2004 presidential vote was “the fairest and freest yet held in the Arab world and that most of the irregularities noted in the Algerian media and by the 125 international observers were congruent with a nation wrecked by civil strife, banditry and terrorism”179.

The 2002 legislative elections were perceived by the opposition as the baseline for the 2004 presidential elections180. However, how can we explain that the 2004 presidential elections didn’t reflect the 2002 legislative voting results?

With all the controversies and discrepancies we have examined, one would wonder who governs Algeria. Indeed, there is an Algerian saying stipulating that “most countries have

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175 Volpi, Frédéric, “Islam and Democracy”, 2003, p.80-81
177 Ibid
178 See Appendix 3, Table 1
179 The Middle East Journal, Winter 2005
180 Ibid
an army, but in Algeria the army has a country”\textsuperscript{181}. The MEED indicated that Bouteflika was appointed by the army during the 1999 presidential elections as well as during the 2004 presidential elections, “the military has changed its role in the election process, but it has not necessarily pulled back from politics”\textsuperscript{182}. Polity IV also affirms that Bouteflika was the chosen candidate of the military establishment in 1999\textsuperscript{183}. Nevertheless, there are other views indicating that Bouteflika was quite independant from the military in 1999. \textit{Africa News Service} stresses that Bouteflika wasn’t candidate of the consensus: “for the first time, the Algerian military did not have a consensus on who would rule the country”\textsuperscript{184}. Some reports also assert that for the first time since the independence, the military did not have a consensual candidate for the 1999 presidential (at least officially). For many observers, the army’s neutrality indicated the will for a progressive withdrawal from the political scene\textsuperscript{185}. If for the first time the army did not have ‘its’ candidate, it however saved itself for the right to intervene in case “the irreversible nature of the national, democratic, republican State, based on pluralism and fundamental liberties happens to be challenged”\textsuperscript{186}. Hocine Aït Ahmed, president of Front des Forces Socialistes (FFS) stated in \textit{El Watan} that as far as Bouteflika’s candidature is concerned, there is the impression that two or three officers wanted to trap everybody. Some people wished to sell this candidature to France asserting it was that of the Army while it was not the case. In return, these same officers wanted to re-sell their presumptions to the military institution claiming that Bouteflika’s candidature was endorsed by France. This is an immense deceit. However, Hocine Aït Ahmed added that a significant result was achieved in the press, as talking about the Army was no longer a taboo. The country used to be governed by fewer officers, a truth that burst out with Zeroual’s departure

\textsuperscript{111} James, Ed. “Challenging choices: the forthcoming elections in Algeria (…), Middle East Economic Digest, March 26, 2004
\textsuperscript{112}Ibid
\textsuperscript{113} Polity IV Country Report 2003 : Algeria
\textsuperscript{114} “Bouteflika and Third Worldism: Algeria’s Transition to Democracy” in Africa News Service, September 9, 1999
\textsuperscript{115} ICG Algeria report Nº4, April 13, 1999, p.9
\textsuperscript{116} El Djirch,(journal), February 1999
according to Ahmed. The latter added that somehow, violence is apparently managed by dominating sectors that want to ensure the sustainability of the system by resisting the democratic transition. Hocine Aït Ahmed is not alone in taking this side. Indeed, Florence Beaugé, journalist for *Le Monde* also questions the army’s impartiality: “is the army neutral or has it been neutralized?”¹⁸⁷ She further declares that for the 2004 presidential elections, the military didn’t want Bouteflika for a second term, but he resisted and decided to represent himself. The army was so scared to be once again accused of intervening in the political game that it preferred to stay neutral. Beaugé added that the power of a certain politico-financial ‘mafia’ can also be an explanation for the army neutralization. According to Volpi, “the choices of the military and the pace of change will be dictated by the international political and financial pressures that are applied to Algeria, as well as by the behaviour of the remaining Islamic guerrillas”¹⁸⁸.

**Is Algeria on its way to democracy?**

After the political deadlock which paralyzed Algeria’s political life when the military intervened to cancel the results of the December 1991 election, authorities started searching for a way to re-launch the democratic process. General Zeroual was appointed President in January 1994, and his collaborators introduced political reforms aimed at establishing an efficient and practical democratic system. Algeria and its rulers seem to have learned their lesson from the failure of the first democratic transition (1989-92). The creation of a second chamber in the parliament, the changing of the electoral law and the setting of restrictions on political parties were intended to avoid the mistakes made in the past. These reforms also

¹⁸⁷ *Le Monde*, April 8, 2004  
¹⁸⁸ Volpi, Frédéric, “Islam and Democracy”, 2003, p.87
have the potential of moving the country away from the political crisis it had experienced since January 1992.\textsuperscript{189}

However, a crucial matter remains unsettled. Why was the FIS banned from participating in the elections? "The authorities had been searching for a formula that would allow for the resumption of democratisation, but one which would be better controlled so as to preserve the interests of the incumbent rulers"\textsuperscript{190}. The first step to return to the democratic process was the holding of presidential elections before the end of 1995\textsuperscript{191}. Thus, pluralist presidential elections were held on 16 November 1995. In what was considered a fair and clean election, Zeroual obtained overwhelming support, with more than 60\% of the votes\textsuperscript{192}. Theses presidential elections marked the first step of a long process that aimed at building the necessary institutions for a potentially successful transition to a pluralist system\textsuperscript{193}. The second step was the revision of the 1989 Constitution in order to better prepare against the legalisation of parties whose programmes may threaten the interests of the incumbent rulers\textsuperscript{194}. The review concerned three main areas: the creation of a second chamber in the National Assembly, the law on political parties and the electoral law.

Perhaps the most significant provision of the Constitution is the creation of a two-chambered parliament. The latter's aim has been to prevent the emergence after a general election of a victorious opposition party (especially an Islamist one) which would threaten the military-backed elite and provoke the military to intervene as it has been the case previously with the FIS:

\textsuperscript{189} Third World Quarterly, "Algeria's elections: the prelude to democratisation", Vol 19, No 2, 1998
\textsuperscript{190} Ibid
\textsuperscript{191} Ibid
\textsuperscript{192} Bouandel, Youcef. "Algeria's first presidential election, November 1995", 1997
\textsuperscript{193} Third World Quarterly, "Algeria's elections: the prelude to democratisation", Vol 19, No 2, 1998
\textsuperscript{194} Ibid
"The second chamber is a safeguard against such a potential menace to the military and suggests that a party with an overall majority would not necessarily be in a position to modify the legislature. This safeguard is central to the new transition to democracy, the introduction of which might conceivably have prevented the army from intervening in 1992."\textsuperscript{195}

As far as the law on political parties is concerned, the drafters of the new Constitution of 1996 sought to remove the ambiguity regarding political parties. Article 42 stipulates that ‘the right to create political parties is recognised and guaranteed’, however making sure that the emergence and activities of new political parties are more carefully regulated\textsuperscript{196}. The provisions are aimed at securing the parties’ commitment to democratic principles while guaranteeing a ‘national pact’ with which all players would comply\textsuperscript{197}. One of the main consequences of the law was, of course, a justification of the decision to ban the FIS in March 1992. However, interestingly enough, the new law on parties contains no provision which would prohibit the recreation of the banned FIS under a different designation. Thus, the FIS is not to be completely excluded from participating in the political life of the country\textsuperscript{198}. It can be argued that this new law (placing a threshold of 5% for parties and candidates in order to be represented in the National Assembly) has acted as a filter to remove the less significant parties whose popular support is almost negligible: in this sense, Benyoucef Benkhedda, for example, dissolved his insignificant Islamic party, Al Ummah\textsuperscript{199}. Another main consequence of the new Law was the drop in the number of political parties taking part in the elections: from 49 parties in the first round of the legislative elections of December 1991 to 39 in June 1997. This is how we can explain that a number of political parties are not represented in the National Assembly.

\textsuperscript{195} Ibid
\textsuperscript{196} Presidential Decree, March 6, 1997
\textsuperscript{197} Third World Quarterly, “Algeria’s elections: the prelude to democratisation”, Vol 19, No 2, 1998
\textsuperscript{198} Ibid
\textsuperscript{199} Le Monde, June 13, 1997
The choice of an electoral law has been one of the most contested issues in Algeria’s political reforms. In light of the FIS’s unexpected victory, the FLN dominated assembly, fearful of similar results in the legislative elections, introduced a two-ballot system, identical to that adopted in France. The new proportional electoral system adopted in 1997 was certainly a better designed system, as it better reflected the popularity of the parties while avoiding concocted majorities.

The president and his collaborators imposed these reforms in an authoritarian manner. According to the former Prime Minister Mouloud Harmouche, the reforms would not change the authoritarian nature of the military-backed regime. However, it might be argued that, although the process was undemocratic, as it had been the case in successful transitions elsewhere (in Brazil for instance), its end results could produce a democratic order, even if it was controlled at its earliest stages.

To decide whether or not Algeria is on its way to democracy, I will state on the one hand the 1997 legislative elections’ voting and results, and on the other hand the 2004 presidential elections’ particularities.

Once amendments to the constitution were operated at the second step of the democratic process, the president announced the holding of legislative elections which, in his view, would contribute to the building of the democratic order. “Whatever its shortcomings, the parliamentary election of June 1997 represented a milestone in Algeria’s political history. Despite violence and campaigns of intimidation, an electoral campaign did take place.”

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201 El Watan, July 11, 1996
202 Zoubir, Yahia. “Transitions from authoritarianism to democracy: the Latin American experience and its relevance to the Middle East: Brazil and Algeria in comparative perspective”, 1997
Those opposed to the holding of the elections wanted to disrupt the operation and to cause a low turnout which would not only cast doubt on the results but also discredit the whole process. However, despite accusations that the reforms were introduced in an authoritarian way, “the participation of the major political parties not only legitimised the process but, in theory, has the potential of bringing an eventual end to the crisis by isolating those opposed to ending the political crisis”\textsuperscript{204}. In this respect, number of questions comes to one’s mind, questions that also reflect the Political Rights checklist of the Freedom House. Did the majority of the parties have an equal opportunity to participate in the process? Were the candidates given equal access to the media? Were there any irregularities which would cast doubts on the results? Last but not least, what do the results of these elections mean? and what are their impact on the democratic transition and the political participation in Algeria?

Given the political violence and instability Algeria has been subject to, especially the escalation of attacks just before polling day, candidates found it rather difficult to conduct a proper political campaign. In order to give credibility to the elections and to make available information about parties and candidates, access to the state-run television was made available to all. The candidates of all parties appeared on television to present their programmes\textsuperscript{205}. In addition to using state-run television, the candidates expressed their views through the independent press. The latter however favoured the programmes of the parties closest to their own views. For instance, \textit{Liberté} and \textit{Le Matin} were clearly supportive of the RCD (Rassemblement pour la Culture et la Démocratie), whereas the Arabic language press, such as \textit{Al-Khabar} was closer to the MSP’S and Nahda’s ideas. The government-owned newspapers were divided between the RND and the FLN. Also, billboards were hanged throughout the streets in Algerian cities\textsuperscript{206}. Thus, it was clear that there were indeed equal campaigning opportunities. All parties had the same objective: putting an end to the violence.

\textsuperscript{204} Ibid
\textsuperscript{205} Ibid
\textsuperscript{206} Ibid
The importance of the results of these elections lies in the high turnout, registered at 65.69%. All major political parties, regardless of their ideologies, had actively participated in the process. This vast participation—despite some criticism—reaffirmed the Algerian voter’s commitment to democratic values and to the creation of a multiparty system. Furthermore, despite the reservations expressed regarding the ‘undemocratic’ manner with which the reforms were introduced, the participation of the major parties legitimised Zeroual’s democratisation process.

Some party leaders contested the fairness of the election, accusing the authorities with fraud. The FFS, for example, suggested that “the election’s results were prepared in a laboratory: the Ministry of Interior.”

“A strong possibility exists that the regime has indeed manufactured the results, but most of those who observed the elections would concur that the true results would not be too different from those the regime proclaimed. (...) There is no general agreement among political parties and international observers on how this might have occurred.”

On the one hand, parties such as the Movement for Society and Peace (used to be called Hamas) or the Berberist parties such as the Socialist Forces Front, and the Rally for Culture and Democracy (RCD) commented that corruption and deceit marked the campaign and that the contest was not held fairly. The United Nations’ mission pointed out the ‘special’ polling stations reserved for the military and the police which did not necessarily guarantee any degree of neutrality and transparency. On the other hand, the National Rally for Democracy (RND) felt that ‘the election was a success’ and international observers from the Arab League and the Organisation of African Unity, while acknowledging that some

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207 Ibid
208 Le Monde, June 8-9, 1997
210 Le Monde, June 8-9, 1997
211 Le Monde, June 10, 1997
‘mistakes’ were made, focused on the high degree of transparency\textsuperscript{212}. The drop in both RCD and MSP electoral fortunes does not automatically prove that the elections were rigged; on the contrary, this can be explained in terms of the participation of similar parties in the June 1997 elections whereby they had no representative candidates in the preidentials thay year\textsuperscript{213}. Finally, it should be noted that if there had been rigging, the authorities should have given the RND an absolute majority so it could have created a clear distinction between the government and the opposition\textsuperscript{214}.

The legislative election of June 1997, regardless of its deficiency, provided Algeria with its first ever pluralist National Assembly. One of the major merits of the June elections has been to guarantee a ‘national pact’ with witch all the main actors would comply. Most importantly, these parties were obliged to cooperate to form a government which is a huge step towards democracy. Moreover, political parties were able to go down to the streets to contest the results of the local elections (which took place after the legislatives) indicating that Algeria did enjoy an increasing autonomous civil society. The new institutions, with all their imperfections, have the potential of spreading the seeds of a genuine democratisation. The next section, ‘the political challenges’, will show if today, those reforms are working as expected, and if they have paved the way for democracy.

Before we move to the last section, what about the 2004 presidential elections? There are views that attribute “Bouteflika's re-election to the opposition's inability to generate an electoral platform that resounded with public opinion and produced immediate gains for the voter”\textsuperscript{215}. If fraud doesn’t explain the results, and if the 2004 elections were the most

\textsuperscript{212} Ibid
\textsuperscript{213} Third World Quarterly, “Algeria’s elections: the prelude to democratisation”, Vol 19, No 2, 1998
\textsuperscript{214} Ibid
\textsuperscript{215} The Middle East Journal, Winter 2005
transparent to date, how can we explain Bouteflika's immense show of support? According to the "Middle East Journal", three interrelated aspects seem to have been at stake:

"First, the elections were marked by low voter turnout, benefiting the incumbent. Second, the Constitutional Council rejected requests by two popular figures for independent candidate status, leaving Benflis, who was then dealing with a split in his own party, as the sole credible opposition candidate. Third, by virtue of the office, Bouteflika (unofficially) began his campaign at least a year before the opposition candidates using the state television monopoly."216

Party affiliation is weak in Algeria and partly accounts for the low turnout. An empirical explanation lies in the inability of the opposition parties to effectively rally turnout, if not support217. Low-level turnout marked most polling stations, with the national average running at 58.07% of the 18,097,255 registered voters. Of the 10,508,777 Algerians who did vote, 329,075 submitted blank ballots218.

Bouteflika's mandate isn't an isolated case. In other developing countries, "weakly rooted political parties also struggle against incumbent presidents who have great scope in authority and power"219. Here, we can quote Latin American specialist Guillermo O'Donnell who has labeled such policies as 'delegative democracies'220. What is worth noting in the Algerian example is that false expectations were acknowledged by the media and the opposition prior to the elections. What we should also keep in mind is that there is no clear evidence of actual ballot rigging. International observers seemed unanimous in their approval of the vote. Anne-Marie Lizin, a Belgian parliamentarian, told AFP that the election was run according to European standards221. However, one can be critical of the campaign. In this direction, Lizin said that "the president had access to the service of the state"222.

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216 Ibid
217 Ibid
218 See Appendix 3, Table 2
219 The Middle East Journal, Winter 2005
221 Bodock, James, "Bouteflika gets massive public backing: by all accounts, Algeria's presidential election last month", African Business, May 2004 Issue
222 Ibid
The political challenges

As noted earlier, the peaceful coexistence between political parties in Algeria is a significant step towards democracy. What has the Algerian government done so far to ensure coexistence between different political parties?

Democratization and economic liberalization are the key solutions to the common problems in Algeria and other countries from the developing world. “Algeria did amend its constitution to make it consistent with the principles of a multi-party democracy, a market economy, respect for human rights, and accountability”\textsuperscript{223}. All the institutions in the multi-party competitions have been put together and that is crucial as today, good governance is a greater part of economic development. Algeria, which has been ruled by a single party for a long time, tried to learn quickly the positive aspects of the democratic systems.

“One of the amendments to the Algerian constitution is to limit the terms in office of the President of the Republic to two years which is an American amendment. Moreover, the Algerian economy is being seen more and more as a measurable economy. That is the best way to take a part in the globalization of the twenty-first century.”\textsuperscript{224}

The political features of globalisation are directly related to democratisation and human rights as they are understood in the West. Algeria has somehow adapted to these requirements of globalisation, although internal and external critics say that the military establishment controls things from behind the scene\textsuperscript{225}.

“The military establishment is well aware that, one of the advantages of globalisation is that the best way to minimise external pressures on internal political issues is to focus on economic liberalisation and on expanding the market opportunities for companies from the countries that set the agenda for the WTO, the IMF/World Bank combine and the UN\textsuperscript{226}.

\textsuperscript{223} Agnihotri, Newal K, « Algeria :Democracy & Liberalization », Presidents & Prime Ministers, 1998 Issue
\textsuperscript{224} Ibid
\textsuperscript{225} « Algeria – The Political Challenges » APS, Diplomat Fate of the Arabian Peninsula, February 19, 2001
\textsuperscript{226} Ibid
Do Islamic orientations influence attitudes toward democracy in Algeria?

"While some electoral democracies have poor human rights records, such democracies afford considerable space for political opposition movement; provide opposition parties and viewpoints access to the media; and meet the minimum standard of a relatively fair vote count in conditions of ballot secrecy."\(^{227}\)

Algeria has, in some way, met all those requirements (albeit some irregularities), yet it is still not qualified as an electoral democracy, but as ‘not free’. According to the Freedom House, not a single Arab country is qualified as an electoral democracy.\(^{228}\)

The "International Journal of Comparative Sociology" studies the cases of Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, and Algeria to evaluate the influence of Islamic attachments on attitudes toward democracy. The assessment’s outcome is similar in all four countries. It illustrates that Islamic orientations don’t discourage nor influence support of democracy to any significant degree.\(^{229}\) The journal focuses on ‘political culture’ which is of great significance when we do research on democratic transitions. The journal quotes Iliya Harik who noted in 1994 in the "Journal of Democracy" that with respect to the Arab world, “a democratic government needs a democratic political culture, and vice versa”.\(^{230}\)

Moreover, the "International Journal of Comparative Sociology" indicates that interrogations regarding Islamic orientations and their impact on democracy can be inspected using data from the World Values Survey (WVS). Factor analysis is used in this study, as it “identifies items that cluster together and hence measure the same underlying concept, thereby increasing confidence in reliability and validity”.\(^{231}\) Five items, separated in two indexes,\(^{232}\) from the WVS interview schedule have been used to measure attitudes toward

\(^{227}\) Karatnycky, Adrian. 2001-2002 Freedom House Survey of Freedom
\(^{228}\) Ibid
\(^{229}\) International Journal of Comparative Sociology, December, 2002
\(^{230}\) Ibid
\(^{231}\) Ibid
\(^{232}\) See Appendix 3, Table 3
democracy. Those two indexes are treated as ‘dependent variables’. First, one can notice that all four countries are more likely to be favourable in their attitudes toward democracy. Second, there is significant disparity in opinions about whether or not there are problems related to democracy. One-third of the respondents agrees or strongly agrees that democracies are incompetent at managing the economy, maintaining order, and acting decisively. Other respondents disagree, or strongly disagree that such problems are linked with democracy.

“Factor analysis was also used to select items measuring attitudes and attachments pertaining to Islam and two distinct dimensions were again identified. One of these concerns personal piety and religious involvement and the other concerns the role in public affairs of religion and religious leaders”233.

The bigger variation of views with respect to the political role of Islam is found in Algeria. For instance, only one-third of the respondents agrees or strongly agrees that it would be better for Algeria if people with strong religious beliefs held public office. Those measures pertaining to Islam are ‘non-dependant variables’. Five demographic variables and the measure of regime evaluation are other ‘non-dependant variables’ that are included in this analysis.

In general, this inspection proposed that Islamic orientations have a limited impact on views about democracy. Regarding religious beliefs, not a single example proves that this variable is associated to attitudes toward democracy to a statistically significant degree. What’s interesting is that a majority of people declared to be religious while most of them have a good opinion of democracy. This means that in sum, there is no incompatibility between Islam and democracy. In other words, advocating democracy is common in the Arab world where most of the societies have strong Islamic attachments. To conclude, little evidence has been confirmed to agree with those who claim that Islam and democracy are incompatible, at least at the individual level of analysis.

233 International Journal of Comparative Sociology, December, 2002, and see Appendix 3, Table 4
Can we consider Algeria as a model of democratisation in the Muslim world? The Algerian crisis provided a model for all those autocratic regimes confronted by public opinion and a political opposition demanding simultaneously a greater democratisation and Islamicisation of the state institutions. For autocratic elites, the Algerian experiment provided important lessons for the reformation of authoritarian institutions supported by radical components of civil society. The foreign powers didn’t intervene directly to stop the new Islamic fundamentalist ‘wave’ in Algeria. However, the Western democracies chose to provide economic and military aid to the state apparatus to prevent the spread of the internal disorder onto the international scene. The withdrawing and reduction of the state’s activities in the early stages of the Islamic insurrection facilitated the uncontrolled emergence of private entrepreneurs; however, the state elite became later a main beneficiary of the process of liberalisation.

“For regimes like Algeria’s, the principal challenge in a partial re-legitimisation of the state’s institutions and in the formation of a new bourgeoisie is to ensure that the state apparatus does not break down despite the reduction of its economic and repressive capabilities.”

What should be done is to plan for a system of legitimisation for the political authority that is less dependent on the functions of the state apparatus. It is indeed a challenge for a nationalistic regime like that of Algeria (as well as that of Egypt or Syria for example) because of the sense of national pride and historical legitimacy. However, the reform (even partial) of an authoritarian regime may produce democracy. The Turkish republic is today the most successful example. It is going from a regime “that blended elements of democracy, autocracy, and pluralism to one that is more liberal and democratic.” The same is happening in Algeria, since it has introduced a series of political reforms in the second half of

234 Volpi, Frédéric, “Islam and Democracy”, 2003, p.119
235 Ibid, p.120
236 Ibid, p.121
237 Brumberg, Daniel & Diamond, Larry, “Islam and Democracy in the Middle East”, 2003
the 1990s. Some scholars tend to call the system of governance in Algeria a 'pseudo-democracy' or 'democracy as façade' because 'it allows the regime to hand over the state apparatus to an elected civilian government and to foster a relatively functional, multi-party, political environment'\textsuperscript{238}. However, as noted previously, the process of controlled democratisation is not democratic, yet the end results might be the establishment of a democratic order\textsuperscript{239}.

I have tried to present a realistic assessment of the evolution of the situation in Algeria. Democratisation is underway, regardless of behind-the-scene manipulation by the government. The violence, extremism, and the severe socio-economic problems have complicated the process, but Algeria is recovering. Corruption is still present but it is not a unique case. Algeria enjoys an increasingly autonomous civil society and there is indeed a 'democratic political culture'. Years of hatred and destruction have not succeeded in muting the voices favourable to a democratic order. These voices exist at all levels, including among moderate Islamists. My vision for Algeria's future is optimistic and I believe one must focus on exploring the positive prospects rather than on blaming the regime for its devious behavior and for crimes it has committed in the past. It is clear that this country has accomplished some steady and serious steps towards democracy which can indeed serve as a great example to benchmark on for Arab and Muslim countries whose rulers seek reform in their regimes.

\textsuperscript{238} Volpi, Frédéric, "Islam and Democracy", 2003, p.121
\textsuperscript{239} Third World Quarterly, "Algeria's elections: the prelude to democratisation", Vol 19, No 2, 1998
CONCLUSION

The “West” versus the “East”, Democracy versus Islam or the Democrats versus the Jihadists?

Finally, it seems only fair to say that Arab and Islamic countries have no inherent principles and or morality that are incompatible with democracy. I believe that Arab and/or Islamic “Exceptionalism” is just a relative and opinionated matter that is misused to justify the “theoretical” opposition between democracy and Islam/Arabs. We have successively shown how every single Arab country is unique, and deals differently with Islam and the Muslim teachings. Besides, we explained how Arabs themselves understand, imagine and view democracy which is only logical as each person has a different image of a certain concept, how about a whole civilisation? We also have concluded that economic development is a pre-condition to democratization but it is not sufficient. In order to build democracy, development as a whole is necessary. We need to bear in mind that relativism is one of the most important concept when observing the correlation between culture, religion and democracy. By providing examples of historical backgrounds or from today’s life, we have managed to show that Islam has constituted a reform in the Arab culture and not the contrary. However today, the malpractices of some groups have stained the Muslim image in the world, a stain that is getting wider as fanatic groups, claiming to be Islamist, manage to maintain and preserve.

Arab and/or Islamic countries can be compatible with democracy which no longer makes the issue of installing a democratic order in these countries a matter of compatibility.
However, what remains is that there is a clash of ideas: the first one is of political nature and the question is: How can the United States of America conceive some Arab Muslim countries, such as Jordan and Egypt as moderate and democratic when one of them is a monarchy (Jordan) while the other one is a semi-monarchy ruled by Mr. Husni Mubarak? It is indeed a clash of political interest in a world where “interest” is the “king” concept. The second clash is not the clash of democracy and Islam, or Islam and the United States, even less of the West and the “Rest of the world”; it is rather a clash occurring within this “Rest of the world”. There is a clash between two Islam, the democratic Islam and the Jihadist Islam (the new generation of Islam). A real Islam, promoting acceptance, tolerance and morality and a disfigured Islam only existing in the minds of a category of people that insists on spreading its vision of the world, even if the only way to do it was through violence and terrorism.

Apart from the United States’ will to democratize the Arab region, I consider this discussion relevant to the international relations these days, when the dispute on the situation of Muslim communities in the European Union seems to be more and more controversial. The underprivileged position of Muslim minorities, proof of a rise of Islamophobia and worry over the progression of alienation and radicalization, have triggered an intense debate in the European Union concerning the need for re-examining community cohesion and integration policies. A series of events such as the September 11 terrorist attacks against the US, the Madrid and London bombings and the debate on the Prophet Mohammed cartoons have given further importance to the situation of Muslim societies. The central issue is how to avoid stereotypical generalizations, how to reduce fear and how to strengthen cohesion in the diverse European societies while countering marginalization and discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion or belief.
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APPENDIX 1
### Table 1

<table>
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<th>Year</th>
<th>MENA Non-Oil</th>
<th>MENA Oil</th>
<th>MENA Total</th>
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<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2030</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.1</td>
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Note: The data represents the real GDP per capita growth for different regions over the specified years.
### Table I—Democracy and Freedom by Region, 2002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REGION</th>
<th>NUMBER OF COUNTRIES</th>
<th>NUMBER OF DEMOCRACIES (% OF TOTAL)*</th>
<th>NUMBER (%) OF LIBERAL DEMOCRACIES FH SCORE &lt;2.5</th>
<th>AVERAGE FREEDOM SCORE FOR REGION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Western Europe &amp; Anglophone states</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28 (100%)</td>
<td>28 (100%)</td>
<td>1.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America &amp; Caribbean</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>30 (91%)</td>
<td>17 (52%)</td>
<td>3.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Europe &amp; Former Soviet Union</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>19 (70%)</td>
<td>4 (15%)</td>
<td>6.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia (E, SE, and S)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>12 (48%)</td>
<td>4 (16%)</td>
<td>4.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Island</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>11 (64%)</td>
<td>8 (47%)</td>
<td>2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa (Sub-Saharan)</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>19 (40%)</td>
<td>5 (10%)</td>
<td>5.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East–North Africa</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2 (11%)</td>
<td>1 (5%)</td>
<td>5.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>192</strong></td>
<td><strong>121 (63%)</strong></td>
<td><strong>73 (38%)</strong></td>
<td><strong>4.39</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab Countries</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5.59</td>
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<tr>
<td>Predominantly Muslim Countries</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>7**</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5.29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


* The current number of democracies as classified by Freedom House.

** Counted among this group are Bangladesh, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Indonesia, Turkey, and Albania.
| Non-Arab Muslim-Majority Countries          | Arab Muslim-Majority Countries | Sources: World Bank (except for Afghanistan, Brunei, Djibouti, Iraq, Libya, Oman, Qatar, Somalia, Sudan, and Tajikistan, which are taken from www.cia.gov/aficial/publications/factbook). Numbers in parentheses represent GDP per capita in 1996 USD (PPP). Data on political rights and electoral competitiveness are from Table 1. N.B.: No data are included for Brunei and Maldives. |
APPENDIX 3
### TABLE ONE: COMPARATIVE RESULTS

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party (Orientation)</th>
<th>2004 Presidential Candidate</th>
<th>2002 Legislative (%)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RND (Nationalist)</td>
<td>A. Bouteflika</td>
<td>12.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An-Nahda/MSP ([dagger]) (Islamist)</td>
<td>A. Bouteflika</td>
<td>9.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Presidential coalition</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>22.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FLN (Nationalist)</td>
<td>A. Benflis</td>
<td>51.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-Islah (Islamist)</td>
<td>A. Djaballah</td>
<td>11.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCD (Berber-Rights)</td>
<td>S. Sadi</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PT (Trotskite)</td>
<td>L. Hanoune</td>
<td>5.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Ahd 54 (Nationalist)</td>
<td>A. Rebaine</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opposition</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>67.62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party (Orientation)</th>
<th>2004 Presidential (%)</th>
<th>Difference 2002-2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RND (Nationalist)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An-Nahda/MSP ([dagger]) (Islamist)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Presidential coalition</strong></td>
<td>84.99</td>
<td>+62.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FLN (Nationalist)</td>
<td>6.42</td>
<td>-44.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-Islah (Islamist)</td>
<td>5.02</td>
<td>-6.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCD (Berber-Rights)</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PT (Trotskite)</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>-4.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Ahd 54 (Nationalist)</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opposition</strong></td>
<td>15.01</td>
<td>-52.61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

([dagger]) Al-Nahda and the MSF run on separate platforms. They have been combined here for simplicity.

### Table Two: Disaggregated Turnout

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Turnout (Voters)</th>
<th>Turnout (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Registered Voters (18,097,255)</td>
<td>10,508,777</td>
<td>58.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bouteflika's share / total turnout ([dagger])</td>
<td>8,651,723</td>
<td>82.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bouteflika's share of total Registered Voters</td>
<td>8,651,723</td>
<td>47.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blank ballots or votes against Bouteflika</td>
<td>9,445,532</td>
<td>52.20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

([dagger]) Includes blanks ballots, which were not included in the Constitutional Council turnout percentages.


### Table Three:

**Attitudes Toward Democracy in Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Algeria**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Egypt</th>
<th>Jordan</th>
<th>Morocco</th>
<th>Algeria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>V167 Having a democratic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government in this country is:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very good</td>
<td>67.9</td>
<td>51.2</td>
<td>81.5</td>
<td>60.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairly good</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>43.5</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>32.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairly bad or bad</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V172 Despite it problems, democracy is better than any other form of government</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>63.6</td>
<td>39.1</td>
<td>77.3</td>
<td>48.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>34.1</td>
<td>51.2</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>59.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree or strongly disagree</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>11.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude toward democracy index</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very favorable</td>
<td>52.1</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>71.6</td>
<td>41.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Favorable</td>
<td>45.7</td>
<td>61.0</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>47.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat favorable</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not favorable</td>
<td>.6</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V169 In democracy, the economic system runs badly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>25.1</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>56.8</td>
<td>39.3</td>
<td>42.4</td>
<td>54.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>25.1</td>
<td>28.2</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V170 Democracies are indecisive and have too much quibbling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>28.2</td>
<td>15.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>34.0</td>
<td>43.6</td>
<td>47.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>53.4</td>
<td>35.4</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>29.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V171 Democracies aren't good at maintaining order</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>24.9</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>23.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td>37.3</td>
<td>40.1</td>
<td>51.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Index of agreement that democracy brings problems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>%</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>11.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>28.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>51.6</td>
<td>38.1</td>
<td>41.3</td>
<td>46.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE FOUR:**

Religious Orientations in Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Algeria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Egypt</th>
<th>Jordan</th>
<th>Morocco</th>
<th>Algeria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>V30 How often do you spend time with people at your mosque</strong></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td>39.1</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>29.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less</td>
<td>32.8</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None at all</td>
<td>42.6</td>
<td>38.3</td>
<td>56.7</td>
<td>46.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>V185 Apart from weddings, funerals and christenings, about how often do you attend religious services</strong></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than once a week</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>32.4</td>
<td>25.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>18.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less</td>
<td>32.8</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>37.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never, practically never</td>
<td>25.1</td>
<td>42.6</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>17.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Index of mosque involvement</strong></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very high</td>
<td>24.9</td>
<td>41.4</td>
<td>29.8</td>
<td>33.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>45.4</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>22.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very low</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>43.8</td>
<td>43.9</td>
<td>37.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>V200 Politicians who do not believe in God are unfit for public office</strong></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>73.7</td>
<td>73.9</td>
<td>66.5</td>
<td>53.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>21.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Religious leaders should not influence how people vote in elections</strong></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>41.3</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>33.5</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>21.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>20.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>21.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>25.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>V201 It would be better for [this country] if more people with strong religious beliefs held public office</strong></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>53.2</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>33.7</td>
<td>31.4</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>20.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>26.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>20.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>73.4</td>
<td>51.0</td>
<td>40.7</td>
<td>25.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td>28.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>26.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>