REDUCTIONIST THINKING AND "ISLAMIC" VIOLENCE

by

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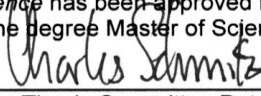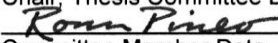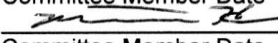
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ABSTRACT

Reductionist Thinking and "Islamic" Violence

Bethany Gentry

Reductionist thinking explains a phenomenon, such as violence in Muslim states, with one cause. Reductionist thinking may erroneously reduce violence in the Muslim world to poverty or Islamic theology. Stathis Kalyvas distinguishes between master cleavages and local cleavages in a civil conflict. I examine civil conflicts in two Islamic states, Algeria and Afghanistan. Applying two theories of "Islamic" violence I demonstrate how they do not account for local conflicts. I will conclude with non-Muslim cases from El Salvador and Argentina to show how reductionist thinking escalated violence. Local conflicts are not synonymous with the master cleavage. Local conflicts in El Salvador were not related to communism, the master cleavage. In the Muslim world, the local cleavages are not Islamic theology or poverty but often revenge or greed. Policy recommendations must address the roots of the violence and therefore must understand the local conflicts and avoid reductionist thinking.

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KEY OF ABBREVIATIONS

Algeria
AIS: Islamic Salvation Army
FIS: Islamic Salvation Front
FLN: National Liberation Front
HCE: High Committee of States
GIA: Armed Islamic Group
MIA: Armed Islamic Movement

Afghanistan
ISI: Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate

El Salvador
PDC: Christian Democrat Party
FMLN: Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front

Introduction

Memories of the 2003 US invasion of Iraq and its supposed weapons of mass destruction resonate with many Westerners. The memories may evoke ideas of miscalculations, misinformation or overreaction. Government action is determined by, among other things, intelligence reports and policy recommendations based on theories. How did the US misjudge the threat of Iraq? How could the policy recommendations have been better? Overreacting to the Iraq threat is similar to the various overreactions to the communist threats in Central and South America during the Cold War period. Villages were massacred in El Salvador to protect against the communist threat that today is acknowledged to have been non-existent. During the Dirty War in Argentina, the state murdered "subversives," largely in secret. How can governments and people stop overreacting? A place to start is to examine how violence in a civil conflict is understood. Often reductionist thinking leads to a dangerous simplification of the roots of the violence which can lead to government policies that cause an overreaction. It happened in the Cold War period in Central and South America and a similar thing is happening in the Muslim World with Islam.

A current topic of interest is the relationship between Islam and violence against a secular state, Westerners, Israelis and other Muslims. The use of violence by an Islamic group, regardless of its target, has led to an erroneous linking by many Westerners of violence to Islamic groups. What can help create a more accurate interpretation of the violence employed by Islamic groups? To be able to develop an

informed theory of violence used by Islamic groups, the true driving forces of their violence must be understood. This is where many of the current theories and thinking fall short. Theories of violence are often reductionist, focusing on one major driving force to account for, sometimes, years of violence within a Muslim country. Reductionist theories may conflate the "master cleavage," as Stathis Kalyvas defines it, with the "local cleavages." Kalyvas defines the master cleavage as the main driving force of violence in a civil war while the local cleavages are the private conflicts between people or groups (2003). When policy decisions are based on reductionist thinking and theories, they are based on resolving the master conflict while ignoring the various local conflicts that may not be resolved through a resolution of the master conflict. Ignoring the local conflicts allows them to grow and spread while energy is mistakenly focused on a master conflict that may or may not even deserve attention. The communist threat in El Salvador, as will be discussed later, did not deserve the energy of the Salvadoran state or the U.S. That energy should have been directed at local conflicts, the true "problem," which were largely ignored in favor of the communist threat.

Theories must match what is actually taking place on the ground. Stathis Kalyvas speaks to academics and the types of theories to explain violence in a civil war. I will focus on violence in a civil conflict which is distinguished from violence in an interstate war such as World War II. A civil conflict involves violence among people of the same state, neighbors. Kalyvas describes civil conflicts as "straddling

the divide between the political and the private" (2003). With a civil conflict, where neighbors are fighting neighbors, the local cleavages become crucial to understand and correctly respond to the violence. Kalyvas's major critique of theories of violence is that they often do not account for the interpersonal level of violence, a microlevel. Most theories, he finds, remain on a macrolevel of analysis focusing on state and non-state actors. Micro theories are able to discern the local cleavages while the macro theories focus on the master cleavage. I will demonstrate that macro level analyses of violence in a civil conflict are reductionist and potentially dangerous. Macrolevel analyses that focus on the master cleavage are strengthened when in conjunction with a microlevel of analysis that accounts for local cleavages. Understanding a civil conflict solely through the lens of a master cleavage will leave a lot unexplained about the violence.

Literature Review

Two scholars, Fred Halliday and Mohammad Hafez, propose different theories about violence committed by Islamic groups. I will look at violence in Algeria and Afghanistan in the 1990s using both Halliday and Hafez's theories. While both theories will offer relevance to aspects of the Algerian and Afghan violence, neither is sufficient to explain all of it. Hafez and Halliday propose fairly broad theories of violence. Hafez focuses on institutional exclusion when understanding violence. Halliday views violence as part of the internal reorganization of the Muslim world. I consider both Hafez and Halliday's theories as macro level theories. Both scholars discuss violence in Algeria in state and non-state terms. Islamic groups are largely regarded as unified groups without a discussion of their complex make-up and complex motivations. While both scholars contribute to an understanding of the violence, I will use them as examples of the dangers of an overly simple and reductionist explanation of violence in the Muslim world. First, I will discuss the theory of Halliday and Hafez. I will then apply each theory to Algeria and then to Afghanistan. I will use the perspectives of journalists, locals, aid workers and former Islamists and combatants to give a micro level of analysis. That will allow for any shortcomings of Halliday or Hafez's macro theories to be evident.

Fred Halliday argues that the "contemporary challenge of 'Islam'" is about the internal reorganization of the Muslim world. It is not about the "outside" world, i.e. the West. Islamic states and societies are trying to determine how to organize

themselves and how that organization will relate to the outside world. The recent rise of Islamic politics is, then, concerned with the Muslim perception of subjugation and weakness of the Islamic world. The Islamic states and societies are internally rearranging themselves in response to this perceived subjugation and weakness of their world.

Halliday provides guidelines for evaluating the Islamic political movements today. He considers Islam as politics, the three variants of Islamism and the multiple interpretations of Islam. Halliday argues that when evaluating Islam as politics it is important to realize that the Islamic movement is not concerned with a revival of religious belief but rather a reassertion of the current belief's relevancy to politics. When confronted with secular ideas, Islamic beliefs should play a dominant role in political and social life. Islamic values should be a central identity of Muslims. According to Halliday, Islamist movements are grappling with how to resist a perceived alien and oppressive state and how to control it.

Halliday finds that when evaluating Islamic political movements it is important to consider that Islamism has multiple variants; it is not a uniform movement. Movements vary with the political and social context surrounding them. Halliday identifies three contexts of Islamic movements. The first is popular revolt. The movement challenges a secular state, or one it finds insufficiently Islamic. Halliday characterizes Algeria's violence in the 1990's largely as a popular revolt. The second context of Islamic movements is when the state uses Islam to consolidate

and legitimize its position. Halliday argues that the National Liberation Front, the FLN, in Algeria fall under this context. Confessional or ethnic conflicts constitute the last variant of Islamic movements. Islamism functions to provide an identity for a group in a larger heterogeneous religious community. Halliday argues that Algerian resistance to French culture should be viewed through this context.

For Halliday, Islam is not a fixed entity that Muslims interact with in the exact same way. Halliday quotes an Iranian thinker expressing this idea saying, "Islam is a sea in which it is possible to catch almost any fish one wants." To understand why a particular interpretation of Islam is being used one should not look at the religion but at the "contemporary needs of those articulating an Islamic politics." These needs could be to have state power, the need to mobilize dominated groups for political action or the 'need' to control women.

While Halliday seeks to understand how people are interacting with Islam and the internal processes involved, Mohammed Hafez, for the most part, leaves religion behind when interpreting "Islamic" violence. Hafez proposes a theory for why Muslims rebel which differs from Halliday's theory. Hafez focuses on institutional exclusion and repression to understand Islamic violence. He, unlike Halliday, does not focus on Islamic reorganization and the role of religion. He characterizes the political violence of 1990's Algeria as a "bloody confrontation" between the Algerian state and Islamists. Hafez finds that "discovering the sources of rebellion in the Muslim world is a critically important but woefully neglected undertaking" (2003).

According to Hafez, previous studies of Islamic violence remain at the level of description and the description often applies solely to the case under investigation. He finds that a "sustained theoretical treatment of Islamist rebellion and an attempt at an explanation of it" is missing from current studies (2003).

Hafez argues that Muslims rebel because of a combination of institutional exclusion and repression that threatens the organizational resources and lives of Islamists (2003). Hafez defines an Islamist as a Muslim who feels compelled to act on the belief that Islam requires social and political action (5). The action could be creating an Islamic state, to reinvigorate Muslim's faith or to create a "separate union for Muslim communities" (Hafez, 2003, p5). A political environment that is repressive and denies access to political institutions forces a "near universal process of radicalization" among Islamists (Hafez 2003). Once a movement has become an exclusive organization it adopts antisystem ideologies and experiences intramovement competition. The intramovement competition results from those who wish to employ violence and those that want peace. The militants' violence becomes less and less rational and increasingly motivated by emotive and group-maintenance goals. Hafez argues that the interplay of a repressive environment, exclusive mobilization structures and the antisystem ideological frames determine the duration and targets of Islamist violence.

Hafez does not argue that repression and institutional exclusion will automatically lead to violence. He acknowledges that "unmitigated" repression of

Islamists has been present in Algeria since 1992. He categorizes Tunisia since 1990 and Syria since 1982 as examples of "unmitigated repression" like Algeria since 1992. Tunisia and Syria, Hafez argues, have been successful in repressing Islamist opposition while repression in Algeria in the 1990's intensified Islamist opposition and led to violence. Repression had different effects in Algeria than in Syria and Tunisia. Transforming grievances into militant action requires a variety of factors. Hafez argues that the nature of the state repression, allies available, political opportunities and expanded capabilities all influence how an aggrieved group responds to a situation, for example why they choose or do not choose violence. Hafez concludes from his comparison of Tunisia and Algeria that political exclusion is often necessary but not sufficient to explain why Muslims rebel.

Hafez discusses other prominent theories of Islamic violence such as socioeconomic and psychological explanations. Socioeconomic explanations focus on unfulfilled promises of better living conditions, rapid industrialization increasing the national debt, not enough "meaningful employment" and overcrowded cities. Psychological explanations focus on "frustrated" and "shattered" expectations from development that lead to Muslims joining militant organizations. Other psychological explanations examine the psychological effects of an "alien" culture on Muslims, necessitating an exploration of the effects of colonization. Hafez finds the socioeconomic and psychological approaches deficient on several grounds. He argues that while conditions of "social dislocation and economic stagnation" have produced

militant Islamic movements they have also produced nonmilitant movements (2003). Hafez writes that almost every Muslim society has experienced excessive Westernization and poverty but not all have endured the same amounts of Islamic violence. To support this assertion, Hafez looks at economic indicators for multiple countries that have experienced differing levels of Islamic violence. Hafez compares population growth, unemployment, urban growth, rural-urban migration, average growth, average GNP per capita and inequality measured by the Gini index. He finds "near carbon-copy data" among Algeria and Tunisia (2003,p15). Despite the similarities in economic conditions, Islamists rebelled in Algeria while Tunisia did not experience Islamist rebellion. Responding to the inadequacy of socioeconomic and psychological theories, Hafez to develop his theory of institutional exclusion and repression.

Hafez finds that the inadequacy of the socioeconomic and psychological theories of social movements is that they "mechanistically link grievances to collective action" (2003, p19). Hafez examines the political environment of Islamists, the mobilization structures through which Islamists gain and allocate movement resources and the ideological frames used to justify collective action. To engage in rebellious behavior, Hafez finds that Islamists need resources, feeling deprived is not enough. Resources range from activists and shared historic experiences to access to public office and combat material. The political environment shapes what types of opportunities and constraints a movement will encounter. Hafez argues that the

political environment, mobilization structures and ideological frames lead movements, over time, towards moderation or rebellion. To apply this process to Islamist movements, Hafez first examines the political environment to determine if it is repressive and exclusionary. A repressive environment forces a "near universal process of radicalization" (2003, p22).

Kalyvas articulates three levels of analysis of violence in civil wars. There are macro, meso and microlevels of analysis. The macro level focuses on the relationship between state and non state political actors. The meso level examines the relationship between the political actors and the populations they rule. The micro level examines interactions with small groups and among individuals. Kalyvas argues that it is important to recognize that much of the research on political violence and civil wars tends to conflate all the levels or focus disproportionately on one level, often the macro level. Kalyvas's differentiation of the three levels of analysis will inform the evaluation of Hafez and Halliday's theories when applying each to the cases of Algeria in the 1990's and Afghanistan in the 21st century.

In the macro level, violence is typically viewed as a natural outcome of war. Ideologies, comparative politics and international relations are often grounded in the macro level. The common element of macro level studies is that they assume unitary actors. Groups are fused together as one entity. Political actors at the top and their people at the bottom cannot always be lumped into one group. Kalyvas finds it problematic to group an entity together given forced conscription, kidnapped children

fighting and desertion from armies. The relationship between political actors and their underlying population is complex and a macro level analysis can overlook that complexity. Overlooking these types of relationships will not provide a full account of violence within a country. There is a need to understand the dynamics within and among small groups. This leads in to the micro level of analysis which "opens up the black box of intracommunity dynamics and individual behavior" (Kalyvas 2006). Kalyvas is not arguing that a macro analysis is useless, rather it needs to be complimented by a meso and micro analysis.

The meso level of analysis accounts for civil wars as processes. Kaylvas acknowledges the scarcity of basic information on the war-fighting aspects of civil wars. He finds that while the dynamics of civil wars are generally understood there is a need to make them the center of analytical examination by social scientists. Intracommunity dynamics are lacking at the meso level. Individuals are not individualized but rather grouped together as a single entity. Kaylvas finds this problematic because of empirical evidence finding that populations are often internally divided.

Halliday's discussion of the Islamic movements would fall under Kalyvas's macro level of analysis. While Halliday is not claiming to put forth of theory of violence in civil wars, his arguments seek to explain the violence found in Islamic movements. He argues that Islamic states are trying to reorganize themselves. The violence is a manifestation of that process of reorganization. While Halliday does

articulate a need to understand the dynamics among Muslim communities, given that

the Islamic movements are about reorganization within Muslim societies, he argues

for three broad types of Islamic movements: popular revolts, strategic use of Islam by

the state and Islamism in confessional or ethnic conflicts to provide an identity. The

violence in Algeria in the 1990's is characterized as a popular revolt where a secular

state is challenged by a group. Kalyvas's macro level focuses on the relationship

between state and non state actors. Halliday's characterization of the Algerian

violence as a popular revolt pitting the state against non state actors makes it a strong

case for a macro level analysis.

Hafez's theory of Muslim violence is characteristic of Kalyvas's macro level

of analysis also. Hafez focuses on the relationship between the state (controlling

institutional access and responsible for repression) and the Islamists. Kalyvas points

to the need to avoid grouping people together in homogenous groups that do not

acknowledge differences. Hafez continually groups Muslims together as one entity

and treats Islamists as a single group. For instance, he argues that Islamists undergo a

"near universal process of radicalization." While both Hafez and Halliday put forth

macro level analysis, Kalyvas does not argue that macrolevel analysis are irrelevant,

rather that they are strengthened and improved upon by a meso and microlevel

analysis. I will focus on ways in which a microlevel analysis could improve the

theories of Hafez and Halliday when, and if, they apply to the Algerian and Afghan

cases.

Method

I will use the examples of violence in Algeria and Afghanistan to illustrate the complexities of the violence and why a macro level of analysis is insufficient to fully understand the conflicts. I will use Hafez and Halliday's macro level theories to interpret the violence in both Algeria and Afghanistan. Macro level analyses make it easier to view Islamic groups as a cohesive group fighting for Islam. A micro level of analysis may offer a compliment to a macro level analysis or challenge the validity of the macro theory. The micro level allows for the views of the people to be heard, for the personal relationships to be examined and the relationships within and among the involved groups. When assessing a violent conflict it is imperative to understand the true motivations of the actors using violence, the true threats and the true context of the violence. Using a microlevel of analysis in Algeria and Afghanistan will show Islamist groups with political and economic concerns that often override religious concerns. When a simple, broad explanation of violence overlooks any of those political or economic dimensions then the violence can be increased and last for years, as will be shown in the following cases.

After a discussion of the Islamist violence in Algeria, I will evaluate the usefulness of Hafez and Halliday's theories to understand that violence. How can the violence be understood as the result of Hafez's institutional exclusion and repression? How can the violence be understood by Halliday's theory of an internal reorganization within Muslim states? To explain the events in Algeria in the 1990s, I

will include microlevel accounts of the violence. I will particularly look at the

microlevel accounts of the violence to determine if they align with Hafez and

Halliday or if they highlight weaknesses of the theories. Kalyvas argues that a

macrolevel of analysis is often too broad and insufficient alone. The same method

will then be applied to Afghanistan under the Taliban rule. The discussions of

Algeria and Afghanistan will include perspectives from journalists in the countries,

citizens, Islamists and government officials. Kalyvas would expect to encounter

shortcomings in the theories of Hafez and Halliday when the violence is examined on

a personal level. For that reason, I have included quotes from various people who

witnessed the violence and the perspectives of journalists who talked to Algerian and

Afghan citizens directly. Once the violence in each Muslim case is discussed, I will

briefly touch on the violence in El Salvador in the 1980's and in the Argentinian

Dirty War. Both cases represent non Muslim cases of violence. In El Salvador and

Argentina, the fear of communism acted as a macro cleavage while a micro analysis

will demonstrate that communism was not the issue for many of the people. The

Central and South American cases are used to illustrate how Islam sometimes

functions similarly to communism in the Cold War period. When Islam is viewed as

the macro cleavage, is the international community missing the various local conflicts,

unrelated to Islam, driving the violence?

Case Studies

1. Algeria

Algeria is in northwest Africa. In 1992 when an Islamist party was likely to win the elections, the military intercepted and cancelled the elections. This event led to years of violence within Algeria. A brief history of the Muslims' experiences in Algeria is necessary to adequately judge views of the 1990's violence as a "popular revolt" or Islamist uprising. In 1830, the French captured the Algerian capital, Algiers. French presence in Algeria was very strong. Algerian Islamists had long strived to preserve an Algerian culture when France controlled the land. A lot of the best land was given to French settlers and the bulk of Muslims were marginalized. During the French colonization of the 1800's until the war for independence in 1954, Algeria's Muslim social infrastructures were mostly destroyed, including schools, courts, tribes and religious orders. Not only were Algerian Islamists resisting French imperialism, later they were faced with the authoritarianism of a military regime. The National Liberation Front, the FLN, launched the Algerian War for Independence in

1954. FLN leader, Ben Bella, later became Algeria's first president. In 1965 he was overthrown by Houari Boumedienne.

The end of the Boumedienne presidency began a period of Algerian history leading the way to the violence of the 1990's. Chadli Bendjedid took office in 1979 after Boumedienne's death. Bendjedid's presidency ended Boumedienne's push for a socialist state entailing state-led development (Martinez xii). Various factors influenced this shift away from state-led development. Among them were the sharp decline in oil and gas revenues, overpopulation in the cities creating overurbanisation, inadequate housing, overenrolled schools, declining health services and crumbling infrastructure (Martinez 2000). The state began a process of withdrawing from state intervention in the economy in favor of increased private sector involvement and foreign investment . Benjedid's policies included decentralizing and deconcentrating the economy. To achieve this, nineteen large state companies were divided up into one hundred twenty smaller companies (Ruedy 2005). Luis Martinez finds Benjedid's liberalization policies were "too little, too late" to prevent the "outburst of deep social and economic discontent which found its most violent expression in nationwide riots of October 1988" (2000, pxii). The October riots of 1988 included tens of thousands charging through Algiers center destroying government and party property. The Algiers riot then spread to other cities and towns throughout Algeria. It is necessary to briefly discuss the economic context of the 1980's to understand and

judge the true nature of the October riots in 1988. Various scholars will challenge Martinez's assertion that they were an expression of economic discontent.

In 1984, GDP adjusted for inflation grew by only 4.3 percent per annum which let it barely stay ahead of the demographic increase (Ruedy, 2005, p236). Ruedy shares Martinez's emphasis on the economic factors leading to violence in October 1988. Ruedy concludes that while other factors are important, "the importance of economic realities cannot be overstressed" (2005, p270). The riots are important because they demonstrate tension within the country unrelated to Islamists. That is important when judging how to view the upcoming violence following the military's cancellation of the 1992 elections. The riots will also demonstrate the shortcomings of reductionist views. The riots, to Martinez, were an "outburst of deep social and economic discontent," while others, such as William Quandt and Hugh Roberts, attribute the riots to other factors.

Many Algerians were dissatisfied with life under FLN rule. The late 1980's included student protests, labor unrest and strikes. In 1986 in Constantine, there was a student protest against new requirements in religion and politics. The discontent spread to suburban students in Zouaghi, where Roberts writes that security forces responded with brutality. The following day tens of thousands of students engaged in a silent protest of the violence. The authorities again responded with great force and the students' anger led them to destroy any symbol of state authority, for example party headquarters and municipal vehicles. Roberts argues that it is misleading to

interpret the 1988 riots as expressions of economic discontent (2003). Two important facts Roberts bases his argument on are that the rioters did not express specifically economic grievances and the riots ended without economic concessions being made to the people. He quotes a repeated phrase of the rioters, "Ma bghina la zabda wa la felfel, lakin bghina zaim fhel," (We don't' want butter or pepper, we want a leader we can respect). In October 1988, the government declared a state of siege and repression increased. Within weeks hundreds of Algerians had died and thousands were tortured in response to the riots. Ruedy writes that the country was "stunned and then infuriated" after the Algerian army turned on its own citizens (2003). Quandt, like Roberts, questions the often accepted economic causes of the October riots. He finds that the most widespread belief among politically sophisticated Algerians is that groups within the Benjedid regime, likely the ruling FLN and the security services, played a significant role in initiating the riots (1998). The riots, in this view, were a tool to oust President Benjedid from power. Benjedid had, in the previous month, criticized party bureaucrats publicly and appeared to imply a purging of bureaucrats thus fueling the bureaucrat's desire to oust him (Quant, 1998). Quandt's interpretation of the October riots challenges the common portrayal of the riots as a manifestation of economic and social unrest of the people and frustration with the state. Quandt's interpretation takes a more personal approach focusing on groups within the regime that used the guise of economic and social unrest to get what they wanted, Benjedid out of power. Quandt's interpretation shows small

groups acting for their own benefit. They did not want to be subject to a purging by

Benjedid. The motivations were personal, not political.

In 1989, President Bendjedid recognized the Islamic Salvation Front, the FIS,

as a political party. Islamic activists controlled the streets in many neighborhoods

and were often helping the wounded. With the discontent surrounding the ruling FLN

party, the Islamists offered the option of having a different group in power. The

Algerians had experienced life under FLN rule and many were unsatisfied as

evidenced by the protests, strikes, repression and violence of the 1980's. A physics

student and FIS sympathizer in Algiers expressed frustration over the use of the

French language in universities while the FLN ruled. He said that "the lectures were

in French (at the university), nobody understood anything… In Algeria there are

lecturers able to give them (lectures in Arabic), but everything is done to make them

go away because those who have the posts are French-speakers. It is they who hold

power…you lose a year or two years because of the use of French (as cited in

Martinez, 2000, p52). This student's grievances were largely practical. He wanted a

higher education in his language; he wanted to be able to earn some power. The

1980's saw the rise of Islamic fundamentalism, as Reudy termed it (2005). (Hugh

Roberts finds applying the term "fundamentalism" problematic in the Islamic context

(2003)). The student's quote does not express a desire to create an Islamic state in

Algeria yet many youth like him voted for an Islamic party, the FIS. The FIS aimed

to Arabitize schools thus appealing to students such as this one.

John Ruedy finds that the appearance of Islamic fundamentalism is attributed to the continuation of the Muslim effort to "conform social and political institutions to the will of God," the empty promises of nationalist leaders and the lack of institutions to voice discontent (2005). The FIS were an Islamic party but understanding them as such obscures the true reasons people aligned with the party. The student's feelings demonstrate that alignment was complex; Algerians did not vote for the FIS solely because it was an Islamist party. Understanding who supported the FIS contributes to a better understanding of the violence and the true nature of the conflict. A micro analysis demonstrates people voting FIS for a number of reasons, often self serving. The student was frustrated that the university's use of French interfered with his education therefore he voted FIS.

To simply label the FIS as an Islamist group overlooks the complexity and diversity within the group. The FIS was formed in February 1989 and legalized seven months later. By June 1990 it had taken control of the Popular Assemblies in thirty-one of Algeria's forty eight provinces and in 856 of the 1,541 communes. Luis Martinez notes the differing motivations Algerians had for voting for the FIS. He infers that support for the FIS did not translate directly into the supporters wanting an Islamic state in Algeria. He found that petty traders voted for the FIS because they wanted a government that would allow free trade and discontinue the tradition of discrimination that existed since independence (Martinez, 2000). A trader voiced his frustration acquiring flour and yeast from FLN officials saying "they (officials)

hoarded goods for their friends or for wholesalers who resold the goods retail…But with the FIS, I swear to you, I had my yeast and my flour every day, without having to wait" (as cited in Martinez, 2000, p29). This trader voted FIS for self-serving reasons; he does not express concern for the FIS Islamic dimension. He also does not articulate an affinity to economic policies of the FIS. While he is concerned about getting his yeast, it shows that he is concerned with fulfilling his needs and not a better economic policy offered by the FIS. Militant Muslims, on the other hand, did want an FIS victory to translate into an Islamic state. For the unemployed youth who voted FIS, it was a vote against the FLN-state that was perceived as responsible for the violent 1988 repression of the riots in Algiers. What is important to note is that the Islamic Salvation Front was not a group solely composed of people wanting an Islamic state, there were many practical and political focuses of its members.

Martinez concludes that, based on a study of FIS voters' life stories, there were a variety of political, economic and social choices and issues at stake that provided a variety of reasons for voting for the FIS (2000). Martinez interviewed Walid, a native of the southeastern suburbs of Algiers, about his regard for the violence and armed bands. Martinez characterizes Walid's experience as one of joy, then revolt and finally disillusion. Walid, an ex-FIS sympathizer, supported the first armed action of the Islamic Armed Movement, the MIA. Slowly, the murders and violence in his commune turned his joy to revolt. He had initially contemplated joining an armed group but later, after experiencing the warlike conduct of the

competing parties, decided not to join any group and instead get married. The armed

bands were distinct from FIS supporters. Allegiances also changed throughout the

conflict. Walid's sympathy for the FIS dwindled as the conflict evolved and violence

increased.

President Benjedid had proposed a constitution that would allow for a

multiparty system and end the tradition of single party rule and a changing

relationship between the army and the state. The changes threatened the army and the

high-ranking military members of the FLN were asked leave the FLN to accomplish

the changes. Two groups were the Armed Islamic Group and the Islamic Salvation

Army. The violence continued until 1998. It was not a simple conflict between the

state and the Islamists. Islamists were not a unified group in Algeria. There were

differences between the groups and, as shown by the differing motivations for

supporting the FIS, within the Islamic groups. The Armed Islamic Movement (MIA)

was a guerilla group that formed the base of the Islamist resistance to the state. The

Armed Islamic Group (GIA) was the most radical and violent wing of the Islamist

movement. It condemned the FIS leadership and its slogan was "no dialogue, no

truce, no reconciliation" (Ruedy 2003). The GIA claimed responsibility for the

killings of intellectuals and foreigners and assistance in assassinating the former

prime minister Kasdi Merbah. The GIA's methods are often cited as savage and

barbaric (Roberts2003). Considering the Islamist movement as one unified

movement allows the GIA barbaric violence to represent the other groups such as the

FIS or the MIA. It is important to recognize that the GIA is distinct from the MIA

and FIS. The Islamic Salvation Army (AIS) was the armed wing of the FIS. The AIS

went on to condemn the deliberate targeting of innocent civilians. Martinez's

discussion of the various motivations of FIS supporters furthers the idea that Islamists

were not a unified group. Since they were not unified, it becomes difficult to view

the violence as an Islamist uprising when the identity of "Islamists" is constantly

changing when allegiance and sympathy are changing. Roberts describes the Islamist

movement, referring to the various Islamist groups in Algeria, initially focuses on

urban guerilla warfare and later diversified to rural and urban guerilla warfare. One

of the guerilla movement's goals was to sabotage the High Committee of State's

(HCE) (the five-man collective Presidency that replaced Benjedid) plan to restore the

state at the FIS's expense. The guerilla movement did not support the army's backing

of the HCE when the guerilla movement proposed a candidate to oversee the

"reconciliation" between the state and Islamist movement.

Before exploring the violence following the cancelled elections, it is necessary

to discuss the power structures in Algerian politics at the time. The changes

proposed by Benjedid threatened the military's power in Algeria. Roberts identifies

four main apparatuses of power, the Party (FLN), the Presidency, the army and the

bureaucracy (2003). He places the Party clearly below the other three apparatuses in

terms of real power. Ruedy identifies three apparatuses of power, the presidency, the

army and the party. He argues that the presidency is clearly dominant (2005). He

characterizes the presidency as having "impressive power" (2005, p 250). He argues

that in 1983 Bendjedid had almost complete control over the government. By the end

of Bendjedid's first five-year term he had effectively "de-Boumedienized" Algeria's

power structure (Ruedy, 2005, p 233). On a somewhat different note, commenting on

the military's cancellation of the 1992 elections, Ruedy says that the army had long

held either indirect or direct control of the political system. While he affords the

presidency more weight than Roberts, he does recognize the constant degree of

control held by the army.

The cancellation of the 1992 elections left many questions to be answered.

Why did the state allow for supposedly free elections then watch the military

intervene? Why did the military, if they had control over the political process, allow

for elections that were widely predicted to put the FIS in power? Who really held the

power and what were their motivations at the time? How those questions are

answered will be relevant when applying Hafez and Halliday's theories. Hugh

Roberts' questions the portrayal of the election of 1992 that many claim were

relatively free elections for Algeria. He understands the end of the FLN's monopoly

of power to mean little. Accepting that the army was the true center of power paints a

different picture of the 1992 elections. After 1989, army commanders who were no

longer FLN members were unaccountable to any political institution and could act

freely. An indirect function of the FLN was that it acted as a restraint on the army.

When discussing the FIS victory in the 1992 elections, Roberts finds that they were

"allowed" to win (2003, p251). He questions why the power holders, allowing for an FIS victory, would act in a way that would "put them out of business" (2003, p251). Army commanders who were freed from the constraints of the FLN could act more freely during the 1992 elections.

Understanding the power held by the military is necessary to answering Roberts' question of whether the military were seeking to fight the Islamists. Roberts' interpretation of the power of the military would lead one to view the army as the instigators of the violence. Ruedy challenges Roberts' understanding of military power when he argues for the dominancy of the presidency. If the presidency is the dominant power apparatus then the military may not have been as much an instigator of violence as Roberts argues. Lessening the role of the military in starting the violence, Islamists can be seen as having a stronger role in initiating violence. Conversely, if Roberts assertion is correct then the military had a large role in starting the violence with the Islamists. If the army was the main instigator of violence by canceling the elections to provoke the FIS and give themselves a legitimate excuse for its use of force against the FIS, would the Islamists have used violence without the army "setting the stage?" Reductionist thinking that characterizes the Algerian violence as a "popular revolt," as Halliday does, or as an Islamist uprising are missing the complexity of Algerian politics and the events preceding the elections.

When the military cancelled the 1992 elections violence broke out between the state and various groups within the country. The day after the cancellation the military began arrested suspected FIS supporters. Within the first two months, several thousand Algerians were arrested and many sent to internment camps in the Sahara. The day after the HCE declared a state of siege in February 1992, Islamists killed six police officers in Algiers. An estimated 100,000 to 200,000 died in the years following the cancellation, which included civilian massacres.

In the spring of 1994, Islamists attacked 150-200 armed men at a prison where an estimated 900 prisoners were freed (FIS militants and Islamist terrorists) (Roberts, 2003). In addition to the prison attack, there were two train attacks, the murder of the director of communications and a senior official at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Roberts, 2003). Violence by 1994 was approaching political officeholders. Two journalists were killed at the French-language weekly and there was an attack on the state hydrocarbons company. Women were also increasingly targeted for not wearing proper Islamic dress (Roberts, 2003). By 1993, Ruedy finds that Islamists, without mentioning any specific groups, were targeting an increasing number of noncombatants including academics, journalists and doctors. Roberts acknowledges that the violence of the state repression rivaled the Islamist violence. Roberts notes ten FIS militants found with their throats slit then the fourteen men found with their throats slit a month later. The fourteen men were supposedly retaliation for the killing of seen security agents days earlier. There were also unofficial death squads

operating. Amnesty International claimed that the Algerian military was resorting to torture and violating human rights (Ruedy, 2005).

If the Islamists were not a unified group and allegiances changed, is it fair to characterize the violence in Algeria, between 1992 and the late 1990's, as a fight between the state and the Islamists, as France often did (Roberts, 2003) and as Mohammed Hafez does? The GIA, through various edicts, announced that anyone it found to follow a lifestyle contrary to Islamic principles was a legitimate target of their violence (Ruedy, 2005). Martinez found that the armed bands' war against the state brought poverty and terror to FIS voters. The GIA embarked on systematically eliminating FIS activists and organizers (Martinez, 2000). In Baraki, Chararba and Les Eucalyptus, direct clashes between the armed bands and the security forces were not nearly as prevalent as acts of sabotage, murder and reprisals (Martinez, 2000). Martinez concludes that it is too simplistic to characterize the violence as a fight against an "impious" regime. He finds it too simplistic because "the political and ideological objectives assigned to the armed struggle were adulterated by economic criminal activity and social revenge-seeking, which… lay behind the armed dissident movements" (2000, p100). Martinez's micro analysis finds what Kalyvas predicted, motives for violence that do not necessarily align with the master cleavage, in this case a popular revolt or Islamist uprising.

Martinez finds that the economic criminal activity and the social revenge-seeking were more relevant to understanding the armed movements than the

ideologies of revolutionary Islamism. Communes in the suburban area of southeastern Algiers were widely controlled by the armed bands from 1993-1994. Protection rackets usually involved all the economic players (Martinez, 2000). In 1994, petty traders stopped automatically supplying armed groups so that they could invest in other markets. This robbed the armed bands of a crucial part of their financial resources thus weakening the bands. From here, the bands killed bakers, grocers, merchants and jewelers and created terror in the districts (Martinez, 2000). Martinez provides examples of Algerians killing Algerians. He does not adhere to an overly simplistic state versus Islamist dichotomy.

Unlike Martinez, Ruedy characterizes the violence as an insurgency rather than a civil war. His rationale is that only a small number of Algerians supported the Islamists' use of violence and the number of Islamist combatants reached no more than 25,000. Roberts, like Ruedy, is uncomfortable calling the conflict in Algeria a civil war. The events in Algeria must be understood without the labels that carry preconceived notions and implications. I am not concerned with debating how to refer to the events in Algeria but it is important to recognize the power behind labels such as "civil war" or "insurgency." What many might label as "Islamic violence" or "terrorism" risks missing the complexities of the violence. An important aspect that is often overlooked is the political demands of the Islamic groups and the, sometimes, irrelevance of Islam. The violence in Algeria will next be evaluated using both Hafez and Halliday's theories.

Hafez's theory leads to a discussion of repression and institutional exclusion. Ruedy finds that the political institutions left little opportunity to voice opinions thus making the mosques the only channel to express one's opinions. After the September 1988 riots, repression by the government accelerates. In October 1988 the government declared a state of siege and increased repressive measures. Days later hundreds of Algerians had died and thousands were tortured. Re-legitimization of the FIS was one of the FIS demands for renouncing violence.

Another FIS demand in exchange for renouncing violence was that the regime acknowledge its role in starting the violence (Ruedy, 2005). The other demands included re-legitimizing the FIS, the regime inaugurating a cease fire and freeing FIS leaders from prison (Ruedy, 2005). The FIS did not demand anything in relation to Islam or religion. FIS demands were practical and political demands. They wanted their party to be re-legitimized stressing the importance to the FIS of being a credible part of Algerian politics. When the FIS was banned, some of its members opted for guerilla activity, viewing it as the only channel available to them (Roberts, 2000).

In 1989 the Benjedid government legalized the FIS thus weakening an obvious case for institutional exclusion. Roberts' questioning of the true nature of the 1991/1992 elections, though, may help make a case for Hafez. Roberts suggests that the FIS was allowed to win the elections and would not have been allowed to win if the FIS was going to take power from the army. Roberts does not elaborate further. An implication is that the military wanted the FIS to win and wanted a confrontation.

The elections were allowed to take place, the FIS won and the military stepped in and canceled them then forced the president out of office. While it may have looked as if the FIS was given institutional access through its legal participation in the elections, maybe it was not true access and rather a façade. There was institutional exclusion and repression of the FIS in the early 1990s. Explaining the initial use of violence by the Islamists as a response to institutional exclusion and repression is plausible. The difficulty in using Hafez's theory to interpret the Islamic violence in Algeria is that the beginning of the violence in 1992 can differ from the factors that continued the violence in 1994 and 1995. The violence in Algeria started in 1992 and was somewhat concluded in 1997. Over the course of five years is it likely to have one main factor driving the violence the entire time? Kalyvas argues that individuals can take advantage of a larger conflict to settle private, local conflicts often unrelated to the main conflict or the master cleavage. This is why Kalyvas questions the validity of explanations of violence in a civil conflict through the lens of the master cleavage, in Algeria Islam is a likely argument for being the master cleavage. What developed as the years went on testifies to the validity of Kalyvas's assertion that personal conflicts are expressed that are often unrelated to the master cleavage. Institutional access for Islamists was not likely driving the violence in Algeria for years.

True institutional access for the Islamists likely would have impacted the violence, or lack thereof, in 1992. When discussing how to end the violence, Roberts argues for institutional channels to peacefully express differing ideas and interests.

He writes that a comprehensive political solution must include the readmission of the FIS to a constitutional political process. At the same time, Roberts concludes that the "main obstacle to the necessary meeting of minds on this issue (the violence) is the Algerian army" (2000, p178). He argues that the army needs to reconsider its role in Algeria. The military's domination over the political life in Algeria is inappropriate. While the readmission of the FIS to the political process creates a voice for the FIS in Algeria, was that why the violence began, a lack of institutional access? If that is why it began, is that why it was continued for years? The account given by Ruedy, Roberts and Martinez, while different, portray an Algerian army that stepped too far into the politics of Algeria and, according to both Ruedy and Roberts, had long been a dominating force in the political sphere. The scenario where the military holds substantial political power, even though it is does not try to be the governing body, created the potential for a volatile situation when that power was challenged (by the president calling for popular, pluralist elections and the FIS winning). Institutional access would have likely led Algeria down a different path in 1992 but other factors led it down a violent path, such as the army. Further, institutional access had a role in initiating violence but was it what drove the violence for years, the microlevel accounts suggest that it was not.

Creating institutional channels for the FIS in efforts to keep their violence in check is logical but to argue that creating those channels will help stop the violence is not. It assumes that the FIS violence during the armed conflict was attributable to

lack of institutional access. The violence had its own character as the conflict progressed. Martinez suggests that personal motivations played a role in prolonging the violence. The FIS is not the sole initiator of the violent acts during the conflict therefore stopping FIS violence would not guarantee stopping the violence as a whole because both the military and other groups had a role in initiating the violence. Hafez's theory works in part but other factors complicate its application. How does Hafez's theory deal with an overly aggressive army in Algerian politics or the microlevel accounts of violence that suggest a vengeful side or a people tired of life under FLN rule.

The violence that engulfed Algeria following 1992 had various factors that drove it for years. Hafez's theory does not always explain the occurrences Martinez found in his interviews with Algerians. When petty traders in communes stopped supplying the armed bands, they were murdered. Was the terror they provoked related to lack of institutional access and repression? A common theme Martinez found in his interviews was the new Moujahideen wanted to kill ex-combatants of the liberation war because of their perceived undeserved privilege. The ex-combatants were convinced they were the "chiefs of Algeria" (Martinez, 2000). Martinez's portrayal does not point to institutional access but rather more personal feelings of jealousy. Further, the new Mujahideen killing ex-combatants is Algerians killing Algerians. This is the "intimate violence" that Kalyvas discusses. William Quandt writes that "generational revenge has played a part in Algerian politics, including the

appalling massacres of civilians in 1996-98" (1998, p19). Quandt traces the tension

to the war for independence in 1954- 1962. Messali, a prominent figure of Algerian

nationalism, clashed with the FLN and was thus pushed aside and his followers

"systematically eliminated" (Quandt, 1998, p19). Quandt notes that some who

supported the Islamists challenge to FLN rule in the 1980's were descendents of

Messalists who were destroyed by the FLN.

Martinez provides examples of the intimate violence of Algeria that shows a

more personal, self serving motivation. Denunciation is an indirect form of violence

(Kalyvas). It perpetuates the violence. Kalyvas writes that it is probable that the

denunciation is primarily private and malicious rather than political (2006). Quandt's

previous assertion that "generational revenge" plays a role in Algerian politics and the

examples from Martinez support Kalyvas's argument for the private and malicious

nature of some of the violence. Martinez discusses the increased crime due to

security forces' apathy for the people's safety and the release of criminals from jail.

He finds that sometimes the criminals were called police informers by Islamist

sympathizers and other times they were accused of being Islamist sympathizers by the

other side. The people were afraid of being called a police informer for fear of

punishment by violent groups such as the GIA while, at the same time, there was fear

of being portrayed as an Islamist for fear that the security forces would harm the

person. A delivery man described his beating by a group of young people in 1993 in

the Algiers suburbs saying "I swear to you, nobody came to help me or even put some

fear into the young people, nothing." (as cited in Martinez, 2000, p75). The delivery

man was beaten by a group of young people while unloading his truck. Fear played a

role in that situation. Fear motivated people to act, or not act. The man was not

attacked because of the state's conflict with the Islamist groups.

Algerians limited their movements for fear of arrest and were sometimes

denied rides by taxi drivers because certain areas were too unsafe at night (Martinez

2000). A building day –labourer named Karim said in 1993 that going to work was

dangerous because if the army stopped him at a checkpoint then the army would take

him in (as cited in Martinez, 200, p77). Karim did not have a permanent address and

was confident that the army would label him as a terrorist coming in to kill and then

just flee. The army's actions were repressing people. People would not go out for

fear of arrest. Taxis drivers refused passengers because certain destinations scared

them too much. Karim was a day-labourer trying to make money. The army's fear

that he was a terrorist, whether a façade or a true fear, made the army overreact to the

"threat" of Karim.

Hafez is useful in understanding aspects of the violence but, as the various

microlevel accounts demonstrate, not all of it. Halliday characterized the violence in

Algeria as "a populist movement within an Islamic country (that) challenges a secular

state or one that is regarded as insufficiently Islamic, for political power." Both

Hafez and Halliday offer explanations of "why Muslims rebel," or the "Islamist

challenge," respectively. They are not focusing the use of violence by Islamic groups,

whether targeted at the state or each other. Halliday makes a broad statement about a populist movement and a secular state with little attention to the individual players, their decisions and the environment they operate in when making decisions. He also frames it in religious terms when referencing the Islamic population and the secular FLN. Just as Hafez was less applicable to the driving forces of the violence, Halliday is even less applicable. The FIS, a major Islamic party, had people supporting it for completely non religious reasons. People supported the FIS because they could provide for a better quality of life, such as supplying people's yeast on time. The militant Muslims in the FIS were the main ones who wanted an Islamic state, many were much less concerned with the Islamic dimension of the Islamic Salvation Front. To view the years of violence, including civilian massacres, as an Islamic state trying to reorganize itself in response to the repressive secular state is misleading. It overlooks the local cleavages, including generational revenge, that drove the conflict and were unaffiliated with the master cleavage, Islam.

Roberts' characterization of Islamic violence supports Halliday's theory of internal reorganization. Roberts does not discuss the outside world. Instead he discusses reconcurring the religious sphere and attracting student recruits. For Roberts, he finds certain aspects of the "Islamist mission" that necessitate violence. He argues that the resort to violence was "inevitable" for the Islamist mission. For instance, he gives examples of establishing unofficial mosques, which sometimes had to be taken by force. Second, Islamists behave as self-appointed censors of public

morals. Lastly, the extent to which the movement has been able to attract recruits from the first generation student population has led to conflict within the university (Roberts 2000). Various ideas expressed by Algerian citizens do not express ideas about the "Islamist mission". They express ideas about having university lectures given in Arabic or making flour and yeast available. Further, violence was often discussed in terms of personal revenge. Again, no mention of Islam was made in various accounts of the violence in Algeria.

This is where Hafez and Halliday's theories fall short. The theories address violence employed by Islamic groups. Both theories find the violence politically motivated and unconnected to the theology of Islam. Hafez's theory can be expanded to also explain non-Muslim cases of violence. His theory applies to groups that are denied institutional access in politics and are repressed; they can be Islamic groups or non-Islamic groups though. Their strength is that they do not focus on the theology of Islam to explain the violence and a particular "Islamic" element. There shortcoming is that they are too general to explain the violence within an Islamic country from the outbreak of the violence through its conclusion. The everyday occurrences and driving forces of violence in Algeria do not always align well with either theory. Hafez and Halliday view the conflict in terms of its master cleavage falling into the trap of differentiating the master from the important local cleavages. Hafez asserts that "political exclusion of Islamists from 1992 – 1997 was the main impetus for mass revolt" (2003, p47). Hafez uses the term "impetus," when

discussing the role of political exclusion. He does not discuss the role of political exclusion after the "mass revolt" begins.

The intimate violence between Algerians was a factor in prolonging the violence in Algeria. What initiated the violence may be different than what continued the violence for years. No one helped the delivery man, likely, because of fear for their own safety. The young people who beat him up likely knew, as Martinez deduced, that the security forces would not intervene and they could do as they liked. The denunciation is evident in Martinez's recounting that criminals were accused of being Islamist sympathizers or police informants by opposing sides. A village resident in 1993 said that "the old men, they should be treated with suspicion, they enter a café silently…they pretend to listen to nothing, but in reality they listen to everything. Afterwards they go and tell the police all that they have heard" (as cited in Martinez, 2000, p85). While the truth of the villager's statement is not relevant now, the mistrust and fear within Algerian society is important. Martinez's interviews with Algerians such as the delivery man or the village resident in the café demonstrate that what may explain the outbreak of violence may not sufficiently explain why it continues, in the Algerian case, for years. Hafez's theory of institutional exclusion helps to understand the outbreak of violence. FIS was denied a fair participation in the 1992 elections and were willing to engage in violence to achieve their goals, particularly if they were violently repressed by the military. One theory, such as Hafez or Halliday's, does not adequately explain the violence at the

outbreak and the multiple instances of violence throughout the conflict, in addition to the degree of violence.

Quandt argues that a shortcoming of theories such as those proposed by Hafez and Halliday is that they do no account for individual actor's choices at critical moments in Algerian history. Quandt advises to "be wary of overdetermined explanations of politics that ignore human choice" (1998, p7). Quandt's thinking matches Kalyvas's emphasis on the microlevel. Quandt strives to understand how particular people's choices affected the violence. He is employing a microlevel of analysis. The players in Algerian politics in the 1980's and 1990's made various choices that fostered or restrained violence. For instance, he argues that not using a proportional representation system of voting (for the 1991 and 1992 elections) was "one of the worst decisions made by the government" (1998, p60). He faults the system for being designed to over represent the largest party. He asks whether the military canceling the elections or the decision to hold elections under rules that would only produce a distorted outcome was the real "mistake". The winner-take-all rules were the real problem Quandt finds, not the elections themselves. Quandt's focus on human choice reiterates the limitations of reductionist theories. Various, specific human choices contributed to setting the state for violence. Quandt recognizes the value in analyzing individual's choices and motivations. This would lead to a microlevel analysis that better understands the local cleavages.

The case of the Taliban will be discussed to show another example of an Islamic group using violence. Whereas the Islamic groups in the Algerian case exemplified anti-state violence but also violence against Algerians opposed to their group. The GIA killed FIS sympathizers and intellectuals in Algeria. The Taliban can not be regarded as an example of anti-state violence in the same way as Algeria. The "state" in Afghanistan before 1994 when the Taliban enter was almost non existent given the years of fighting within the rival mujahideen groups in Afghanistan. The Taliban enter Afghanistan and are competing with local warlords for power, not a functional central government. Microlevel accounts will be given, as in Algeria, to be able to better judge the applicability of Hafez and Halliday's theories. Afghanistan is a very different case than Algeria. Hafez states that a "sustained theoretical treatment" of Islamist rebellion is needed, rather than a description of one particular case. The differences between Algeria and Afghanistan will present a challenging task for Hafez to apply "sustained theoretical treatment" to both. Algeria and Afghanistan both have majority Muslim populations. Algeria is located in northern Africa while Afghanistan is bordered by Pakistan, Iran and former Soviet states. Just as understanding the composition of the FIS was important, understanding who the Taliban are and where their movement thrived is also important. The Taliban members and the history and geographical location of Afghanistan provide a fuller understanding of the violence in Afghanistan during the Taliban reign.

2. Afghanistan

Afghanistan, like Algeria, has had significant involvement from other states. Both Algeria and Afghanistan have a history of anti-colonial violence preceding their violent periods discussed in this paper. Algeria was colonized by the French while Afghanistan has had significant British, American and Soviet Union presence on their land. The Taliban began their takeover of Afghanistan in 1994. Afghanistan's history has always included significant fighting. Before its independence from the British in 1919, the British fought three wars in Afghanistan in eighty years. Goodson continually notes the fierce independent spirit of the Afghani people. He writes that "one constant was the willingness of the Afghan tribesmen to fight…not only against foreign invaders and neighbors but among themselves as well" (2001, p36). It is within the context of the history of fighting that the Taliban emerge onto the scene.

Following British involvement in Afghanistan, the Soviet Union and the United States battled each other indirectly in Afghanistan. The American government backed the Afghan mujahideen fighting the Soviet troops in Afghanistan. In 1978

there was a coup d'etat that overthrew Mohammad Daoud's nationalist regime and in its place came a communist party. Months later a rebellion broke out in response to the coup and the new radical reform program of the communist government. In 1979, the Soviet Union invaded partly to bring Afghanistan under Soviet hegemony, therefore preventing British or American influence. The Soviets did not leave Afghanistan for ten years.

The violence during the Soviet invasion and occupation impacted Afghanistan and created an environment that would shape future Taliban members. Journalist Robert Kaplan recalls a haunting observance a surgeon treating Afghanis made one night after working in a Red Cross hospital in Pakistan, a relatively short trip over the Afghanistan border. The surgeon stated that "most of the mines they've (Russians) laid were designed to maim, not kill, because a dead body causes no inconvenience. It only removes the one dead person from the field. But somebody who is wounded and in pain requires the fulltime assistance of several people all down the line who could otherwise be fighting" (as cited in Kaplan, 2001, p2). These experiences shaped the Afghan people into the fierce warriors with an independent spirit reflecting Goodson's characterization. There is a history of fighting and war in Afghanistan stemming from British colonization and Soviet invasion. This history does not involve Islam. The violence used by the Taliban in the 1990's may have a stronger connection to the Afghans being accustomed to war and violence than Islam. When the Taliban begin their takeover in 1994, their behavior and use of violence must be

considered with their history and experiences in mind. The surgeon's characterization of the Soviet invasion sheds light on the context in which Afghan people lived in for ten years.

When the Soviets invaded, the US supplied the Afghan mujahideen with modern lethal weaponry to fight American rivals, the Soviet troops. Pakistani journalist Ahmed Rashid characterizes the occurrence as "lethal modern weaponry given to simple agricultural people who used it with devastating results" (2000, p18). Once the Soviets withdrew, Afghanistan and the rest of the world would witness the effects of giving lethal weaponry to the mujahideen. The violence did not stop in 1989. Instead, it was turned inwards with Afghanis and mujahideen killing each other.

The war with the Soviets has various effects on Afghanistan as do the years that follow the withdrawal of the Soviets in 1989. Larry Goodson characterizes 1989 to 1992 as an intense civil war in Afghanistan. In 1989 there was a mujahideen effort to capture Jalalabad, a major city in east Afghanistan, to put pressure on the capital of Kabul. The mujahideen were unable to effectively coordinate their effort and the violence continued for the next three years. President Najibullah, whose presidency began in 1987, was unable to stop the violence within his country. The Soviet regime continued to back the Najibullah regime in Afghanistan even after their withdrawal. Rashid finds that the brutality of the civil war "destroyed the age old Afghan

tolerance and consensus" (2000, p83). Islamic sects and ethnic groups were divided in ways completely new to the Afghan people.

What took place in Afghanistan before the Taliban takeover is also important because it is different than what took place in Algeria before the violence following the 1992 elections. The two cases are different so one question I will discuss later is if Halliday and Hafez's theories can be used, even if only with limited applicability, in both cases that, while different, included violence being used in pursuit of "Islamic" goals. The type of blatant discrimination the FIS faced in the 1992 elections is absent from Afghanistan history. As I will later discuss, the Taliban were not denied access to political institutions; there were no functioning institutions in the chaos of 1994 Afghanistan. The following discussion of events following the Soviet withdrawal will strive to explain the emergence of the Taliban and the violence in Afghanistan during the Taliban takeover beginning in 1994. In what ways are the events in Afghanistan similar to Algeria? Are there similarities in the violence in both countries? Hafez and Halliday's theories will provide the lenses to look for commonalities among the two cases of "Islamic" violence. Is there institutional exclusion in both cases or is there a strong case to be made for an internal reorganization within the Muslim state?

Between 1992, when the Najibullah regime was overthrown, and 1994, when the Taliban emerge, rival mujahideen groups were unable to agree upon a power-sharing agreement in Afghanistan government. It was not until the Taliban emerge

that the fighting among the mujahideen stopped. This is the context in which the

Taliban are faced with in 1994. In 1994, the Taliban capture the city of Kandahar, in

the southeastern part of Afghanistan. In 1995 they capture Herat in northwestern

Afghanistan and in 1996 they capture the capital, Kabul. When the Taliban captured

Kabul, ex-President Najibullah was taken from UN headquarters in Kabul and

publicly hanged, along with his brother who was visiting.

How were the Taliban able to ultimately capture the capital, Kabul, and hang

Najibullah? Understanding where they started and how the people viewed the

Taliban contributes to understanding their eventual takeover of the majority of

Afghanistan. Rashid characterizes the Pashtun south, were the Taliban began their

takeover in Kandahar, writing that it was a "total vacuum of leadership as warlordism

gripped the south" (2000, p97). This helps to explain the relative ease the Taliban

had in taking over the south. The communist-backed government had fallen in 1992,

the mujahideen were largely discredited and the traditional tribal leadership was

largely gone (Rashid, 2000). An additional reason for the Taliban success in

capturing Kandahar was the compatibility of Taliban behavior with the customs of

Kandahar. The Pashtuns are the dominant ethnic group in Afghanistan. They reside

in the southern part of the country. The Pashtun belt is extremely tribal and

traditional. The Pashtuns had ruled Afghanistan for 300 years but recently lost power

to smaller ethnic groups in the country. The men that formed the Taliban were

southern Pashtuns. What appeared to many Westerners as violent, discriminate

behavior by the Taliban was viewed differently by the traditional Pashtuns. For example, the Taliban treatment of women was condemned by Western feminist groups and governments but for the Pashtun South, women were typically veiled and girls did not attend school. The Taliban victories gave hope to Pashtuns that they would once again be the dominant group in Afghanistan. .

The links between the Taliban movement and the behavior of Pashtuns question the amount of Islam and religiosity that motivated the Taliban. It can be viewed as an extremely fundamentalist Islamic movement or less a religious movement but more a southern Pashtun movement. The Taliban leader was Mullah Omar, a southern Pashtun, Taliban leaders were from the poorest, most conservative and least literate southern Pashtun regions. In Mullah Omar's village, women were fully veiled and girls did not attend school. Rashid finds that the rest of Afghanistan was not "even remotely like the south" (2000, p110). The cities outside the Pashtun region were diverse, female education was supported, women went to the movies and danced at weddings (Rashid, 2000). The Taliban takeover would demonstrate many southern Pashtun elements, while the Taliban claimed to be re-Islamizing society and establishing order. Rashid questions the Taliban use of Islam saying that while the Taliban claimed they were fighting a jihad against corrupt Muslims, ethnic minorities viewed the Taliban as using Islam as a cover to exterminate non-Pashtuns.

The environment created by the violence between the Soviets and the mujahideen saw later consequences when the Taliban need recruits in the 1990's.

Many Afghanis fled the country to Pakistan and lived in refugee camps during the war with the Soviets. Some of these Afghan refugee boys did not know a peaceful Afghanistan. Rashid states that many of these boys did not know their own country's history or the jihad against the Soviets. In the 1990s, when the Taliban needed recruits, these Pakistani refugee camps were a pool to draw from for Taliban leaders. These boys may have only received an education in a madrassa, a religious school, and may have grown up without parents. They only knew a violent world, sometimes a world without true parents. Rashid concludes that "these boys were what the war had thrown up like the sea's surrender on the beach of history" (2000, p32). The violence between the Soviets and the mujahideen had the ability to influence boys that went on to join the Taliban movement. Who the Taliban were has a connection to the Pakistani refugee camps and the war with the Soviets. When assessing the importance of Islam to explain the Taliban violence it is necessary to understand the background of the Taliban members. It is important to understand how the members are shaped by non-Islamic and possibly Islamic factors. Here, the boys may have only received an education in a madrassa and were born in an environment with a heavily influenced by war and violence.

Afghan society was shaped by the violence with the British, the Soviets and each other. American and Soviet governments supplied weaponry to Afghan people. The civil war, as Rashid discusses, destroyed the tolerance in Afghan society. The new divisions in society are shown in the violence that occurs among Afghan society.

Burhanuddin Rabbani was president in Afghanistan from 1992-1996. The Taliban,

then, clashed with Rabbani's government. The Taliban were not trying to share

power or function within the Rabbani government. The division is exemplified by

Masud's, President Rabbani's "sword-arm,"massacre of Hazaras in Kabul in 1995,

the Hazaras massacre of Taliban in Mazar in 1997 and the Taliban massacres of

Hazaras and Uzbeks in 1998 (Rashid, 2000). A 1997 uprising in Mazar-i-Sharif, a

northern Afghan stronghold against the Taliban, led to the massacre of over four

thousand Taliban. The Hazaras are Shia Muslims, a minority within the majority

Sunni Muslim population in Afghanistan. Rashid emphasizes that there was no

precedent for this type of violence between groups in Afghanistan prior to the civil

war.

Rashid writes that, before the Taliban offensive on the Mazar-i-Sharif in 1997,

"nobody expected the bloody drama of betrayals, counter-betrayals and inter-ethnic

bloodshed which was astounding even by Afghan standards…" (2000, p55). The

betrayal Rashid references is exemplified by the relationship between General Rashid

Dostum, who controlled Mazar, and his second in command, General Malik

Pahlawan. Malik accused Dostum of killing his brother the previous year in an

ambush (Rashid, 2000). Malik's animosity towards Dostum eventually, along with

Taliban bribes, led Malik to call on the Taliban to kill Dostum (Rashid, 2000). After

the Taliban massacre at Mazar, Malik set out to retake three Northern provinces

resulting in heavy fighting against the Taliban. Thousands of Taliban were killed in

those provinces and buried in mass graves. In a move to lessen support for Malik,

Dostum's troops found 20 mass graves of over 2,000 Taliban and accused Malik of

the killings. Dostum even offered assistance to the Taliban in recovering the bodies

(Rashid, 2000). Later eye-witness reports characterize the killing by Malik's forces

of these Taliban as an ethnic cleansing (Rashid, 2000). Generals reported that the

method used to kill the Taliban were to put them in large containers, drive them out to

the desert, put the containers in front of large holes and shoot at them. Once the

bodies were pulled out they were said to be burned black from the heat and lack of

oxygen (Rashid, 2000).

Before the violence following Soviet withdrawal, Rashid writes that Islam

was a "unifying factor" (2000, p83). Rashid characterizes the Taliban's use of Islam

as a "lethal weapon in the hands of extremists, a force for division, fragmentation and

enormous blood-letting. He writes that before the Taliban, Islamic extremism had

never flourished in Afghanistan . Any group could make the claim that their behavior

is justified by Islam. The other driving forces for a group's behavior need to be

examined. The Taliban may claim to be establishing a Muslim state governed by

sharia law but does that claim make sense given the historical role of Islam in

Afghanistan. Rashid does not find a precedent for the Taliban brand of Islam. He

found Islam to be a "unifying factor" in Afghanistan. Marsden asserts that Islam has

always had a strong hold on the people residing in Afghanistan. This bears the

question, if the Taliban are truly driven by religious fervor, why is there weak historical precedent for this type of "Islamic violence?"

Explaining who the Taliban are, how they began or what their motives are is difficult because of the intense secrecy they maintain. They may have begun as a group of religious students in the Kandahar region in 1994. They appear to have been frustrated with the fighting amongst the mujahideen and wanted to bring order back to Afghanistan by creating an Islamic state based on sharia law (Marsden, 2002). Using Islamic principles, they aimed to "fix" Afghanistan.

The Western world was taken aback when the Taliban began taking harsh stands against Afghan women and used shocking violence such as public executions and massacres. Outside of the health sector, women were banned from employment, female schools were closed down and women were severely restricted in their movement outside the home. Additionally, a strict dress code was established for men and women. Rashid recalls an event, soon after Taliban takeover of Kandahar, that made an execution seem like a public show appalling Afghanis and others inside Afghanistan at the time. The Taliban lifted the ban on football and the UN aid agencies took the opportunity to improve the football stadium so the people could have a chance to enjoy a football game and have a break from the harsh rules of the Taliban (Rashid, 2000). The Taliban, instead, did not schedule a football game but rather a public execution where the victim would be shot between the goalposts (Rashid, 2000). The twenty year old man was executed for allegedly stealing

medicines from another man and in the process killing the man. A relative of the dead man shot the twenty year old while more than 10,000 men and children watched (Rashid, 2000). While executions such as the stadium execution are not unique in the world, they are not standard methods of justice in the Western democracies. For many outside the Western world, this type of violence did not make the Taliban dangerous extremists. Understanding the local context is important because what may appear to the United States as dangerous behavior on the part of the Taliban may not appear to other governments who also use public executions.

Events like the execution in the stadium made many outsiders question who were these Taliban men who appeared cruel and unforgiving. It is important to understand how an event is "painted." The Taliban were not unique in their choices and use of force. Many recruits of the Taliban came from a society largely shaped by violence. Many Taliban recruits were raised in exclusively male societies (Rashid, 2000). They were orphans from the previous violence in the 1980's and among the mujahideen in the 1990's. Simi Wali, the head of an Afghan NGO, said that the "Taliban are a new generation of Muslim males who are products of a war culture" (as cited in Rashid, 2000, p111). As previously discussed, the original Taliban members were from the Pashtun south that possessed a very tribal and traditional lifestyle. Taliban, like Omar, were accustomed to girls never attending school and women being fully veiled. For the Pashtun south, their behavior may not have been as appalling. Additionally, Afghanistan had been in the midst of continuous violence

between rival groups since the Soviet withdrawal. The Taliban offered a relief from the years of fighting and chaos. However, their takeover in non-Pashtun areas did not have the same reception as in the south.

The Taliban began a takeover of non-Pashtun south areas by force and sometimes, reportedly, by bribing opposition commanders (Goodson, 2001). Taliban used money to convince the commanders to surrender or switch sides (Goodson, 2001). The Taliban fought with regional warlords and the Rabbani government to take control of the non-Pashtun areas. In 1996, President Rabbani abandoned Kabul and fled north. In 1998, the Taliban began to increase their pressure on the Hazara population, Shia Muslims, by cutting off their food supply (Goodson, 2001). By the end of 1998, the Taliban were again looking eastward. Goodson writes that eastern cities were closed to outsiders by the Taliban and atrocities occurred. By the autumn of 1998, the Taliban controlled ninety percent of Afghanistan with the only credible rival being Ahmad Shah Massoud. Massoud was able to hold the plains north of Kabul in the face of Taliban attack and Massoud's forces recaptured Taloqan and pushed into Kunduz province, northern Afghanistan near the Uzbekistan border.

Taliban success can be analyzed by their compatibility with the Pashtun south and the war-weary Afghan population but also by Pakistani support. The relationship between the Taliban and Pakistan is often speculated but Pakistan has been cautious about openly supporting what many view as appalling violence by the Taliban. Goodson characterizes the Pakistan government's support for the Taliban as "deep

and multifaceted" (2001, p110). Goodson cites indirect and direct military

involvement, logistical support, recruitment, financial aid and diplomatic recognition.

Goodson argues that Pakistan military instructors trained Taliban personnel.

Goodson suggests that a group of religious students, some former mujahideen, would

not have fought like the Taliban and had the success they had on their own. Pakistani

support makes it easier for Goodson to understand the Taliban's successes. Goodson

also adds that more than ten thousand Pakistanis are a part of the Taliban rank-and-

file. Goodson credits this partly on the Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate, ISI,

efforts to recruit Pakistanis from madrassas to fill the Taliban-rank-and-file.

The Taliban experience appears different from the "Islamic" violence in

Algeria in the 1990's. Hafez's theory first requires that institutions are established, so

to later assess any institutional exclusion. Afghanistan, at the time of Taliban

takeover, did not possess functional political institutions. Following the 1992 coup,

regional warlords could not agree upon a power sharing system. It is difficult to

argue that the Taliban were excluded from political institutions. Power was held by a

variety of people and did not need to be given through formal elections. It seems

Hafez's theory holds little value for explaining the Taliban use of violence.

Halliday would look at the reorganization of Islamic society in Afghanistan.

Multiple sources point to the unorthodox interpretation of Islam by the Taliban.

Rashid continually notes that Islam in Afghanistan had long been a unifying factor

and the extremism exhibited by the Taliban did not have a strong history in

Afghanistan. Rashid also notes the ethnic minorities' views that the Taliban used Islam as a façade, with their true motivations being to kill the minorities. Goodson characterizes the Taliban as a social movement and a tribal militia that ran a country. He does not mention an 'Islamic" group. Goodson finds Afghanistan's Islam to be a non-literate village Islam, a blending of basic Islamic beliefs with local village customs. Louis Dupree notes that "the Islam practiced in Afghan villages, nomad camps, and most urban areas would be almost unrecognizable to a sophisticated Muslim scholar (as cited in Goodson, 2001, p18). Goodson finds that most Afghans believe in the tenets of Islam but are not particularly religious . This is supported by Marsden's statements that the Taliban were much stricter than the mujahideen parties that "ruled" after the Soviet withdrawal. For instance, the mujahideen did not enforce dress codes as strictly as the Taliban and were less severe in their restriction of music playing. Multiple sources note that the behavior of the Taliban was not consistent with the way Islam was practiced in Afghanistan and that the Taliban themselves were poorly schooled in sharia law and the tenets of Islam. Was this Afghan Islam reorganizing itself or was something different?

Halliday agrees with characterizations of Islam in Afghanistan that state it has multiple variants and is not one uniform movement. He articulates a situation where Islam can be used by the state to achieve its goals. In this instance he says that it is important to understand the needs of those "using" Islam. In this case, Halliday would question why the Taliban were articulating Islam in the manner they were.

One possibility is it served as a justification for a Pashtun movement trying to exterminate the non Pashtuns in the country it had long dominated. Based on previous accounts of Islam as a unifying, non violent force, the Taliban's violence seems to be more than Islam and religion. The political interpretations such as aiming to exterminate minorities and Pakistan profoundly supporting Taliban efforts for their own gains explain the unprecedented violence in Afghanistan. Additionally, Rashid's accounts of the betrayals, such as that between Dostum and Malik in the North, were personal, not religious or political. Malik was partly angry at Dostum because he believed he had a part in his brother's killing. The local cleavages between Dostum and Malik, between Hazaras and the Pashtun Taliban were not related to Islam or religion.

The microlevel accounts of the Taliban given by Rashid and Marsden allow outsiders to hear the thoughts of Afghan people subjected to Taliban rule. Whereas popular American media can label the Taliban as an "Islamic extremist" group, the microlevel accounts point to political interpretations that focus on Pashtun versus non-Pashtun rivalries, anarchy and chaos and a culture of violence. The United States has been involved in both Iraq and Afghanistan. How much of the fear of violence from Islamic groups is legitimate and how much is an overreaction due to macro theories of violence and reductionist thinking that do not account for local cleavages?

Neither Halliday nor Hafez's theories explain the violence in Algeria or Afghanistan completely. Hafez's theory of institutional exclusion helps to understand

the outbreak of violence in Algeria in 1992. It does not help much in the case of the

Taliban. Halliday would view the violence in Afghanistan as a Muslim country

trying to determine how to organize itself, an internal process. The Taliban have

strong Pashtun characteristics that make it difficult to argue they are mainly an

Islamic group. The Taliban claimed to want to make Afghanistan an Islamic state

governed by sharia law. Many debate whether that was the true goal or if it was

reestablishing Pashtun dominance and killing minorities in Afghanistan. Halliday

may apply here. Accepting that the Taliban are less an Islamic group and more a

Pashtun group then Islam is being used as a justification for its actions. Some of

Halliday applies to some of Afghanistan just as some of Hafez applies to some of

Algeria. As Kalyvas argues, these macrolevel theories do not sufficiently apply to all

the violence in a particular case. The next undertaking is to discuss what is added to

an understanding of violence in Algeria and Afghanistan from the microlevel

accounts.

　　　　After analyzing the behavior of the Taliban through the lens of Halliday and

the Algerian violence through Hafez's theory, it must be asked how Islamic these

"Islamic" groups actually are? This is why a microlevel account is crucial to

understanding the often publicized "Islamic violence." A 1995 Washington Post

headline read "Powerful Islamic student militia may hold key to Afghan future"

(Anderson). A 1997 New York Times headline read "Islamic Rule Weights Heavily

for Afghans" (Burns). A 1996 New York Times headline read "In Algeria, Oil and

Islam Make a Volatile Mixture" (Cohen). All three headlines comment on what they identify as "Islamic." All three refer to Islam when commenting on the violence in Afghanistan or Algeria. The previous analysis of both cases suggests that Islam has less to do with the violence than headlines from the Washington Post or New York Times would imply. When the US and other countries are intervening and being affected by violence in Muslim countries and from Islamic groups, overlooking the local cleavages that drive violence and succumbing to reductionist thinking can lead to poor policy decisions regarding actions taken in response to the violence.

Consider violence in non-Muslim countries. El Salvador in the 1980's and the Argentinian Dirty War both experienced violence. In El Salvador and Argentina, overreactions of the right led to devastating results. Both countries witnessed the effects of an overwhelming fear of the left and communism. At the time of the conflicts, they were often regarded as a struggle between the state and leftist guerillas or Soviet-backed communists. Decades later, many agree that the actual threat of communism in El Salvador and Argentina was unlikely. Violence in El Salvador starting in the 1980's led to at least 70,000 deaths and human rights organizations estimate 30,000 were victims of the Argentinian state's clandestine activities from 1976 to 1983 that labeled them as "disappeared."

Both states claimed that they had to defeat leftist guerillas or "subversives" but ultimately both threats were much weaker than popular opinion would have thought. The dangers of reductionist theories such as macrolevel theories in Algeria

and Afghanistan have been shown to perpetuate the idea that Islam or Muslims are violent. The theories fail to properly account for the local conflicts that contribute to the violence. Properly analyzing the local conflicts leads to a conclusion that Islam has much less to do with the violence than reductionist headlines such as those of the New York Times suggest. Similarly, the cases of El Salvador and Argentina will demonstrate the dangers of reductionist thinking when they perpetuate violence. The United States played a role in El Salvador during the 1980's. Many US government personnel were sold that this was a state that needed to defeat a leftist threat. Exploring the political, social and economic scene in El Salvador in the 1970's and 1980's shows tensions unrelated to communism that played a strong role in initiating the violence. The Cold War rhetoric, unfortunately, was able to drive the conflict for over a decade resulting in tens of thousands dying. Accounts from people involved in the Salvadoran conflict and Argentina's Dirty War will reveal other local cleavages that drove the violence, factors unrelated to communism. The question then becomes, how did the "fight" against communism cost more lives than necessary had the true issues been dealt with and responded to appropriately.

3. *El Salvador*

El Salvador, the smallest country in Central America, experienced over a decade of violence starting in 1979. It is bordered to the northwest by Guatemala, to the east and north by Honduras and the south by the Pacific Ocean. It is the most densely populated country in the Western hemisphere. El Salvador had the most unequal distribution of income in Latin America in the late 1970s. El Salvador had been dominated by *el Catorce*, families of economic elites, while maintaining a large amount of poor rural peasants. Raymond Bonner acknowledges that economic elites such as *el Catorce* were not unique to El Salvador, however their degree of control was. Bonner concludes that el Catorce's grip was so tight on the country because it had formed a powerful alliance with the military. He characterizes the relationship as "the wealthy made money, the colonels and generals kept the peasants and workers in line" (1985, p27). The military and *el Catorce* were not the same. William

Leogrande characterizes the relationship as a political alliance where the military served as the guardians of the oligarchy, sometimes requiring forceful suppression of challenges to the oligarchy's power.

In a conversation held with several business owners, teachers and Cabinet ministers during the violence of the 1970's, Bonner heard their questions and views of the violence in their country. Bonner recounts the conversation saying that the people acknowledged the widespread poverty but asked why, when other countries had poverty but no revolution, El Salvador seemed to be trapped in violence. Bonner identifies the lack of democracy as a crucial factor in explaining the violence. The country's last truly free elections had been in 1931, and in months the president was ousted by a coup. Bonner identifies this as the beginning of "the era of generals and colonels shooting their way in the Presidential Palace or getting there through rigged elections" (1985, p29). While this may not be unique to El Salvador, it is the first element required for Hafez's theory. Hafez elaborates his theory acknowledging that repression alone is not sufficient to lead to violence, for instance access to allies and other political opportunities. The other factors, though, are irrelevant if a type of repression and denied access to institutions can not be first established. Bonner's analysis reflects Hafez's theory that groups need meaningful access to political institutions to deter them from choosing violence to attain their goals.

Many elements of its immediate pre-1979 history mirror elements of Algeria immediately before 1992. For nearly fifty years before 1979, the military had harshly

ruled El Salvador, along with civilians. In 1972, the military had "stolen" the

electoral victory of Jose Napoleon Duarte and Guillermo Manuel Ungo, heads of the

opposition party. The fraudulent elections left people considering other opportunities

for achieving change in El Salvador (Bonner, 1985). By 1970, The Christian

Democratic Party (PDC, Partido Demócrata Cristiano) emerged to oppose the

military's drive to keep its monopoly on politics. The PDC's head was José

Napoleón Duarte, who won the 1972 presidential elections. The military responded

to Duarte's victory through suppression and forcing Duarte into exile while another

man was awarded the presidency. The following repression by the government in

response to the 1972 elections drove many rank-and-file supporters of opposition

groups to the "radical left" (Leogrande, 2000). The Catholic Church, El Salvador is a

predominately Catholic country, participated by mobilizing opposition to the regime

too. Bonner finds that liberation theology had a profound effect in El Salvador

compared to the rest of Latin America. Liberation theology involves reading the

Bible through the eyes of the poor. Bonner judges that the revolution, as he terms the

violence of the 1980's, would not have progressed as quickly without the

acquiescence of important church leaders on the side of the poor. Priests preached to

the poor and supported their organization and action to alter their impoverished

condition. Some priests even lived with peasants, working side by side (Bonner,

1985). Like Algeria, El Salvador was a country strongly ruled by the military. Access

to political institutions was barred when groups such as the FIS in Algeria and the

PDC in El Salvador won elections that the military decided to ignore and backed its decision with severe repression of the opposition groups. Additionally, the widespread poverty among the peasants created discontent with no true way to be legitimately expressed, since the military so tightly controlled political institutions.

San Salvador archbishop Oscar Romero said in a homily that "we do not overlook the sins of the left but they are proportionately fewer than the violence of the repression (of the state)" (as cited in Bonner, 1985, p7). The Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front, the FMLN, were a coalition of five left wing guerilla organizations. According to archdiocese reports, the FLMN was responsible for 63 civilian deaths in a fourteen month period ending in July 1983 while, in that same period, the government claimed 4,867 lives (Bonner 1985). A priest, who did not support the armed revolution, explained to Bonner that the guerillas selectively killed soldiers and policemen while the government killed randomly, content if one in ten of the murdered was a guerilla (Bonner, 1985). Romero concluded that the government had embarked on a "general program of annihilation of those of the left" (as cited in Bonner, 1985, p7). A notable incidence of violence in the 1980's was the massacre at El Mozote carried out by a Salvadoran state battalion. Leigh Binford characterizes the massacre as a "meticulously planned operation carefully calculated to drain the civilian 'water' from the sea and thereby strand the guerilla 'fish'" (16). The massacre was carried out by the state's Atlacatl Battalion. This battalion was the first immediate-reaction infantry battalion armed and trained by the United States.

The United States supported the El Salvador regime through monetary aid and military aid. For instance, the Reagan administration funneled money to the Salvadoran state through the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank) (Bonner 271). Between 1981-1983, the Reagan administration was able to send $332.4 million in loans from these banks (271).

On December 10, 1981 the battalion waited outside El Mozote while helicopters bombed surrounding hillsides to, as Binford writes, "soften up" the area (1996, p18). Soldiers then entered El Mozote, rounded up inhabitants from the houses and brought them to the central plaza. The people were abused and questioned by the soldiers then ordered to return to their houses and stay inside. The people were gathered up again later and separated into two groups according to sex. After interrogation of alliances with guerilla groups or where the people's arms were hidden, the killing began. Men were lifted up by the soldiers and decapitated. Men who tried to escape were shot with machine guns. Reports indicate that between eight o'clock in the morning and four o'clock in the afternoon, several hundred people were killed in this manner (Binford, 1996). The women were raped then killed by stabbing or strangulation.

One woman did manage to escape the killing and her testimony has been crucial to gaining firsthand accounts of what occurred at El Mozote. Rufina Amaya, the woman who escaped by hiding behind a tree unbeknownst to the soldiers, recalls

a conversation she overheard between two soldiers (Binford, 1996). One soldier says

that they have killed all the old men and women but there are still children alive. He

comments on how "cute" they are and the possibility of taking them home with them

and not killing them. The other soldier replies, "We have to finish everyone, you

know that. That's the colonel's orders. This is an operative de tierra arrasada here

and we have to kill the kids as well, or we'll get it ourselves" (as cited in Binford,

1996, p21). There are over 300 known victims of the massacre at El Mozote.

The events of El Mozote give a glimpse of the violence that afflicted El

Salvador in the 1980s. In 1982, the Reagan administration characterized the violence

in El Salvador as a "textbook case of indirect armed aggression by Communist

powers through Cuba" (as cited in Bonner, 1985, p15). Reagan's characterization

does not reflect the events at el Mozote. El Mozote does not appear to be a case of

"indirect armed aggression by Communist powers." In the four years following the

1979 coup, the United States contributed nearly $300 million in military aid in two

years, trained four Salvadoran battalions and brought nearly 500 cadets to the United

States for officer training (Bonner, 1985). Robert White, former US ambassador to El

Salvador, concluded that he did not believe "the ideological roots of these people (El

Salvadorian leftists) go all that deep. I think it is more a response to persecution than

anything else" (as cited in Bonner, 1985, p88). The Reagan administration made

various attempts to characterize the situation in El Salvador as a fight against

communists trying to take over El Salvador. This meant that aiding the Salvadoran government in fighting these "Marxist guerillas" was necessary.

White's quote demonstrates what numerous microlevel accounts of Algerian violence show. There were political and economic grievances of the Salvadorans. In the late 1970's, the poorest 40 percent of Salvadorans had only 7.5 percent of the national income while the riches 5 percent held 38 percent (Bonner, 1985). In rural areas, adult literacy was only at 30 percent. With no exportable resources, land becomes increasingly valuable. In the late 1970's, 78 percent of the state's arable land was held by top ten percent of the landowners (Bonner, 1985). The state's farmland is largely devoted to growing crops to export therefore leaving little land to grow crops to feed the people. The calorie intake for the country only met 82 percent of the daily requirements in 1977, meaning the peasants' intake was even lower than the country's figure (Bonner, 1985). There was great economic injustice and unequal access to political institutions to create changes. These grievances are not related to a Salvadorans leftist orientation. In Algeria, there were statements from FIS supporters who were upset about not being able to secure their yeast or were frustrated when they were not granted the political offices won in 1992. The revolt of the Salvadoran left or the FIS in Algeria are better explained by political and economic grievances than their leftist or Islamist orientation.

Binford admits to having no evidence of what transpired when planning the massacre but he is confident of the mention of "communism." The communists

threatened the power of the oligarchy and the military. The actual communist threat in El Salvador is discredited by many today. This overreaction to an evil communist threat led to widespread violence for over a decade in El Salvador. The US decided to support the Salvadoran state in its fight against communism. When Reagan stated that this was a "textbook case" of indirect armed aggression, the US should have already been cautious. It is unlikely that the violence was a simple "textbook case," partly because it lasted for years and saw over 70,000 killed. Scholars can propose macrolevel theories of violence that are too simple as well as politicians telling their constituents that a conflict is a "textbook case." That duration and the -amount of deaths suggest a complex situation. The fear of communism was also at work in Argentina when the state embarked on a task of eliminating "subversives" for over five years.

4. *Argentina*

Argentina's Dirty War, beginning in 1976, was an episode of state terrorism

led by a military dictatorship. In 1930 a coup overthrew the constitutional government in Argentina and led the state away from a democratic future. Military interventions in politics were beginning. Paul Lewis characterizes Argentina in the 1930's as a leader in South America. Its capital, Buenos Aires, was full of businesses, parks, boutique shops, hotels and dance halls. In Argentina, despite how it appeared to the outside world, was an oligarchy unwilling to lose its power. In 1965, the military ousted president Illia and a military junta abolished Congress and all political parties. Guerilla violence began in 1969 and peaked in 1971. The decline in 1972 is attributed to the military government's antiguerilla tactics. In 1976, when the military regained power after losing it in the 1973 election, the guerilla organizations were finally defeated. The Armed Forces in 1976 began a mission to defeat "subversion" in Argentina.

Before the Dirty War, Argentina did house various guerilla groups. The Montoneros were a Peronist urban guerilla group which was almost completely

destroyed during the Dirty War. The Montoneros supported President Peron's return from exile and the establishment of socialism in Argentina. They kidnapped and killed former dictator Pedro Eugenio Aramburu. In 1972 they laid explosives in a plaza killing four and blinding one person and they detonated a bomb inside a Sheraton hotel killing one person.

Argentina's Dirty War lasted from 1976 until 1983. In 1976 the president was ex President Perón's widow, Isabel Perón. Her presidency was marked by incompetence. The military ousted her in 1976. The state was involved in kidnappings, murder, torture and other criminal activities. The state used detention centers and concentration camps throughout Argentina. Militants of guerilla organizations and those with a leftist association were common targets of state violence. Violence was not limited to insurgents. The entire society was susceptible thus "streets, schools and universities, labor unions and areas of citizens' private lives became the 'battlefields' of this conflict" (Aguila, 2006, p173). The state-led acts of terror during the Dirty War are often noted for their clandestine character. Aguila notes, though, that repressive and violent behavior by the state was sometimes not hidden from the public. For example, the most important detention center in the city of Rosario was located in the city center, not in a remote, obscure location. Aguila finds that the dictatorship established an oppressive environment where denunciation and suspicion were common. She finds a large part of society that acted indifferently or as if nothing was happening. The Argentinean military used the idea of

"subversives" to eliminate threats to its power. Argentina had a military deeply

involved in the political sphere. The military used the fear of leftists or subversives to

justify its violence.

Discussion

In the aftermath of September 11th, Islam and Muslims have been confronted with stereotypes. Hafez's theory is strong because it looks for explanations of Muslim rebellion outside of Islam. Hafez focuses on political causes. The strength is that the institutional exclusion and repression would be applicable to any group, Muslim or not. This has been shown in the case of Algeria and El Salvador. Denying groups meaningful access to political institutions can be a strong factor in initiating violence. Hafez's theory has applicability in explaining why violence is initiated but, as microlevel accounts of violence in Algeria and El Salvador demonstrate, less applicability in explaining the continuance of violence in a civil conflict. Once the violence is initiated, other motives can come into play. Personal revenge can become a factor. The outbreak of violence allows for interpersonal violence to be "acceptable" and justified by the master cleavage.

Halliday does not argue for an innate violence in the theology of Islam. He argues for a process happening within Muslim countries. He aims to assure Westerners that this should be a comfort as the movement is not concerned with the outside world. According to Halliday, Islam should not be ignored. The danger is that what is considered "Islamic" is debatable. Many accounts of the Taliban claim that its members are poorly tutored in Islamic doctrine and are more concerned with establishing Pashtun dominance. Who decides what is "Islamic?" Further, both Algeria and the Taliban show similarities to non-Muslim cases of political violence in

El Salvador and Argentina. When comparing the Muslim and non-Muslim cases, an "Islamic" character in Algeria and Afghanistan is not apparent. All four cases exemplified violence that required some ideology or justification to "legitimize" the violence.

Kalyvas argues that a microlevel account of violence is necessary to fully understand violence within a country. Institutional exclusion can make violence the only option for a group to have a voice. The microlevel accounts challenge Hafez's theory because what initiates violence may not be the same as the factors the drive the violence throughout the duration of the conflict. Theories are useful but the oversimplification needs to be acknowledged. Violence is complex and using one theory to explain all aspects of violence may not be appropriate. Listening to the accounts of people in the midst of the violence, listening to their interpretation of the violence is important. It can show a side of the conflict that a broad theory may not. It can allow the local cleavages to become apparent and not hidden in the master cleavage. Theorists need to strive to better incorporate the microlevel of analysis, even at the risk of complicating a broad theory. Kalyvas finds a preference in accounts of violence for the universal over the particular and the "easily codable over the messy evidence" (2003, p480). An overreaction to a perceived threat has happened before with devastating results in Argentina and El Salvador. Communism was a "neat," universal idea that acted as the master cleavage. Now, decades later, was communism the true root of the conflict? Today, it can be argued that

communism was not even the true master cleavage. In El Salvador the true master

cleavage was the deep economic and social division between the elites and the

Salvadoran people. Communism was a "charged" topic during the Cold War period.

Americans regarded it as a threat to capitalism, as dangerous and different. The

governments and people, today, need to ask if the same is being done to Islamic

groups. Is the international community overreacting to the threat of Islam by

overlooking the role of local cleavages? Violence in civil conflicts is complex and

should not be reduced to a single theory or a simplistic characterization. This

violence should be recognized to not always align with the master cleavage of the

conflict.

More attention to the local cleavages, while "messy," are crucial to avoid

overreacting, which can lead to erroneous policy that kills innocent people and allows

unknowing governments to be used by local forces to settle personal conflicts.

Kalyvas argues that local cleavages are often mistakenly articulated in the language

of the master cleavage, sometimes to deceive foreign forces involved in the conflict.

He uses the example of Afghanistan and it demonstrates the dangers of not

understanding the local cleavages. Local factions in Afghanistan accused one another

of being Taliban or Al Qaeda to have their rivals bombed by U.S. Air Force (Kalyvas

2003). A better understanding of the local cleavages or the micro level would have

helped the U.S. to not be strategically used to settle local rivalries costing people their

lives. This is why properly understanding the difference between master and local

cleavages is necessary in a civil conflict; it can influence thinking and policy

recommendations that can lessen the conflict, instead of making it worse and costing

more lives to be lost. Governments and academics must recognize the common

preference for a macro level analysis instead of a micro level analysis of violence.

They must recognize that a macro level analysis alone will likely overemphasize the

master cleavage at the expense of the local cleavages that may strongly perpetuate the

violence.

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