

Appendix 1 - Historical construction and national identity trends in Algeria

Our analysis of the historical and sociological literature on Algerian society underscores a process marked by five key episodes: the colonial period, fight for liberation, adoption of the socialist model, openness to the market economy and questioning of the national consensus. Algeria was occupied by France for 132 years (Harbi & Stora, 2004). Since the country gained its independence in 1962, its institutions have been dynamic and fairly unstable (McDougall, 2017). Therefore, Algerian national identity is arguably under construction (Martinez & Boserup, 2016).

Colonial period The long period of colonization was marked by constant confrontations that cultivated a unitary indigenous identity. This identity foregrounds the desire to liberate the population from misery and poverty. Mutual aid, solidarity, and the active contribution to rebuilding national unity (Addi, 1999), common themes during the struggle for independence, rested on ancestral values of equality and honour (Bourdieu 2006). Two major events in this period influenced the evolution of national identity. First, on May 8, 1945, a protest in the Sétif region resulted in a massacre that took the lives of 45,000 Algerians. Harbi and Stora (2004) suggest that this event sparked the need for a revolutionary liberation war. In 1954, a group of revolutionaries supported by the indigenous population waged an armed struggle that culminated in independence. These events are celebrated as sacred milestones in national history.

Struggle for liberation. Led by the Front de Libération Nationale, the liberation war was declared on November 1, 1954, and lasted over seven years (McDougall, 2017). This phase comprised three turning points: the Tripoli convention, which brought together the leaders of the revolution around the affirmation of the Algerian nation in the fight against colonialism; the Soummam convention, intended to foster a civil, democratic and self-centered movement; and the guerrilla war by Algerian fighters along the borders, which prompted a rethinking of the principles adopted during the previous conventions. These events reflect the contradictions and political struggles that shaped the emerging unitary identity (Addi, 1999; Djellali, 1992; Lacheraf, 1965).

Socialist orientation of the young independent state. When Algeria gained independence in 1962, socialism was adopted as a natural economic choice because of its emphasis on the values of unity, social justice, solidarity and sharing (Martinez & Boserup, 2016). In this model, wealth was often construed as the fruit of illegal acquisition and a sign of collaboration with the colonial administration (Djellali, 1992). Nonetheless, socialism clashed with aspirations of freedom and was partly called into question in the early 1980s.

Openness to the capitalist model. The economic failures of the socialist period until the late 1970s, the rigidities of economic statism and the popular demand for more freedoms increased political openness, leading to the adoption of a multiparty system and economic openness, which fuelled the development of the private sector (Hemissi & Hafsi, 2017; Martinez & Boserup, 2016). These changes ushered in new woes: institutionalized corruption that plagued state institutions, social tensions exacerbated by inequalities, and ideological confusion about the country's orientation

(Hafsi, 2012; Martinez & Boserup, 2016; McDougall, 2017). They also paved the way for religious violence in the 1990s.

Questioning the national consensus. In conjunction with a severe economic crisis, the weakening of state apparatuses led Algeria to the brink of bankruptcy and facilitated the emergence of Islamic fundamentalism, which sparked a civil war in the 1990s; a particularly violent episode (McDougall, 2017). Compounding the fundamentalism, military, legal and institutional violence fomented institutional and social chaos (multiplication of centres of power), political disorder, and the rethinking of the core values of the nation (Martinez & Boserup, 2016). The national consensus on the management mode of the economy and the nation thus disintegrated.

This historical path strongly influenced the Algerian national identity, which is discussed relative to the empirical research reviewed in the Methodology section.