MILITARISM AND ISLAMISM IN ALGERIA

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Abstract

This article focuses on the combined consequences for women of militarization and pan-Islamism—a particular manifestation of Islam that has spread using some of the mechanisms of globalization, especially global trade and global communications. The empirical data are drawn from the civil conflict of the 1990s in Algeria, where an Islamist movement led by the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) and several armed Islamist groups (notably the GIA, the Armed Islamic Group) terrorized the population and killed tens of thousands of people in an attempt to seize control of the state. External support from pan-Islamists accounts, in part, for the ability of the FIS and the GIA to gain a foothold in Algeria. The pan-Islamist movement has cells in Europe and the Middle East, some of which were in contact with Algerian Islamists. Armed Islamist groups from Algeria received training from Al Qaeda, combat experience in Afghanistan and Bosnia, and financial support from Saudi Arabia, Sudan, and Iran.

The militarization of Africa is not new. From the colonial history of military conquest of the continent and military suppression of African revolts and liberation struggles to the world wars among European powers that were played out on African soil, militarism has left its mark on the continent. In the Cold War period after World War Two, the superpowers waged proxy wars in Africa: the United States supported its allies—the European colonial powers—against left-wing liberation movements that were supplied by the Soviet Union and its allies, while the Soviet Union supported some socialist governments against rebel movements supplied by the United States and others. For example, the United States supported the Portuguese colonists in Mozambique while the Soviets armed the FRELIMO independence movement; and after independence in 1975 the FRELIMO government received support from the Soviet Union and East Germany, whereas the rebel RENAMO troops were supplied by apartheid South Africa and the United States. This legacy of militarization is proving very hard to overcome: militarism—which is defined as the excessive or illegitimate influence of military institutions, policies, and values on civil society—is evident in many African nations today.

At the start of the Cold War, most African nations were still colonies of various European powers (the exceptions were Ethiopia and Liberia, which were never colonies of foreign powers). Decolonization started in the 1950s with Egypt, Libya, Sudan, and Guinea. The main decade of decolonization was the 1960s and the process continued until 1994, when South Africa finally achieved majority rule, marking the end of European formal

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political domination of the continent. By then the Cold War was over and the ideological conflicts appeared to die with it, but the legacy of internal wars continues. Globalization—in the form of the global arms trade—is perpetuating and materially assisting the ongoing militarization of Africa, not only by supplying arms to rebels, criminals, and governments alike, but also by drawing Africans into the global drug trade and the trafficking of women and children. In addition, some of the major transnational corporations, which promote (some would say define) globalization, benefit from the endless civil wars, though corporations are but one of the vested interests that block the resolution of conflict.

The combined impact of globalization and militarization on women in Africa is felt in all aspects of women's lives: the induction and kidnapping of women and girls into armed forces; the participation of women in global trafficking, both as subjects (black marketers) and objects (prostitutes); the displacement of women both internally and across frontiers as refugees as a result of armed conflict; and the violence against women that is the hallmark of militarization—the social (or interpersonal) violence of physical assault and mental trauma; the political violence of dispossession, statelessness, and disenfranchisement; and the economic violence of impoverishment (for the majority) and loss of state services.

This article focuses on the combined consequences for women of militarization and pan-Islamism—a particular manifestation of Islam that has spread using some of the mechanisms of globalization, especially global trade and global communications. The empirical data are drawn from the civil conflict of the 1990s in Algeria, where an Islamist movement led by the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) and several armed Islamist groups (notably the GIA, the Armed Islamic Group) terrorized the population and killed tens of thousands of people in an attempt to seize control of the state. External support from pan-Islamists accounts, in part, for the ability of the FIS and the GIA to gain a foothold in Algeria. The pan-Islamist movement has cells in Europe and the Middle East, some of which were in contact with Algerian Islamists. Armed Islamist groups from Algeria received training from Al Qaeda, combat experience in Afghanistan and Bosnia, and financial support from Saudi Arabia, Sudan, and Iran.

Pan-Islamism and Militarization

At the outset it is important to distinguish Islam from Islamism, to state that not all Islamist movements are militarized, and to explain why pan-Islamism is an instance of globalization and not the historical spread of the religion through proselytism and migration. In essence, Islam is a monotheistic religion founded by the Prophet Mohammed in the seventh century CE in the area that is now Saudi Arabia. Based on the Qur'an and the performance of the five pillars related to faith, prayer, alms, fasting, and pilgrimage, Islam has become a politically and socially diverse world religion (as varied as Christianity) with adherents throughout the Middle East, Asia, many parts of Africa, and wherever migrants from these areas have settled (there are five million Muslims in France, for example, most of North African extraction). Islam is notable for having emancipated women, giving them new rights in the realms of marriage and

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property that distinguished the new Muslim belief from contemporary seventh century practices (Al-Hibri 1982).

Islamism, in contrast to Islam, is a political project. Some Islamist movements are transnational, as for example the Muslim Brotherhood, which was founded in Egypt in 1928 and spread across the Middle East and North Africa to Algeria (Kristianasen 2000), and the Hizballah, which exists in Lebanon, Syria, and Iraq. Other Islamist movements are primarily national opposition movements like the one in Algeria; but the national and transnational movements can and do interact. Islamists want political power, which they recognize as a necessary step in realizing their global project of Muslim civilization. Islamism invokes the religious values of Islam to justify and legitimize political action and political arrangements. The pan-Islamist movement is an instance of globalization because it uses modern technology and communications to organize and execute its opposition and because it operates through a global network of parties and cells (Bergen 2001).

There are as many terms as interpretations of those terms used to describe conservative Islam; the following expressions current in Algeria will be used in this paper. Muslim traditionalists are concerned only with normative behavioral values and are not the same as Islamic fundamentalists who oppose traditionalists as superstitious (Imache and Nour 1994:26-27). Islamic fundamentalists want to purify Islam by returning to the sources (the Qur'an and the Sunna) but do not confront secular authorities. Islamic fundamentalists see the West as a model for meeting the many socioeconomic needs of poor Muslim societies and are therefore different from Islamists who oppose the influence of Western powers. Islamists also contest regimes they regard as corrupt (for example, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Algeria) and want to prohibit what they define as non-Islamic practices (for example, coeducation).

The recent historical background of Islamism dates to the death of the Egyptian leader, Gamal Abdel Nasser, in 1970. Panarabism, the secular nationalist movement that Nasser championed, was challenged by the Muslim Brotherhood based in Egypt (Irwin 2001) and by the conservative Wahabbi version of Islam financed by Saudi Arabia. In October 1973 war broke out in the Middle East and although Israel, with its superior military force, was the winner, the Arab states, directed by King Faisal of Saudi Arabia, used the weapon of oil to win the economic war. As leader of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), Saudi Arabia used its oil wealth to build Islamic institutes, mosques, and associations from Morocco to Indonesia, as well as in England, Belgium, and France. The offices of the Islamic League in London, Brussels, and Paris became the main conduits of Saudi influence in Europe (Aïchoune 1990:90).

The militarization of Islam—interpreted by Islamists as the practice of *jihad* or holy war—has a very long history (Al-Ashmawy 1989:67-73). And, indeed, Islam is not the only faith to marry religion and the military (see Seward 1972.) In the recent past, we have seen the conjuncture of militarism and Islamism in Afghanistan where *mujaheddin* took up arms against the Soviet Union in 1979 (with $4-5 billion in aid from the United States between 1980 and 1992); and in Iran where Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini

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fought a war with Iraq in 1980. In Algeria, hundreds of Islamist networks, including paramilitary cells, constituted themselves in the 1980s, ready to federate as the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) when the government legalized nearly 60 new political parties in response to the demands for democratization in October 1988. Algerians participated in the Afghan war, which offered political and military training and an opportunity to engage in *jihad* for Islamists from many countries.[1]

The Algerian Experience

In local elections held in Algeria in May 1990, the FIS carried 54 percent of the popular vote;[2] and in the first round of legislative elections held in December 1991, the FIS gained 44 percent of the seats, guaranteeing a majority in the second round. Fearing its imminent fall from power, the government canceled the second electoral round in January 1992 and the military stepped in to remove President Chadli from power; a new High State Council took over headed by the respected FLN leader, Mohamed Boudiaf. In March 1992, the Haut Comité d'État dissolved the FIS (the FIS leaders, Abassi Madani and Ali Benhadj, had been arrested in May 1991), but in June 1992 Boudiaf was assassinated. The FIS claims that the ensuing violence was a direct result of the cancellation of elections; but the historical record shows that the Islamists were already active guerrillas in the 1970s and 1980s, arming themselves by attacking military bases to steal weapons. From 1992 the violence escalated and became so savage and bloody that many Algerians are still stunned (Karadja 1998). An estimated 100,000 people lost their lives.

In Algeria, competing armed groups operating in the name of Islam—the Armed Islamic Group (GIA**,** once number three on the U.S. list of terrorist organizations), the Armed Islamic Movement (MIA), the GSPC (the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat, a faction of the GIA), and the Islamic Salvation Army (AIS, which was the armed wing of the FIS)—targeted prominent women and men (doctors, lawyers, journalists, and other professionals and intellectuals) and individuals connected with the government like the police and the military. Their modus operandi was that of terrorists who use violence to demoralize, intimidate, and subjugate their opponents as well as any member of civil society not following their dictates with respect to behavior and dress (Karadja 1998). As the government responded with force, the terrorists stepped up their activities, establishing roadblocks and killing everyone ambushed in this way. When the government reacted to this new tactic with additional force, the terrorists again escalated their attacks, descending *en masse* on popular towns in the Mitidja, the fertile plain that extends to the east and south of Algiers. On a single night in August 1997 they massacred 100-300 women, children, and men in Haï-Raïs and in September they slaughtered 64 in Beni-Messous and 100-200 in Bentalha (Barrak 1998). They also kidnapped young girls and women, forcing them to serve as cooks and cleaners in their forest camps and to provide sex when demanded (Turshen 2002).

The armed Islamist bands ran rackets; they collected money as a "tax for the revolution" and they stole goods from shops. Moreover, they controlled the main arteries of the country. The roadblocks they maintained allowed them to check the movement

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of goods from the ports to the interior, diverting what they needed (Martinez 1998:323). The decentralized control of the bands meant that individual "emirs" (commanders) lived on the money they raised. And the GIA and others had external support.

It would be false to suggest that militarized Islamism contrasts with a secular civilian government: political power has always been in the hands of the military in Algeria. The military has used the threat of internal disorder to justify its rule. In the words of William Quandt: "The military's relatively cohesive organizational structure has given it a comparative political advantage; and petrodollars have helped to keep soldiers in place by giving an unpopular regime a means of buying acquiescence from many citizens" (Quandt 2002:20). The response of the government to the Islamist attacks was repression: arrests, the internment of suspects in camps, and the "disappearance" of prisoners (Amnesty International 2000).

Militarism and Islamism

Militarism and Islamism have in common the usurpation of the roles and prerogatives of civil society. The infusion of military values in civil society has particular implications for women's democratic rights, as does the imposition of Islamist tenets. Military regimes limit democratic freedoms in the name of national security and employ secrecy to protect their decisions from civilian review (holding the military accountable for their actions in times of war is difficult even in democratic societies). Islamism imposes (a strict interpretation of) religious law to the exclusion of civil law.

Both Islam and the military are masculine, male-dominated institutions; both are patriarchal in the sense that they are gendered hierarchical systems of social and sexual control; and both are sex-segregated societies with sharp sexual divisions of labor. All three—patriarchal traditionalism, Islamism, and militarism—control women to accomplish their goals. Cynthia Enloe explains, "Militaries need women," (2000:xii) to provide commercial sex to soldiers, to be loyal military wives, to fill jobs working in the defense industry, and for the military. Islamism places women at the center of family life, which is the foundation of Muslim society. The patriarchal organizational structures of Islam, the military, and many national cultures are consonant and mutually reinforcing. In combination, militarized Islamism in patriarchal cultures minimizes and marginalizes the multiple roles of women in society.

Women's entry into the military has not changed the masculine character of the armed forces. Most interpreters believe that Islamic law forbids Muslim women to take active roles as combatants in warfare, but even contemporary militaries that recruit women (like the U.S. and Israeli armed forces) remain masculine institutions dominated by men.

Militarization and Islamization in Algeria

The progress of militarization and Islamization over the decade of the 1990s was interactive, with the government forces and Islamist bands responding to each other with ever-greater violence. With each strike, the martial grip on civil society tightened

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(declarations of martial law, curfews, etc.). Each new notch on the spiral of violence marked the spread of militarism and increasing dependency on the military. In the words of a prominent Algerian magistrate, Leïla Aslaoui: "On the night of 3 to 4 June 1991, the Army came out once again *to save the Republic*." (Aslaoui 2000:144 emphasis added)., The social consequences of the processes of militarization and Islamization are far-reaching. Consider the increase in government military expenditures from 1.5 percent of GDP in 1990 to 3.9 percent in 1998 (UNDP 2000:216). Consider the 200,000 new recruits trained to reinforce the ranks of the country's security forces (police, military, gendarmerie, and militias) as a result of the Islamist attacks (Lamine 1998:53). Consider the formation at the end of 1994 of so-called patriot units equipped by the government to work directly with the gendarmerie, of self-defense militias in Kabylia, and of private security forces hired in the east of the country to protect the private property of notables (Martinez 1998:234ff.).

The impact of militarization and Islamization on access to information (through education, the press, television) is also pernicious. The struggle to control education dates back to the beginning of French colonial rule in the 1830s: the French closed Qur'anic schools and dismantled the Muslim system of education (Laremont 2000:50-51). Algerians identified independence with the substitution of Arabic for French as the language of instruction (a project with both nationalist and Islamist intentions). In 1966 the government introduced classical Arabic in the high schools (initially in the teaching of civics and religion); Arabization of university instruction followed in 1979 (Laremont 2000:170-171). Islamists exploited the opening, placing their graduates as teachers and introducing a pedagogical model that emphasized Islamist thought (Carlier 1999:89).

Free education has made a great difference to women's lives: women's literacy rose from under 10 percent to over 60 percent in the forty years since independence; by 1994-95, 46 percent of primary and 50 percent of secondary school students were girls. Half of university graduates are women; 50 percent of doctors (and only 48 percent of nurses), one third of judges, and 30 percent of lawyers are women (Oufriha 1999).

In September 1994 the GIA called for a boycott of schools and threatened reprisals—school burnings and murders of pupils and teachers—on anyone defying the order (Alia 1995:9). Where they controlled villages, Islamists shut public schools. Bombs destroyed schools in many places where Islamists did not control public education, where coeducation persisted and girls mixed with boys in lunchrooms, where French was taught, and where girls participated in sports. In 1998, a year when violence had already begun to subside, Islamists bombed 17 schools (ONDH 1999:33). The number would have been higher but by then students knew to report suspicious packages, so in El-Biar on 21 January 1998, pupils discovered a bomb that security services were able to defuse 20 minutes before it was set to go off (ONDH 1999:31).

Islamist attacks on journalists began with the murder of Tahar Djaout in 1993; some 50 reporters died in the next two years and others went into exile (Mouffok 1996). Following the assassination of Mohamed Boudiaf in 1992, the government decreed a

state of emergency and military censorship: newsrooms could be and were shut down (for shorter or longer periods) and specific editions of newspapers seized.

A counter to censorship, television programs arrived unedited from France, Spain, and Italy via satellite. Islamists objected to foreign films featuring nudity that were mixed in with news and other programming. An Islamist edict condemned television viewing and banned satellite dishes. The effect of the *fatwa* may be measured by the stagnant number of 68 televisions per 1000 people in Algeria as compared to the increase in Tunisia from 81 sets per 1000 in 1990 to 198 in 1998 and the increase in Morocco from 102 to 160 (UNDP 2000:200). This measure must be placed in the context of the changes television has brought to the lives of Algerians; even in the poorest urban homes, television has been an essential fixture of everyday life and it is women's most important form of entertainment and source of information (Lazreg 1994:168-169).

Islamism, the Family, and Women's Roles

Patriarchy is a broad concept that needs to be embedded historically and culturally if it is to be useful and meaningful. The Algerian family is traditionally patriarchal; the father heads an extended household of his sons, their wives, and children. The 1975 National Charter proclaimed the equality of women and men. Nonetheless, the subservience of women to men was institutionalized in the 1984 Family Code. The code is a body of personal law, largely inspired by Islamic *Shari'a*, which regulates women's lives; it made a man the head of his family whom his wife must obey and to whom she must defer. It declared that all women are minors in education, work, marriage, divorce, and inheritance, meaning that they must defer to the decisions of their father or husband. Whereas men can divorce unilaterally and evict their ex-wives from their homes, women can sue for divorce on only a limited number of grounds. Generally, women are given custody of daughters and of sons under the age of ten, but men are not required to pay child support (in combination, the lack of residential security and the lack of financial support mean that divorced women can find themselves homeless and penniless; this prospect places great pressure on women to remain in abusive situations). The code allows for polygamy, but because plural marriages are rare in Algeria, this provision is mainly symbolic of men's superiority and used as a threat to keep women in line. *Shari'a* law, which is based on the Qur'an and other sources, also defines inheritance: men are entitled to twice as much as women.

In the forty years since the end of the war for independence, the Algerian family has changed: it is simultaneously smaller (the birth rate is falling as women marry later and more couples practice contraception) and larger (households are bigger because housing is so scarce in urban areas). In the first decades after independence family income was higher, with new patterns of consumption to match (Djeghloul 1989). Even as cities and towns grew rapidly (the percent of the population living in cities increased from 22 percent at independence in 1962 to 56 percent today), conservative Islamic leaders progressively gained more influence in civil society, successfully imposing their views on civil law. One result is that women's public lives are narrower and more circumscribed,

despite their real gains in education and the professions. Fewer women held elective office in the 1980s than in the 1960s and 1970s.

Although Islam proclaims the primary importance of the family as the basis of the community of Muslims, Islamism disrupts family life. Far from reasserting "traditional family values," Islamism turns children against parents by encouraging them to spy on their parents and report on such "non-Islamic" activities as drinking alcohol, smoking cigarettes, and watching television. Islamism alienates the young from the old in the most modern of ways, by using the induction techniques of cults to isolate recruits from their families and bond them to the leader of an armed band. The clerics' insistence on the Arabization of the school curriculum pitted the older generation of French-speakers against a younger generation of Arab-speakers, especially in the period when Arab-speakers were penalized in the job market; it also set rural Arab-speakers against urban French-speakers and opened the way to the murder of French-speaking intellectuals (Carlier 1999).

The Cumulative Impact of Civil War on Women

From the early 1980s it was clear that women were both targets and pawns in the power struggles between the Islamists and the Algerian government. Women were the targets of Islamists who attacked women workers (because women should not work outside the home), female students (because women should receive religious education only), and mothers living alone (because women should always live with a husband or father). Women were pawns because Algerian political leaders used Islam to legitimize their governments, and they found it expedient to make concessions on *Shari'a,* which rules women's lives.

On 20 April 1990, the FIS organized a march of several hundred thousand people to present their platform to President Chadli; among the points were a call for full application of *Shari'a* law, which would further curtail women's rights, and the acceleration of educational "reform" to protect schools from non-Islamic influences like coeducation and mixed groups in school lunchrooms. Other aspects of the FIS platform included actively discouraging women from working outside the home and creating separate administrative services, public transport, and beaches for women and men. According to the FIS, Muslim women have rights to (religious) education, respect, inheritance, freedom of opinion, the vote, and to refuse an imposed husband. They do not have the right to work outside the home, become political leaders, or participate in sports. They should not wear makeup, perfume, fitted clothes, or mingle with men in public; they should wear *hijab*, which in Algeria consists of a scarf that hides the hair and neck and a full-length, long-sleeved robe (veil is not an accurate translation). According to *El Mounquid*, the official FIS journal, *hijab* establishes the distinction between masculine and feminine and underscores the separation between public and private; it distinguishes Muslims from non-Muslims and is obligatory for Muslim women and not an individual decision. The distinction between Muslims and non-Muslims is most important politically, as the visual identification of numerous adherents is of great importance to Islamists in their struggle for political control.

It is in this climate that Islamists attacked private homes, forcing women to flee with their families not once but sometimes several times. At a bathhouse, one woman recounted her story to Chérifa Bouatta:

> They came; they kidnapped girls and massacred their parents. We saved ourselves by running away to E. It was peaceful, tranquil; we lived with a paternal uncle. One day, others came, they killed half the village and my oldest son. We fled and went to G. but that couldn't last; there wasn't enough room for all of us, so we came here; I live in a hut. My husband isn't working; my daughters are cleaning the houses of others; me, I haven't found any work; I'm too old. (Bouatta 1998:121)

In the case of Torkiya, the need to flee came after witnessing from her balcony the murder of a young policeman and running down to the street to cover his body with a sheet. For this gesture she was condemned to death by the Islamists and spent the next two years in hiding, on the run with her three children. When, exhausted, she finally returned to her apartment, she was tracked down and murdered (Belloula 2000:45-49).

The word *terror* is invoked so often that it has lost its power to convey the Algerian state of mind. According to Malika Boussouf:

> The person who inhabits this book is named Nina. She could have carried other first names: Khalida, Farida, Saïda…or even Malika… It is up to Nina, then, to testify, to articulate the fear, revolt, disgust of all democratic Algerians, hostages to horror. Up to her to describe the blood that is spilled every day, the burials, the mutilations. More than any journalist condemned to death by the Integrists,[3] more than me, Nina is free to recount the barbarities and denounce their accomplices: free also to escape the depression that haunts us and risks reducing a whole people to silence. (Boussouf 1995:7)

Terror and fear of reprisals work to destroy familial and neighborly relations; they sow suspicion, distrust, and anxiety, and they turn friends into spies. In the Algerian civil war, Islamists terrorized citizens who resisted their decisions; when Islamists took over villages, people feared that the security forces might accuse them of collaboration, so they were caught between the two. Fathers could not protect their daughters from "marriages of convenience" to members of armed bands. Yamina, a 16 year-old in Bathia, a village in the Ouarsenis overrun by Islamists, was "married" to Haroun. When her father protested "but she is so young," the "emir" struck him and warned him not to resist (Belloula 2000:37). Families condemned by Islamists for whatever reason—resistance, "non-Islamic" behavior—became isolated. If a member of a family was killed by Islamists, no neighbor dared to present condolences, no one attended the funeral. Women especially lived in fear and felt that this isolation diminished their choices: "No women escaped these despotic condemnations, whether they were women of easy virtue, housemaids, fortunetellers, or women who worked for the government" (Belloula 2000:61).

Lessons from Algeria

Globalization is (among other things) a process that spreads technology and trade worldwide. The technology conveys ideas and the trade carries products that are culturally freighted. It is a truism that globalization has positive and negative consequences. Communication technology has undermined the repressive grip of military governments by giving dissidents access both to information that contradicts the official position and to solidarity groups that can assist their opposition. The same technology that assisted the East Timorese in their struggle for independence from Indonesia helped Al Qaeda capture the Afghan government for the Taliban and enabled pan-Islamists to organize and finance subversive groups around the world.

Economic globalization, which includes the liberalization of trade and the privatization of state-owned industries, has had perverse side effects in Algeria. The structural adjustment program imposed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in 1993 undermined the Algerian government by forcing it to cut subsidies and services; the Islamists provided their own versions of welfare, exploiting the government's inability to meet the people's basic needs. Liberalization facilitated the movement of money by the GIA (Armed Islamic Group), which made use of newly loosened currency exchange rules (Martinez 1998:309). At the same time, the rescheduling of debt in 1994 released new funds, which the government used to buy weapons to fight the armed bands (Martinez 1998:152).

Globalization is also tied to the veritable explosion in the 1990s of NGOs (nongovernmental organizations), a vehicle that women's movements around the world have driven successfully to further the cause of women's rights (Moghadam 2001). Using global communications technology to inform and organize, women's NGOs have focused, *inter alia*, on violence against women and the education of girls and women, two issues of especial concern in Algeria. The Algerian women's movement is anchored in the struggle for independence from France, in which women played a prominent role (Turshen 2002). Women veterans of that war were the core of opposition to the Islamist movements of the 1980s and 1990s. In the midst of the worst period in the early 1990s, when Islamists placed increasing restrictions on women and the growing personal and economic insecurity limited women's choices, Algerian feminists were organizing protests, publicizing the attacks on women and girls, creating women's shelters for survivors, standing in solidarity with teachers against the boycott of schools proclaimed by Islamists, and voting in the national election despite the Islamists' call for nonparticipation. Their depiction of Islamist brutality toward women was important in discrediting the extremists and, together with the people's own experience of Islamist attacks, eventually turned the population against the Integrists.

With the end of the worst of the violence and as the Islamist threat subsides, Algerian women are emerging from a difficult period and feminists are again mobilizing to reform the Family Code. Women are once again represented in government; 11 women won seats in the National Assembly in 1997 and, in 2003, Khalida Toumi (Messaoudi) became the government spokesperson. Despite the current setback caused by

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devastating earthquakes in May 2003, which claimed 2,300 lives, injured 10,000 people, and is estimated to cost $5 billion, Algerian women will prevail and reclaim their rightful place in civil society.

NOTES

1 Between 1982 and 1992 some 35,000 Muslim radicals from 43 Islamic countries in the Middle East, North and East Africa, Central Asia, and the Far East fought with the Afghan Mujaheddin. Tens of thousands more foreign Muslim radicals came to study in the hundreds of new *madrassas* in Pakistan and along the Afghan border. Eventually more than 100,000 Muslim radicals were influenced by the jihad (Rashid 2001:130).

2 Not even one woman was nominated by the FIS (Bennoune 1999:171).

3 Integrist (*Intégriste*) is a term used frequently in Algeria to refer to Islamists.

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