
Oil wealth and authoritarianism: Algeria in the Arab Spring

Riqueza petrolífera y autoritarismo: Argelia en la Primavera Árabe

Lala Muradova

Universitat Rovira i Virgili
muradova_lala@yahoo.com

Abstract

The “oil curse thesis” links a country’s oil largesse *inter alia* to the durability of its authoritarian regime. And it contends that abundant oil revenues enable autocrats to stymie democratic transition by obviating taxation from citizens, buying off their political acquiescence, bolstering the repressive apparatus and thwarting the formation of civil society. This paper revisits the relevant literature by qualitatively testing its predictions on an in-depth case study of the Algerian regime in the face of the political crisis and riots of 2011. Going beyond the deterministic argument on “oil wealth-authoritarianism”, it carefully examines the strategic interaction between country-specific factors and oil wealth and studies how the confluence of these factors has shaped the survival of the authoritarian regime in Algeria since 2011.

Keywords: oil wealth, authoritarianism, rentier state, democracy, Algeria, Arab Spring, institutions, political economy.

Resumen

La teoría de la “maldición del petróleo” vincula la riqueza petrolífera de un país con la durabilidad de su régimen autoritario. Y sostiene que disponer de este recurso en abundancia permite a los autócratas obstaculizar la transición democrática al obviar los impuestos de los ciudadanos y redistribuir la riqueza sin lograr una adecuada y necesaria cohesión social. Este trabajo revisa la literatura relevante, evaluando cualitativamente sus predicciones a través de un estudio de caso en profundidad de la resistencia del régimen autoritario argelino ante los disturbios políticos y populares del año 2011. Finalmente, este trabajo busca ir más allá del argumento determinista de “la riqueza petrolífera-autoritarismo”, propone examinar con cuidado la interacción estratégica entre los factores específicos de un país y la riqueza petrolífera, y estudia cómo la confluencia de estos factores ha determinado la supervivencia del régimen autoritario argelino desde el año 2011.

Palabras clave: riqueza petrolífera, autoritarismo, estado rentista, democracia, Argelia, Primavera Árabe, instituciones, economía política.

INTRODUCTION

Oil has been blamed to have pernicious economic, political and social effects for exporting countries. One strand of the literature asserts the existence of a robust correlation between a country's oil wealth¹ and the stability of its authoritarian regime (e.g. Ross, 2001; Jensen & Wantchekon, 2004; Smith, 2004; Ulfelder, 2007; Andersen & Aslaksen, 2013). According to the rentier theory (Bablawi & Luciani, 1987; Mahdavy, 1970) and the resource curse thesis (Auty, 1993; Karl, 1997; Ross, 2001), the oil wealth enables the autocrats to stymie democratic transition by obviating taxation from citizens, buying off political acquiescence, bolstering the repressive apparatus and thwarting the formation of civil society.

This paper builds on the recent research in political economy on the correlation between oil wealth and the survival of the authoritarian regime², and complements them by qualitatively testing the conventional causal mechanisms on the survival of the Algerian regime in the face of an influential political crisis: the Arab riots of 2011. The events unfolded in Tunisia, and spread to Egypt, Bahrain, Yemen, Libya, Syria and beyond hugely challenged the previous theories of authoritarianism in the region, as three deeply entrenched dictators (Hosni Mobarek of Egypt, Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali of Tunisia, and Moammar Gaddafi of Libya) were overthrown, and the stability of several other regimes of the region were acutely shaken by popular protests. Nonetheless, and against the backdrop of regional instability, the Algerian regime stood intact.

Analysts and scholars attributed the Algerian regime stability during Arab revolts of 2011 to different factors, among them: redistributive patronage and security apparatus (e.g. Achy, 2012; Volpi, 2013); social memory of Algerians (e.g. Zoubir & Aghraout, 2012; McAllister, 2013); the lack of a strong and unified opposition (Zoubir & Aghraout, 2012); and the complex power structure of the Algerian regime (e.g. Benakcha, 2012).

Does oil and gas wealth of the country have something to do with the stability of the Algerian regime in 2011? Does the natural resource curse thesis suffice to explain the resilience of authoritarianism in Algeria in 2011 and beyond? By examining the Algerian regime through the prism of the resource curse theory during 2011 and beyond, we will search for answers to these questions.

The article proceeds as follows: in the first section we present the theoretical framework of our paper, by revising the rentier state and resource curse theories. Within the same section we analyze the main causal mechanisms of the oil-authoritarianism association, predicted by the political resource curse theory. Section two discusses Algeria during the Arab revolts of 2011; section three applies the resource curse thesis to the Algerian regime in 2011 by scrutinizing three main predicted causal mechanisms; section four

1. By "oil wealth" we refer to the oil and gas wealth in this paper.

2. The concepts of "regime stability", "regime resilience" and "regime durability" are interchangeably used in this paper.

addresses the question of whether the oil wealth of the country alone could account for the regime durability in Algeria in 2011 and examines the fate of other rentier states in the region during the Arab riots of 2011; section five is dedicated to the analysis of the regime strategy during 2011; in section six the nature of Algerian regime and institutions are studied; section seven examines the protest scene in Algeria; section eight and nine are dedicated to examining the *sui generis* history of the country and the external legitimacy of the regime respectively. In the final section, we analyze the interaction of different factors among themselves and the country's oil wealth in sustaining authoritarianism beyond 2011. We conclude by discussing the implications of our findings.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The Rentier State theory —resuscitated with the oil era of 1970s— sustains that “rentier states” are those that are heavily dependent on substantial amounts of external rent on a regular basis” (Mahdavy, 1970: 428). The reaped revenues are “effortless” and accrued rather than “earned” (Beblawi, 1987). Furthermore, the rents are external, i.e. they are paid by foreign individuals or governments. Only few participate in the generation of this wealth, and the majority are involved in the distribution or utilisation of it (*ibid.*); as a corollary of that, the government is the main recipient of rent (Mahdavy, 1970; Beblawi, 1987) which becomes the main factor in the state's economy.

The resource curse thesis (Auty, 1993) and the paradox of plenty (Karl, 1997) builds on the rentier state theory and link the resource abundance of a country to its economic, social and political shortcomings. The proponents of the resource curse thesis examine the correlation between resource wealth and authoritarian regime stability in resource-rich countries via Large-N cross-country studies. Most of their findings³ show that oil wealth, an important natural resource renewed for its enclave character and geopolitical importance, has a strong and perverse anti-democratic effect on political regimes, by making autocratic governments “more stable and less likely to transit to democracy” (Ross, 2014: 6). Karl (1997) asserts that the oil wealth leads to longer periods of stability and could bolster regimes. Smith confirms this thesis by contending that “oil wealth is robustly associated with more durable regimes and significantly related to lower levels of protest and civil war” (2004: 232). The claim is also consistent with findings of some other scholars who argue on the causal effect of oil wealth on the prolonged survival of autocratic incumbents in office (e.g. Omgba, 2009; Andersen & Aslaksen, 2013).

However the political outcomes across the resource rich countries are not homogenous: some of them have either never experienced this curse or have managed to overcome some

3. Ahmadov (2013) integrates the results of 29 studies and 246 empirical estimates in a meta-analysis on the oil-authoritarianism question and concludes that oil has robust effects on democracy.

economic and political dysfunction caused by oil wealth, by transiting to democracy (see, among others, Norway, Canada, Nigeria, Venezuela, and Indonesia). Thus, scholars started to question the validity of this deterministic thesis. Some of them even contradict the resource curse thesis altogether, by stating that the oil wealth-autocracy correlation is endogenous or driven by omitted variables (Brünnschweiler & Bulte, 2008; Haber & Menaldo, 2011); or they affirm that the negative effects of oil are counterbalanced by its positive indirect effects (e.g. Herb, 2005). Others argue that oil wealth could well lead to democracy, albeit via different causal mechanisms (Dunning, 2008).

The most recent attempts to solve this puzzle have been on developing conditional theories of the resource curse (e.g. Dunning, 2005; Robinson *et al.*, 2006; Ross, 2009). The conditionalists argue that, in order to comprehend the resource curse better, the conditions which shape the oil wealth-regime relationship should be better researched and understood.

Basedau contends that exceptions and variations (i.e. Botswana and Gabon) among resource rich countries should not be treated as “lucky” cases, or outliers in statistical parlance (2005: 22). These variations necessitate theoretical explanations which, according to the author, “are most likely found in the country-specific context” (*ibid.*). There is no causal mechanism that works without the interference of other variables, as whether oil wealth causes beneficial or damaging socio-economic and political development is contingent on a “dynamic and complex interplay of a number of contextual variables” (*ibid.*). This author also stresses the importance of the scrutiny of pre-resource conditions of the given country, and he evaluates whether the impact of oil wealth on the country’s political and economic situation still holds significant after taking into consideration all other country-specific variables.

We concur with Basedau (2005) and others on the significance of the context for the analysis. This way, we will examine the strategic interaction between country-specific factors and oil wealth in order to determine how the confluence of these factors shaped the survival of the authoritarian regime in Algeria in 2011. And, according to Don Slater and Sofia Fenner (2011), we define our main dependent variable “authoritarian regime survival”, as the ability of a regime to meet and overcome crises, as well as to avoid them; or in case crises cannot be avoided, to resolve them in the incumbent regime’s favour. Oil wealth is defined as a country’s dependence on hydrocarbon rents.

Causal pathways of the political resource curse

One of the challenges faced by resource curse scholars is to determine the causal mechanisms through which the oil wealth strengthens authoritarianism. The classical causal mechanisms of the resource curse are compiled by Ross (2001) in his seminal paper on the matter and are the following: (1) rentier effect, (2) repression effect and (3) modernization effect.

Middle Eastern scholars (Mahdavy 1970; Beblawi-Luciani 1987; Crystal 1990) have largely contributed to the rentier effect literature. After Ross (2001) disintegrates this effect into three different parts: First, the abundance and scope of the oil revenues obviate the state's need to tax its citizens for the state revenues. It is much easier and cost-effective for the state to rely on its external oil rents than on building an effective administrative structure for taxation. When the rentier state does not levy taxes, it also ceases to represent its citizens. This argument stems from the previous literature on the bargaining nature of the relationship between the political regime and the society, underpinning important western democracies (e.g. Bates & Lien, 1985; North & Weingast, 1989).

Oil windfalls, on the other hand, increase the financial capacity of the regime and enable autocrats to build strong patronage networks (Karl, 1997; Ross, 2001; Robinson *et al.*, 2006; Sandbakken, 2006). Patronage, in its turn, wards off or diminishes the potential pressures for democratization by buying off acquiescence (Ross, 2001). Thirdly, autocracies also use these revenues to thwart the formation of social groups and potential opponents to the incumbent regime (Bellin, 1994; Shambayati, 1994).

Repression is another mechanism through which oil revenues are supposed to bolster authoritarianism (Shambayati, 1994; Ross, 2001; Bellin, 2004; 2012). Authoritarian regimes take advantage of their vast income to invest on strong and large military, police and security forces and to crack down on civil dissent.

The modernization theory sustains that democracy is only triggered by a set of social and cultural changes, which includes, among other, education and occupational specialisation. According to Inglehart (1997), higher educational levels and occupational specialisation lead to the formation of social capital and a more organized civil society which could act as a countervailing power to authoritarian governments. Ross (2001: 337) suggests that growth based on the export of oil and minerals fails to bring about the social and cultural changes that tend to produce democratic government⁴.

ALGERIA AND ARAB SPRING 2011

At the onset of Arab revolts, the international pundits predicted that the social uprisings that erupted in Tunisia would spill over to its immediate neighbourhood, and beyond. The list of reasons that made Algeria a perfect candidate was far from short: the country's geographic proximity; its aging and ailing President (over 70 years old); power struggles between clans; the country's weak economy and heavy dependence on hydrocarbon

4. In addition to the above mentioned causal mechanisms, some scholars suggested other pathways: Fish (2005), for instance, studies Russia and argues that oil hindered democracy in Russia, via the corruption it caused. Boix (2003), on the other hand, finds that the asset specificity, i.e. whether the ruling elite's assets, acquired thanks to the oil windfall, are mobile or fixed determines if the country will have a democratic transition or not. Due to the limitations of this paper, we test qualitatively only three conventional causal mechanisms of the resource curse.

exports; youth unemployment reaching almost 22 per cent; social injustice; entrenched corruption; endemic inequality; and the sense of *al-hogra*⁵ among its citizens. All these reasons were strong enough to create discontent, frustration and discord between the state and the society in 2011. When faced with increasing food prices as a corollary of the new fiscal measures introduced by the government in 2011 and encouraged by riots in the neighbouring countries, Algerian youth took to the streets between the 3rd and 10th of January 2011. The rioters mainly consisted of marginalised and unemployed youth, who expressed their discontent and frustration by ransacking shops, banks, and government offices, burning tyres and putting up barricades on main roads.

Algeria was not new to this kind of riots. Civil unrest, sit-ins and manifestations had already been an important part of Algerian internal dynamics. For the last ten years, almost every day in some parts of the country, one or two riots took place (Layachi, 2011). In 2010 alone, 112,878 interventions by riot police were registered officially (McAllister, 2013: 1).

Nonetheless, the riots of January 2011 were different from the previous ones. The year 2011 saw the magnitude of the riots to reach: 48 *wilayas* (provinces) of Algeria compared to 30 *wilayas* in 2002 (Dris Aït Hamadouche & Dris, 2012). Their magnitude and exceptionally violent nature shook up the Algerian civil society and encouraged several groups of civil society organisations, syndicates and political parties to come together and publicly condemn the violent reaction of the regime towards demonstrators (Baamara, 2012). Different initiatives surged from this cooperation and the most important one among them was a coalition, Coordination nationale pour le changement et la démocratie-CNCD (National Coordination for Change and Democracy), which was created on the 21st of January under the leadership of an Algerian civil society organization, la Ligue Algérienne de défense des droits de l'homme-LADDH (Algerian League for the Defence of Human Rights) and an opposition party, Rassemblement pour la Culture et la Démocratie-RCD (Rally for Democracy and Culture).

The coalition aimed at holding a massive peaceful demonstration demanding political and economic reforms on the 12th of February. It put forward three main demands to the government: (1) lifting the state of emergency, (2) removing the restrictions on the media and political participation and (3) releasing the political prisoners of the popular protests. Different social media groups, such as Bezzef and Barakat encouraged the citizens to participate in their popular march.

Although touted as a success by its organisers, it only brought together 3000 protesters (Le Monde, 2011). Unauthorised by the regime, the march faced the strong and prepared security forces of Algerian regime. As Hamouchene (2012) figuratively states, “Algiers the White” converted to “Algiers the Blue”, indicating the colour of the uniform of the

5. The expression is used to state the hatred, injustice and humiliation shown by the people in power towards the Algerian population.

140,000 policemen who were deployed by the regime to suppress the demonstrations organised by the Algerian civil society and opposition parties.

CNCD further attempted to continue popular protests every Saturday. However it was unsuccessful in mobilising Algerian population and converting separate riots into a unified revolt. The protests were subdued and *status quo* within the regime continued to reign. Predictions notwithstanding, revolutionary contagion did not hold true for Algeria. The political coalition, led by the Front de Liberation National-FLN (National Liberation Front) of the ailing president Bouteflika, together with the National Rally for Democracy (RND) —of the Algerian Prime Minister Ahmed Ouyahia won the following legislative elections of 2012. The elections were hailed by the regime as the most transparent and freest ever and were backed by foreign observers. The Algerian regime, marred by corruption, nepotism, continuing clan struggles and repression, succeeded in holding on.

POLITICAL RESOURCE CURSE: ALGERIA IN 2011

Algeria and its economic, social and political shortcomings triggered and caused by the country's oil dependence have frequently been studied by scholars (Martínez, 1998; Dillman, 2000; Aïssaoui, 2001; Henry, 2004; Sandbakken, 2006; Werenfels, 2007; Lowi, 2009).

The country represents *par excellence* the typical rentier state within the definition of Mahdavy (1970) and Beblawi & Luciani (1987). The hydrocarbon industry is the backbone of Algeria's economy; the oil industry roughly accounts for 30 per cent of the country's GDP, more than 95 per cent of export earnings and 60 per cent of budget revenues (US Energy Information Administration-EIA, 2014). Due to the volume of oil wealth, the country is financially autonomous and does not depend on taxation from its citizens. On the other hand, as with other rentier states, the volatility of international prices of oil and gas creates financial, economic and political instability, as the redistributive policy of the country is also dependent on its hydrocarbon incomes (Bustos & Mañé, 2009).

The petroleum products are one of the mostly subsidized products. The price of regular gasoline in Algeria is twice cheaper than in other oil-exporting countries, 28 per cent of the price of this commodity in developing countries and almost 15 per cent of the average price on international markets (Achy, 2013: 14). Algeria is considered to be the place of the second-cheapest domestic price for natural gas in the whole African continent. Although promulgated as covering the necessities of the disadvantaged, in reality these subsidies “disproportionally benefit the well-off segments of the population, while adding to both fiscal and current account pressures” (World Bank, 2015).

Furthermore, corruption, nepotism and clientelism —common characteristics of many rentier states— have been defining features of Algeria's politics since the nationalisation of the hydrocarbon industry in 1971. The national hydrocarbon company, Sonatrach, ironically called a “state within a state” (Entelis, 1999) has been the principal instrument

of the state power. And due to its strategic importance for regime's rent-seeking, it "has remained above supervision, regulation and accountability" (Lowi, 2007: 134).

By closely analysing the events of 2011 and Algeria regime's measures and behaviour in the face of riots, we could trace the following causal mechanisms of the resource curse:

- **Rentier effect:** political resource curse suggests that the abundant oil revenues preclude taxation in a resource-rich country (Ross, 2001). In Algeria non-oil tax revenues constitute 10.2 per cent of the country's GDP (Benbahmed & Lohoues, 2014). This figure is below the average indicator in emerging and developing countries and well below the ratios in the neighbouring oil importing Morocco and Tunisia (IMF, 2014). The IMF model (2014) suggests that, Algeria has not reached its tax potential and should look into reducing costly tax exemptions. Moreover, according to Algerian statistics, 46 per cent of wage earners were unregistered workers (*ibid.*: 12). Some types of taxes are even non-existent in Algeria (e.g. property taxes).

The literature also suggests that oil wealth bolsters authoritarianism via patronage. In the case of Algeria, faced with extensive riots, as the very first countermeasure, the Algerian government agreed to duplicate the subsidies for foodstuff. The import of food products rose by 60 per cent in comparison to 2010 (Dris Aït Hamadouche, 2012; Dris Aït Hamadouche & Dris, 2012) and the invoice of imports reached 46 billion dollars as a result. The regime also increased salaries of civil servants by 46 per cent (IMF, 2012).

At the same time, the regime decided to relax the regulations controlling the street vending in order to keep unwaged youth away from the protests. In a country where the informal economy is estimated at 6 billion USD, which represents 13 per cent of GDP outside the hydrocarbons sector and gives jobs (albeit informal) to nearly 2 million people (22 per cent of the active force) (Iratni, 2014), any attempts to hinder this business without introducing real development and employment creation had proved to be too risky and costly. Furthermore, the government allocated substantial amounts of money for interest-free loans for young people. Only in 2011, more than 50.000 small enterprises giving jobs to 70.000 young people were created with the financial help of the government

In sum, the Algerian government offered to its citizens more than 23 billion dollars in public grants and retroactive salary and benefit increases (Salhi, 2011). Algerian spending increased by 50 per cent in 2011 (IMF, 2012). The abundance of its financial reserves, standing at 182 billion dollars as of December 2011 to be exact, enabled the regime to expand its patronage policy and easily buy off popular dissent.

- **Repression:** faced with a looming threat following the civil society initiatives and ultimately the creation of CNCD, the regime realised that its patronage policy needed an extra parallel support. It turned to its second-beloved strategy: coercion (repression). Although the military did not resort to the use of lethal power during

Arab revolts of 2011, the mere fact that the regime deployed large, well-equipped and experienced military forces to block the access of the protesters to the marches and to instil fear among the participants of the rallies and marches showed its repressive capacity. Algeria owns the largest defence budget on the African continent, which Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) estimated to be 9.1 billion dollars in 2012 (SIPRI, 2012).

In the same vein, during the years prior to 2011 and beyond, the Algerian regime used a “combination of appeasement and force” (Zoubir & Aghrout, 2012: 70) to ensure that real and independent civil society, potentially capable of mobilizing large number of citizens, was quasi-inexistent in Algeria. They were either co-opted or repressed.

- The lack of modernization effect: it suggests that the oil wealth fails to generate the social and cultural changes a democratic government needs. According to United Nations Development Programme’s Human Development Reports index, which measures three basic dimensions of human development —Life Expectancy Index (life expectancy at birth); Education Index (mean years of schooling and expected years of schooling); and Gross National Income per capita (GNI) index (UNDP, 2014)—, Algeria scores high in the human development index, and this ranking is not substantially different for 2011.

Nonetheless, the index does not explicitly take into account the occupational specialisation, which Inglehart finds vital, as “these [the increase in occupational specialisation] changes produce a more autonomous workforce, accustomed to thinking for themselves on the job and having specialized skills that enhance their bargaining power against elites” (1997: 163). Autonomous workforce with diverse occupational specialisation in its turn has the potential to push for a diversified economy, which, according to many economists and scholars, is the most effective economic solution against the resource curse (Gelb, 2010). Diversification would concurrently facilitate the emergence of diversified elites⁶, with diverging interests and better competence, potentially acting as a countervailing power to incumbent elites. Algeria still rejoices in the concentration of elites and power resources⁷ and therefore its regime model obviates the encouragement of diversification and continues to rely on its “hydrocarbon-dependent” economy.

CONTEXT MATTERS

In the face of civil riots, the authoritarian regime of Algeria dived into its abundant “pockets” and made generous social transfers to its population in order to buy off their

6. I am grateful to an anonymous reviewer of RECP for bringing this point to my attention.

7. For an interesting discussion on the political regimes by elite types and resources in the Arab world see Izquierdo (2013). For the main reasons leading Algerian elites to abstain from developing real and healthy economy, see Izquierdo (2007).

acquiescence. The regime also resorted to its well-trained and well-paid police apparatus in order to hinder the protests from acquiring their full potential. The mere number of police, outnumbering the manifestants, their willingness to show violence, coupled with the Algerian leadership's discourse during the days of the unrest, sent "right" messages: that the "uncontrolled change would be equivalent to playing with fire" (Hamadouche, 2012: 165). But these measures did not prove to be enough; on the contrary, riots acquired a new facet which led to the mobilisation and multiplication of civil society initiatives during the Arab revolts, ultimately to the creation of CNCD.

Furthermore, if it was only the oil wealth that kept autocrats in power, notwithstanding the threats, the outcomes would have been homogeneous for all autocrats affected by Arab revolts in the region, i.e. the *status quo* in the form of authoritarian regimes in the region would have remained unaltered. Confronted with widespread revolts, "nearly every authoritarian regime in the region scrambled to concoct the 'right' mix of repression and cooptation" (Bellin, 2012: 127) regardless the availability or lack of oil wealth, in order to stifle the protesters. Likewise, the weakness of the civil society in the whole region had not been long the central argument of many analyses by Middle East scholars⁸. Algeria had similar socio-economic and political grievances as Tunisia, Egypt and other Middle Eastern countries which were confronted with strong civil dissent and protests. This did not make it different either. What is more, Algeria was not the only resource-rich country in the region; the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region is home to the world's most important rentier states.

The outcomes for regimes in the region proved to be far from homogenous. The Libyan regime, another important rentier state of the region, saw itself deeply affected by the wave of revolutions which resulted in the toppling of its dictator, Muammar Gaddafi. The regime in Bahrain was faced with unprecedented opposition from its citizens despite the will of the coercive apparatus of the regime to suffocate them. In spite of the fact that oil wealth existed in all three rentier states, the outcomes for regimes were completely different. This calls for a more context-specific study of these countries⁹.

Libya's coercive apparatus, the pillar of its authoritarian regime survival, experienced fragmentation, which facilitated the ousting of the dictator by NATO-led intervention. Bahrain's small and patrimonially linked military stood by the dictator (Bellin, 2012), however its insufficient capacity necessitated external support (Saudi Arabia) in order to clamp down the rebels and hold onto power. Thus, the empirical variation with regards to regime breakdown, severe risks to regime stability, and regime resilience in the region during the Arab revolts of 2011, confirms the premise that the whole range of different countries cannot be painted with a broad brush by only taking into account their oil wealth. Therefore, it would be conspicuously erratic and naïve to analyse the survival of the

8. On interesting analyses of Civil Society in the Middle East, see for example, Wiktorowicz (2000).

9. Other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries did not experience serious civil mobilisation and protests. The state formation in these countries however is intrinsically connected and endogenous to the oil wealth, the discussion of which is well beyond the scope of this article.

authoritarian regime in Algeria only through the prism of political resource curse, without taking into account a complex interaction of different contextual and country-specific factors.

REGIME STRATEGY

When confronted by initial demonstrations and protests in 2011, the Arab regimes of the region adopted different strategies¹⁰: some employed brutal repression (Syria, Bahrain); some opted for patronage (most GCC countries); others embarked upon some degree of political opening. Algerian regime, in order to protect the *status quo* applied a combination of patronage and repression as a preliminary measure. But cognizant of the looming jeopardy, the regime did not stop there; in order to dissuade the actual and potential rebels it adopted a more tactical strategy, that of “increasing the value of security, by “empowering” a bit of insecurity” (Henry, 2004: 4). Via official discourse, the social memory¹¹ of the events of 1990s was widely exploited and reminded. The message was clear: Should the citizens take to the streets, Islamic threat, instability, and terrorism might loom over them. What is more, this message was clearly backed by events transpiring in Tunisia, Egypt and beyond, where the prominence of Islamist parties in several of the affected countries was prominent.

The empirical examples supported the regime’s argument. The “institutionalisation of fear” (Grevy, 2014) in Algeria succeeded in spelling disempowerment among the citizens. Neither spontaneous protesters nor structured opposition coalition succeeded in mobilising large scale protests. Should the history of Algeria be different, free from recent bloodshed and terror, the outcome might have been different.

Moreover, note that contrary to previous riots of similar magnitude, the Algerian regime did not use lethal force against protesting citizens during the riots of 2011. When, back in 1989-1991, the Bendjedid Chadli regime decided to opt for severe repression against protesters, killing more than 500 unarmed civilians in two weeks, it backfired and resulted in the radicalisation of protesting groups and in a horrendous civil war. This time (in 2011), Algerian leader Bouteflika abstained from using violent repression¹². The example of the neighbouring Tunisia, where due to the use of power the social unrest acquired a new force and intensity, also served as a lesson for the Algerian regime. “Authoritarian learning”, as suggested by Heydemann and Leenders, played its role in the way how some authoritarian incumbents in several countries, including Algeria, took stock of the events

10. According to Heydemann & Leenders, “they [regime strategies] should be seen as complex, multilevel games involving regimes, publics, and external actors, in which regimes develop strategies that aim to affect the strategic calculus of citizens, allies, and adversaries, even while constantly updating their own probabilities, ...of successfully suppressing their opponents...” (2012: 649).

11. For a superb discussion of the “social memory” in Algeria see McAllister (2013).

12. One of the anonymous reviewers of the journal kindly disagrees with this statement, stating that social movement was different back in October 1988 and should the intensity of January 2011 have been similar to the previous ones, Bouteflika would not have hesitated to use similar violence.

unfolding in their neighbourhood and developed strategies “to maximize their probabilities of surviving this wave of popular mobilization and living to rule another day” (2012: 649). The regime strategy, this time, differed from the previous one.

Furthermore, apart from a modicum of repression, patronage and fear-inducing speeches, the Algerian regime decided to grant some degree of policy concessions to its citizens and pledged to implement a set of political reforms. Although the reforms have proved to be far from a real breakthrough, they served as a brake on the intensity of uprisings. The state of emergency was legally lifted. New legislation to govern the creation of political parties, freer media laws ending the state monopoly over TV and radio stations, the increase of powers for the Prime Minister and the parliament, and the returning to the two-term limit on the presidency were among the most important ones. There is, of course, a difference between sharing the rents (in Algeria’s case oil ones) and policy concessions and the combination of these resources which depend on the leader’s need “for cooperation and the strength of the opposition” (Gandhi & Przeworski, 2006). Fearful of the rising waves of social grievances and citizens’ unrest in its soil, the Algerian regime gave in by “cooperating” with the opposition with its proposed political changes (albeit according to some scholars still insignificant and superficial). Thus, the “selective distribution of economic and political resources” (Lowi, 2009) coupled with the manipulative policies targeted at the citizens, as well as at international forces, constituted the strategic tactics of the regime.

NATURE OF THE ALGERIAN REGIME AND INSTITUTIONS

The Algerian political regime, scholars argue, can be defined neither as authoritarian, nor as democratic. It is rather in-between, otherwise called an electoral autocracy, a hybrid or a semi-authoritarian regime. This classification is due to the fact that the regime possesses institutions of *façade* democracy¹³. It holds regular elections, and grants some degree of political competition and “free” media since the political liberalisations of 1980s¹⁴. As a result of these reforms, Algeria had changed to multiparty system; the number of civil society organisations skyrocketed and media acquired some kind of openness (at least on paper). The political liberalisations under Chadli Bendjedid and the subsequent civil war were mentioned in the official arguments of the Algerian regime as constituting factors which prevented another “Arab Spring” in Algeria for, supposedly, Algeria had already had its Spring. However, the analysis of the nature of the regime and civil society à l’Algérie would shed light on the ostensible character of this liberalisation.

13. See Shedler (2006) on electoral authoritarianism; also Szmolka (2010).

14. See, for example, Dris Aït Hamadouche and Dris (2012) for the analysis of Algerian political regime as a semi-authoritarian one.

The Algerian regime is characterised by power struggles mainly between the incumbent President Abdelaziz Bouteflika, a civil, and the country's intelligence service, DRS (Département du Renseignement et de la Sécurité). Bouteflika was put into office by the military in 1999 and has since served four terms. Since the independence of the country, the balance between two governing power structures was more or less maintained, until the bloody decade, when the Military and DRS acquired power and prominence due to the latter's fights against Islamist insurrection.

Nonetheless, a year prior to the January 2011 riots Algeria experienced considerable ruptures within the regime (Keenan, 2013: ch. 17). The power struggles resulted in the rift between Bouteflika and DRS, more precisely a high-ranking officer, General Mohamed Mediène¹⁵. Some experts (e.g. Meddi, 2015) argue that this move by the president was triggered by extensive corruption investigation started by DRS in 2009, which brought to the fore some major corruption scandals in 2010. The scandals involved some public contracts, engaging the national hydrocarbon company Sonatrach and the ex-Minister of Energy of Algeria, Chakib Khelil, as well as foreign companies, such as Italy's Saipem and Germany's Contel Funkwerk. As a result, the upper managers of Sonatrach were removed from office¹⁶.

Corruption and nepotism have thus been an essential part of the Algerian system, *le pouvoir*, since many years now. Therefore, unveiling the cases of corruption by DRS was, as some analysts and experts claim, a purely political move, and a part of a clan power struggles and was, supposedly, targeted at Bouteflika's entourage.

THE POLITICS OF PROTEST IN ALGERIA

Similar to previous protests in Algeria, the January 2011 riots were short of a unified and strong front. The lack of a real opposition, proximate to its citizens and capable of mobilizing citizens once again contributed to the failure of popular revolts in Algeria in 2011. It is not without reason or surprise, though. The Algerian space of political protest, encompassing opposition parties, syndicates, associations, and other civil society institutions, is heterogeneous and complex (Bamaara, 2012). Even when different civil society organizations, opposition parties and trade unionist came together to act as a coalition within the CNCD in 2011 against the regime, the complexity and ephemeral nature of the coalition and their diverging interests and agendas of CNCD caused fractions within the coalition and hindered a unified protest¹⁷. Citizens preferred expressing their protests separately (as labour unionists, public health employees, fire fighters, etc.) defending their own sectorial interests.

15. President Bouteflika finally replaced the head of the DRS intelligence service, General Mediène, in September 2015.

16. This scandal was later followed by another series of allegations on corruption within Algeria's power and gas utility company and involves Sonelgaz executives over the contracts with General Electric, US conglomerate and Alsom S.A, from France

17. Please see Baamara (2012) for a superb analysis of the political protest space in Algeria during 2011 and beyond.

Baamara (2012) eloquently discusses the power relations that permeated the protest space in Algeria in 2011 in an example of CNCN and sheds light on the compound nature of the Algerian political scene. She draws a distinction between two types of opposition movements: First, the so-called “democrat” movement parties, which principally consists of RCD (Rassemblement pour la Culture et la Démocratie), the Rally for Culture and Democracy and holds seats in the Algerian Assembly, FFS (Front des Forces Socialistes), Socialist Forces Front, a social-democrat party, whose electoral roots are located in Kabylie, PST (le Parti Socialiste des Travailleurs), as well as the Socialist Workers’ Party, and MDS (Mouvement Democratique et Social), Democratic and Social Movement.

The second type of movement is that of “Islamists”. The country currently hosts only two legal Islamist opposition parties, which are perceived by public to be no more than “instruments of the regime” (Islamic Monthly, 2012). Co-opting some of the Islamist party members via lucrative political posts, the regime has ensured that the autonomy of these parties is out of question. Unpopularity of Algerian Islamists and their exclusion from real political life is due to Algeria’s recent history, the “black decade”, full of violence between the regime and Islamists and their supporters. This piece of crucial history also elucidates why Islamists did not have a prominent role in the Algerian riots of 2011¹⁸. Likewise, the existing “democrat” parties are perceived to be either too elitist or limited to, for example, Berber-speaking population.

In sum, none of the political parties seems to represent real Algerians; and, in turn, citizens do not trust them. According to a survey conducted in April 2011, just two months after the January riots, 97 percent of Algerians asserted that they had no political affiliation, which was not due to the lack of choice (Parks, 2013: 112), since post-1988 Algeria has numerous political parties.

The public also distrusts the main political institutions in Algeria, such as the National Assembly or the Cabinet. The former has no real power to make decisions, and in most cases limits itself to rubber stamping the decisions already taken by two leading parties (FLN and RND) and the executive, while many Cabinet ministers are known for corruption and rent-seeking.

Furthermore the existence of numerous associations and organizations¹⁹ “on paper” could create a false impression of the vibrant and pluralistic character of the civil society in Algeria. Most of these civil society groups paradoxically depend on the state for subsidies or other kinds of support; they also compete with each other as these financial subsidies are limited in scope. Likewise, the regime also creates “a great number of satellite associations” (Iratni, 2014: 12). That raises a question on the credibility of these associations to represent the citizens’ voices.

Public disenchantment, thus, is connected to citizens’ inability to participate in the political life of their country and to instigate any kind of change. That is why the January

18. See Izquierdo (2013) for an analysis on the role of the political Islam in post-Arab revolts of 2011.

19. There were at least 93.000 registered associations back in 2013 (Parks, 2013: 2).

2011 riots were principally limited to riots and protests organized by disenchanted youth with no political affiliation. When CNCD as a coalition tried to organize mass demonstrations, they badly failed to do so, mainly due to the fact that citizens did not feel they were represented by this coalition of diverse interests and agendas.

HISTORY

“Political events happen within a historical context, which has a direct consequence for the decisions or events” (Steinmo, 2008: 127). Therefore taking the history “out of ‘equations’ [...] would leave us with an impoverished pseudoscience” (*ibid.*: 136) and an impoverished analysis. If we consider it for a country like Algeria, and taking into account that the state-society relations currently Algeria are heavily defined by the country’s fight against French colonists, and by the more recent bloody events of 1988-1992, history becomes even more important.

The institution-building in Algeria is intrinsically tied to the country’s anti-colonist legacy. It is not a secret that French colonialism (1830-1962) had undeniable negative impact on the economic and political development of Algeria. As to institutions, colonialism not only discouraged the formation of autonomous institutions in Algeria; it also disintegrated and destroyed traces and resources of existing pre-colonial elites in agriculture and commerce (Bustos & Mañé, 2009; Henry, 2004). Colonialism stripped the country off its elites who could have become important actors in building a newly independent state of Algeria. Further virtual disintegration of the elite continued since the decline of oil prices in 1986 (Henry, 2004) and the following Civil War.

Oil has undeniably played a role in the institution-building process. When oil was first discovered during the nationalist movement in Algeria, France’s motives for creating and promoting extractive institutions for its own colonialist gains prevailed in its politics toward Algeria. The fight to hold its grip on Algeria and thus on Saharan resources, and its concern over energy security made France firstly to intensify its colonist struggle against Algerians. Secondly, when Algerians with their courage and struggle could fight back colonists bravely, France resorted to a tighter control over Saharan resources. French companies got exclusively engaged in the research, and exploitation of natural resources of Algeria. Taking advantage of the fact that Algerians lacked expertise and technology for the exploration and exploitation of these resources, France could maintain their grip over this industry for some time via its rent-seeking institutions. The Saharan Petroleum Code (CPS-Code Pétrolier Saharien) of 1958, approved during the leadership of General De Gaulle, laid down fiscal and juridical rules for the research, exploitation and transportation of Saharan resources (Malti, 2012: 27-29) and limited the investment by foreign firms on Algerian hydrocarbon industry, and thus maintaining their monopoly over these resources. The practice of rent-seeking and corruption continued with newly established Algerian institutions.

Moreover, as Algeria's traditional elites were disintegrated by French post-independence Algeria was left only with those who participated in the military revolutionary fight while those who opted not to use the military option were discarded from entering the competition²⁰. Thus the state-building created the most powerful institution in Algeria: the military. The Civil War of the 1990s, on the other hand, bolstered the position of the military and the intelligence services in Algerian political system, due to their role in the fight against "terrorism".

What is more, the Independence movement became an indispensable part of the regime discourse and Algerian political identity, where "participation in the war of liberation became a factor of inclusion and exclusion in the political game" (Dris Aït Hamadouche & Dris, 2012: 10). This crucial historical event created a new concept and a new generation: the revolutionary family (*famille révolutionnaire*). It is this self-attributed historical and revolutionary legitimacy that has justified the supremacy of the nationalist party, FLN since 1962²¹. Even now, "belonging to a revolutionary family grants special privileges" in political life (*ibid.*: 10).

Algeria's "black decade", which started with the October 1988 riots, also constitutes an important element to understand the nature of the Algerian regime, its strategy, as well as Algerian citizens' reticence about fighting the incumbent regime with violence. It could also shed light on the similarities and differences between the riots of 1988 and those of 2011. The violent riots of October 1988 were triggered by Algerian citizens' immediate needs and their exacerbating and deepening social and political cleavages. The Algerian state, short of real legitimacy, could not handle the social and economic problems of the time. Therefore it applied violent repression to the protesters with a hope of subduing them. Concurrently, Bendjedid Chadli's regime decided to go for political "*ouverture*", that is to say, relative liberalisation of the political scene. Algeria adopted a new constitution in 1989 and political pluralism was officially institutionalised, overturning the single-party regime.

But this liberalisation proved to be a double-edged sword: all the old and new grievances (social, cultural, economic and political), in an environment of relative freedom and liberty, sprang up and took diverse shapes and forms. That is how the Islamist political party Islamic Salvation Front-FIS (Front Islamique du Salut), gained prominence and recognition, winning the trust of a large number of citizens, desperate for a change. The victory of FIS during the first free elections in Algerian history proved to be indigestible for the regime. Annulment of election results and declaration of FIS as illegal, followed by the declaration of the state of emergency was a perfect blow for the country's advances in the democratic reforms. As a result, "Algeria exploded" (Lowi, 2009: 121). A fully fledged civil war, horrendous violence, and terrorism followed. The death of more than 200.000

20. For an interesting discussion on the Algerian elites and their specific characters, see Bustos & Mañé (2009).

21. See for example, Benakhcha (2012).

Algerians, together with thousands of wounded, lost or kidnapped planted the seeds of fear and terror among people. Horror and suspicion got hold of the daily lives of Algerians.

The events also determined the future of the protest space in the country. Currently, albeit sporadic riots, “the boundaries of the permissible are never surpassed” (Islamic Monthly, 2012) for the fear of instability and terror similar to 1990s.

In spite of some specific features of Algerian protests of 2011, they had similarities with the October 1988 ones. In both cases, riots started in larger cities, by young people aged 16 to 24 years; they used the same degree of violence; and protests represented similar socio-economic grievances coupled with some political demands. In both cases, the discourse of the regime contained “tribal” or “Kabyle” labels for the protests and this way disguised the common political demands of protesters (Jabi, 2011: 3).

Unlike the October 1988 protests, however, the Algerian riots of 2011 did not transform into extensive anti-establishment protests. And they were not hijacked by Islamist political party, as in post-October 1988 Algeria, either. Political Islam had already grown infamous by 2011 due to nation’s horrendous experience with Islamists during the Civil War. Therefore Ali Belhadj, former FIS “number-two” and the current FIS Vice-President as of 2015, was utterly unsuccessful in mobilizing young people in Bab el Oued in 2011 and when he merely tried it, “he was stoned and chased by youth” (Parks, 2013: 6).

EXTERNAL LEGITIMACY

Algeria’s strategic importance for Western powers is beyond any doubt. Western superpowers’ interests in the authoritarian *status quo* of Algeria are primarily driven by their security concerns. The failure of the Islamist party FIS to consolidate power in Algeria and the success of the Algerian military and DRS to subdue terrorists granted international recognition for Algeria, especially after 9/11. The United States, under the pretext of the threat of terrorism and via GWOT (Global War on Terrorism) further settled in the Sahel region of Algeria with its military forces (see Keenan, 2013).

Algeria is considered to be a key partner for the UK and US in counterterrorism and “the only one capable of ridding the Sahel of AQIM” (Al Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb) (EU conference on the “development on Sahel” cited by Keenan, 2013: 225). UK in more than one occasion made clear that it would provide Algeria’s DRS with “material, intelligence, training and other cooperative needs” whenever the latter needed them (*ibid.*: 225-226).

In the face of the 2011 riots in Algeria, the regime ensured to emphasize the threat of extremism to western superpowers in order to shore up its legitimacy and continue to receive overt and covert patronage from the US and the UK, to say the least. Islamic radicalism’s potential threat spreading into neighbouring countries and looming instability in the Sahel-Sahara region also supported the regime strategy. Antiterrorist discourse served the tacit argument that “autocracy is the counterpart to an efficient antiterrorist strategy” (Boudjemil, 2014: 7). In January 2012, when Algeria’s ex Foreign Minister Mourad

Medelci paid an official visit to Washington, Hillary Clinton expressed her explicit support for Algeria in the latter's fight on terrorism.

Western interests in Algeria are also led by energy interests. American support to the Algerian regime initiated after the promulgation of the reform of the hydrocarbon laws in 1991, and the opening of the hydrocarbon sector to external world. Since the end of 1990s and the beginning of 2000s, imminent American companies, like Anadardko, with its logistical branches Halliburton and Bechtel carried out important oil field discoveries in the country (Bustos & Mañé, 2009).

Algeria is an important energy partner to the European Union. Nearly 40 per cent of Algerian oil production is exported to the European market and the country is the third largest gas supplier to the EU. After EU-Russian gas crises of 2006, 2009 and ultimately 2014, Algeria has acquired a regained importance on the energy security agenda of the European Union. The latter's obsession with energy insecurity and the potential of Algeria for renewable energy have also opened new ways of cooperation and partnership between two parties.

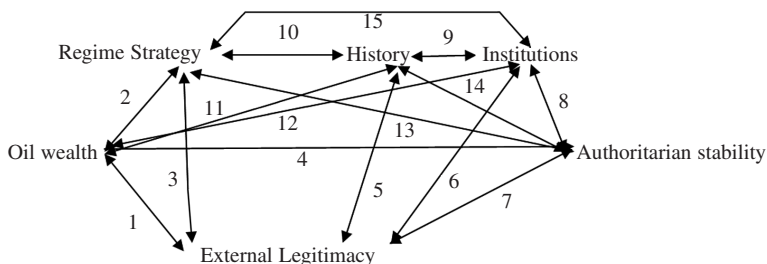
In numerous occasions, the West has showed that it needs Algeria, notwithstanding the country's regime of sophisticated repression, corruption and disrespect to basic human rights of nearly 38 millions of Algerians.

CONCLUSION

The extensive literature on deterministic resource curse argues that the abundance of the oil largesse hinders democratic transition and favours the durability and resistance of an autocracy, by giving a dictator financial capacity to ward off any democratic attempts.

FIGURE 1.

INTERACTION OF COUNTRY-SPECIFIC FACTORS



The case study on Algerian authoritarian regime durability during the path-breaking Arab revolts, though limited in its scope, showed how an authoritarian regime whose economy is heavily dependent on hydrocarbon rents acted when confronted by a political

crisis. Our findings show that, although oil wealth might have played an important role in preventing the social dissent to grow into a fully-fledged revolution, via patronage, repression and cooptation, it never worked alone as the only explanatory variable. Instead, it was accompanied by and interacted with a constellation of other contextual factors which interplayed with each other and with the main structural variable.

The regime, having learned lessons from brutal confrontation between citizens and the military during the “lost decade” of Algeria in 1990s and having taken stock of the fate of the neighbouring countries in 2011, abstained from using lethal force against protesters. Instead, it used (soft) coercion and accompanied the patronage and coercion (4) with policy concessions for its citizens (13). On the other hand, again interacting with historical factors and external legitimacy, the regime manipulated the public opinion (10, 13 and 15) and exploited the national trauma on the previous terrorism and violence extensively in its discourse. Concurrently, the citizens, jealous of their fragile stability, (historical factor interacting again) did not confront the military violently (14). Path dependence, also contributed to the less violent nature of the protests and their cessation following the concession of economic and political resources by the regime.

Simultaneously, by aptly stressing the sensitive topics such as “Islamism” and “terrorism” on one hand and energy importance on the other, the regime manipulated international forces to its own advantage and gained their tacit support for (1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 10 and 13) the *status quo*.

The decisions by the leadership, which affects its domestic and foreign policy, is shaped by its institutions (15). It was due to *sui generis* institutions that Algerian regime in the first place could hold on the power. The military, hidden behind the civil President, has ruled the country since its independence and is the robust coercive apparatus of the regime. It is shaped by Algeria’s history and, at the same time, the historic events are shaped by it (9). It is also considered as an important shield against Islamic terrorist resurgence in the country, giving it yet another reason to be backed by great powers of the west (14 and 6). The military is paid and maintained by state coffers which are filled by oil wealth, gained thanks to the oil importing countries (12, 6 and 4).

The historical legacies of oil discovery and extraction in Algeria, that started during the war for independence, may also affect the quality and efficiency of its institutions (12). The basic institutions were set up during those years in order to serve the economic interests of France and to extract as much benefit as possible. Hence, institutions are profoundly affected by historical legacies, as well as oil wealth, which concurrently creates beneficial environment for neopatrimonialism, corruption and rent-seeking (11, 12, 9 and 8). The complex interplay of a set of factors once more emphasizes the premise that one factor cannot be sufficient or necessary for complex processes of regime persistence in oil rich countries.

In an attempt to extrapolate the findings of this paper, we concur with Basedau (2005) on the importance of the context for the oil wealth-authoritarian correlation, and other scholars who favour the conditionalist approaches to resource curse theory, as well as with

Lowi (2009) on the significance of leadership choice for political outcomes. Together with them, we argue that in order to understand the dynamics of authoritarian resource-rich regimes, there is a need to go beyond the deterministic arguments based on the average impact of the oil wealth on authoritarian regimes and apply a more nuanced approach by examining and re-examining the complex web of ever-intertwining factors (Basedau, 2005; Meissner, 2010), which interact with oil wealth in impacting the authoritarian regime durability in a oil-rich country. The multifaceted complexity of mechanisms, interplays and effects between the single factors (Basedau, 2005; Meissner, 2010;) could better explain why oil in some resource-rich countries bolsters authoritarianism, in others it causes political breakdown, and in a different set of countries it contributes to the political and economic development of state.

Only then, after having understood fully the interaction between the perverse (or positive) effects of oil wealth and other structural, institutional, contextual and agency factors, could we embark upon the quest for making policy proposals to overcome the obstacles to democracy in resource-rich authoritarian countries. Even so, it is not to argue that the same kind of contextual conditions would give similar outcomes for Algerian regime in the future, as other contingent events could change the dynamics of authoritarianism which is sometimes troublesome to predict, as the events unfolded in the MENA region demonstrated. Nonetheless, perhaps some future research could better illuminate the variation in political outcomes among rentier states during the Arab Spring and beyond in a complex comparative perspective, not only taking into account the idiosyncratic aspects of one case study.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author is grateful to the editors of this journal, two anonymous reviewers and Professor Enric Olivé Serret for valuable comments. For interesting discussions on Algeria, she extends my deepest gratitude to Professors Djamel Zaaboub, Yefsah Abdelkader, Ouelhadj Ferdiou, Belkacim Iratni, Bachir Boumbali, Smail Debeche and Ali Abdellah. Additionally, thanks to Aldo Farfán Sión and Alejandro Arias Lera for their help with the Spanish abstract of the paper. All errors are my own.

References

- Acemoglu, Daron and James Robinson. 2013. *Why nations fail? The origins of power, prosperity and poverty*. London: Profile Books Ltd.
- Achy, Lahcen. 2012. "Algeria Avoids the Arab Spring?" *Working Paper Carnegie Middle East Center, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*. Available at: <http://carnegie-mec.org/publications/?fa=48277> [consulted: 06th of October 2015].

- Achy, Lahcen. 2013. "The price of stability in Algeria" Working Paper. *Carnegie Middle East Center*. Available at: http://carnegieendowment.org/files/price_stability_algeria.pdf [consulted: 06th of October 2015].
- Addi, Lahouari. 1994. *L'Algérie et la démocratie. Pouvoir et crise du politique dans l'Algérie contemporaine*. Paris: La Découverte.
- Ahmadov, Anar K. 2011. "A conditional theory of the political resource curse: oil, autocrats, and strategic contexts". PhD thesis. London School of Economics. Available at: http://etheses.lse.ac.uk/618/1/Aahmadov_Conditional_Theory_Political_Resource_Curse.pdf [consulted: 06th of October 2015].
- Ahmadov, Anar K. 2013. "Oil, Democracy and Context: a Meta-Analysis", *Comparative Political Studies*, 47 (9): 1238-1267.
- Aïssaoui, Ali. 2001. *Algeria: Political Economy of Oil and Gas*. Oxford: Oxford Institute for Energy Studies.
- Álvarez-Ossorio, Ignacio (ed.). 2013. "Social civil y contestación en Oriente Medio y Norte de África". Barcelona. CIDOB/Barcelona. Available at: http://www.cidob.org/es/publicaciones/serie_de_publicacion/interrogar_la_actualidad/sociedad_civil_y_contestacion_en_orient_medio_y_norte_de_africa [consulted: 05th of January 2016].
- Andersen, Jorgen and Silje Aslaksen. 2008. "Constitutions and the resource curse", *Journal of Development Economics*, 87 (2): 224-249.
- Andersen, Jorgen and Silje Aslaksen. 2013. "Oil and political survival", *Journal of Development Economics*, 100 (1): 89-106.
- Andersen, Jorgen J. and Michael Ross. 2014. "The big oil change: a closer look at the Haber-Menaldo analysis". *Comparative Political Studies*. June (2013). Available at: <http://cps.sagepub.com/content/early/2013/06/13/0010414013488557.abstract> [consulted: 06th of October 2015].
- Auty, Richard M. 1993. "Natural Resource Endowment, the state and development strategy", *Journal of International Development*, 9 (4): 651-663.
- Baamara, Leyla. 2012. "(Més) aventures d'une coalition contestataire: le cas de la Coordination nationale pour le changement et la démocratie (CNCD) en Algérie", *L'année du Maghreb*, VIII: 161-179.
- Bablawi, Hazem and Giacomo Luciani (eds.). 1987. *The rentier state (Nation, State and Integration in the Arab world)*. London: Croom Helm and Instituto Affari Internazionali.
- Basedau, Matthias. 2005. "Context matters-rethinking the resource curse in sub-Saharan Africa", *Working paper of the German Overseas Institute (DÜI)*.
- Bates, Robert H. and Da-Hsiang Donald Lien. 1985. "A note on taxation, development and representative government", *Politics Society*, 14 (1): 53-70.
- BBC. 2015. "Behind the ousting of Algeria's secretive spy chief "General Toufik". Available at: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-34268565> [consulted: 07th of October 2015].
- Beblawi, Hazem. 1987. "The rentier state in the Arab world", in Hazem Beblawi and Giacomo Luciani, *The rentier state. (Nation, State and Integration in the Arab world)*. London: Croom Helm and Instituto Affari Internazionali.

- Bellin, Eva. 1994. "Democracy, Islam and the study of Middle Eastern politics. Civil Society: Effective Tool of Analysis for Middle East Politics?", *Political Science & Politics*, 27 (03): 509-510.
- Bellin, Eva. 2004. "The Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Exceptionalism in Comparative Perspective", *Comparative Politics*, 36 (2): 139-157.
- Bellin, Eva. 2012. "Reconsidering the robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East. Lessons from the Arab Spring", *Comparative Politics*, 44 (2): 127-149.
- Benackcha, Narrimane. 2012. "Why Algeria has been immune to the Arab Spring?". IPI Global Observatory. Available at: <http://theglobalobservatory.org/2012/03/why-algeria-has-been-immune-to-the-arab-spring/> [consulted: 07th of October 2015].
- Benbahmed, Tarik and Hervé Lohoues. 2014. "Algeria 2014". *African Economic Outlook*. Available at: http://www.africaneconomicoutlook.org/fileadmin/uploads/aeo/2014/PDF/CN_Long_EN/Algerie_EN.pdf . [consulted: 07th of October 2015].
- Boix, Carles. 2003. *Democracy and Redistribution*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Boudjemil, Kamil. 2014. "Interview", in Côme Grevy, *Legitimizing an authoritative power through the foreign policy discourse, the example of Algeria during the Arab uprisings*. Course work. Available at: http://www.sciencespo.fr/psia/sites/sciencespo.fr/psia/files/GREVY_Come_KSP_Paper_Award.pdf [consulted: 07th of October 2015].
- Brünnschweiler, Christa N. and Erwin H. Bulte. 2008. "The resource curse revisited and revised: a tale of paradoxes and red herrings", *Journal of Environmental Economics and Management*, 55: 248-264.
- Bueno de Mesquita Bruce, Alastair Smith, Randolph M. Silverson, and James D. Morrow. 2003. "The logic of political survival". Available at: <http://pages.ucsd.edu/~tkousser/Bueno%20de%20Mesquita%20et%20al%202003%20-%20logic.pdf> [consulted: 07th of October 2015].
- Bustos García de Castro, R. 2014. "Argelia: de la no-primavera a la sucesión (2011-14)". Available at: <https://emui.academia.edu/RafaelBustos> [consulted: 07th of October 2015].
- Bustos, Rafael and Aurèlia Mañé. 2009. "Argelia: estructura poscolonial de poder y reproducción de élites sin renovación", in Ferran Izquierdo Bricks (ed.), *Poder y regímenes en el mundo árabe actual*. Barcelona, CIDOB/Bellaterra.
- Bustos Garcia de Castro, Rafael and Aurèlia Mañé. 2012. "Algeria: post-colonial power structure", in Ferrán Izquierdo Bricks (ed.), *Political Regimes in the Arab world*. London & New York: Routledge.
- Crystal, Jill. 1990. *Oil and Politics in the Gulf: Rulers and Merchants in Kuwait and Qatar*. New York: Cambridge University.
- Dessi, Andrea. 2012. "Algeria: Cosmetic Change or Actual Reform?". *Institut Français des relations internationales (IFRI)*. Available at: <http://www.ifri.org/en/publications/editoriaux/actualite-mom/algeria-cosmetic-change-or-actual-reform> [consulted: 07th of October 2015].
- Deutsch, Karl W. 1961. "Social Mobilisation and Political Development". *American Political Science Review*, 55 (3): 493-514.

- Dillman, Bradford L. 2000. *State and Private Sector in Algeria: the politics of rent-seeking and failed development*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Dris Aït Hamadouche, Louisa and Chérif Dris. 2012. “De la résilience des régimes autoritaires»: la complexité algérien”, *L'année du Maghreb*, VIII: 279-301.
- Dris Aït Hamadouche, Louisa 2012. “Algeria in the face of the Arab Spring: Diffuse Pressure and Sustained Resilience”. *Mediterranean Politics*. IEMED. Available at: http://www.iemed.org/observatori-en/arees-danalisi/arxius-adjunts/anuari/med.2012/hamadouche_en.pdf [consulted: 07th of October 2015].
- Driss, Chérif. 2013. “Élections, dumping politique et populisme: quand l’Algérie triomphe du printemps arabe”, *L'Année du Maghreb*, IX: 279-297.
- Dunning, Thad. 2005. “Authoritarianism and Democracy in rentier states”. Available at: http://www.nyu.edu/gsas/dept/politics/seminars/dunning_1_f05.pdf [consulted: 07th of October 2015].
- Dunning, Thad. 2008. *Crude Democracy. Natural resource wealth and political regimes*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Entelis, John. 1999. “Sonatrach: the political economy of an Algerian State Institution”. *Middle East Journal*, 53: 9-27.
- Fish, Steven. 2005. *Democracy Derailed in Russia. The failure of open politics*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Gandhi, Jennifer and Adam Przeworski. 2006. “Cooperation, cooptation and rebellion under dictatorships”, *Economics and Politics*, 18 (1). Available at: http://politics.as.nyu.edu/docs/IO/2800/ep_2006.pdf [consulted: 08th of December 2015].
- Gelb, Alan. 2010. “Economic Diversification in Resource Rich Countries”. Available at: <http://www.imf.org/external/np/seminars/eng/2010/afrfin/pdf/Gelb2.pdf>. [consulted: 08th of December 2015].
- George, Alexander L. and Andrew Benet. 2005. “Case studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences”. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Ghiles, Francis. 2015. “Algeria buffeted by falling oil prices and growing social unrest”. Opinion. *CIDOB. Centro de Estudios y Documentación Internacionales de Barcelona*. Available at: http://www.cidob.org/en/publications/publication_series/opinion/mediterraneo_y_oriente_medio/algeria_buffeted_by_falling_oil_prices_and_growing_social_unrest [consulted: 07th of October 2015].
- Grevy, Côme. 2014. “Legitimizing an authoritative power through the foreign policy discourse, the example of Algeria during the Arab uprisings”. Course work. Available at: http://www.sciencespo.fr/psia/sites/sciencespo.fr.psia/files/GREVV_Come_KSP_Paper_Award.pdf [consulted: 07th of October 2015].
- Haber, Stephen and Victor Menaldo. 2011. “Do natural resources fuel authoritarianism? A reappraisal of the resource curse?”, *American Political Science Review*, 105 (1): 1-26.
- Hamouchene, Hamza. 2012. “Algeria and Arab Spring”, *Open Democracy*. Available at: <https://www.opendemocracy.net/hamza-hamouchene/algeria-and-arab-spring> [consulted: 07th of October 2015].

- Henry, Clement. 2004. "Algeria's Agonies: oil rent effects in a bunker state". Available at: http://www-personal.umich.edu/~twod/oil-ns/articles/research-07/research-alger/Algeria_Agonies.pdf [consulted: 07th of October 2015].
- Herb, Michael. 2005. "No representation without taxation? Rents, development and democracy", *Comparative Politics*, 37 (3): 297-316.
- Hertog, Steffen. 2010. "Defying the Resource Curse: Explaining Successful state-owned enterprises in rentier states", *World Politics*, 62 (2): 261-301.
- Heydemann, Steven and Reinoud Leeders. 2012. "Authoritarian learning and authoritarian resilience: regime responses to the 'Arab Awakening'", *Globalisations*, 8 (5): 647-653.
- Inglehart, Ronald. 1997. *Modernization and Post-modernization: Cultural, Economic and Political Change in 43 societies*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- International Monetary Fund (IMF). 2012. "Algeria 2012 Article IV Consultation". Available at: <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2013/cr1347.pdf> [consulted: 07th of October 2015].
- International Monetary Fund (IMF). 2014. "Algeria: Selected Issues". Available at: <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2014/cr14342.pdf> [consulted: 07th of October 2015].
- Iratni, Belkacem. 2014. "Why no Arab Spring in Algeria?", in Ennaji Moha (ed.), *Multiculturalism and Democracy in North Africa: Aftermath of Arab Spring*. London: Routledge Studies in the Middle East Politics.
- Islamic Monthly. 2012. "We have all this before: Algeria and the 2011 Arab Spring", *The Islamic Monthly*. Available at: <http://theislamicmonthly.com/we-have-all-this-before-algeria-and-the-2011-arab-spring/> [consulted: 23rd of January 2016].
- Izquierdo Brichs, Ferrán. 2007. "Poder y Estado rentista en el mundo árabe", *Revista de Estudios Internacionales Mediterráneos*, 2: 1-31.
- Izquierdo Brichs, Ferrán (ed.). 2009. *Poder y regímenes en el mundo árabe actual*. Barcelona: CIDOB/Bellaterra.
- Izquierdo Brichs, Ferrán. 2013. "El islam político y la movilización social tras las revueltas árabes. Un análisis desde la sociología del poder", *Revista de Estudios Internacionales Mediterráneos*, 15 (julio-diciembre): 5-29.
- Jabi, Abdel Nasser. 2011. "Protest Movements in Algeria". Available at: <http://english.dohainstitute.org/file/get/02a7f030-68c2-44f8-85fb-d7d8cb2e6452.pdf> [consulted: 07th of January 2016].
- Jensen, Nathan and Leonard Wantchekon. 2004. "Resource wealth and political regimes in Africa", *Comparative Political Studies*, 37 (7): 816-841.
- Karl, Terry Lynn. 1997. *The paradox of plenty: oil booms and petro-states. Studies in international political economy*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Keenan, Jeremy. 2013. *The Dying Sahara*. London: Pluto Press.
- Kolstad, Ivar. 2009. "The resource curse: which institutions matter?", *Applied Economics Letters*, 16 (4): 439-442.
- Layachi, Azzedine. 2011. "Algeria's rebellion by instalments", *Middle East Research and Information Project*. Available at: <http://www.merip.org/mero/mero031211> [consulted: 07th of October 2015].

- Le Monde, 2011. “Une manifestation d’opposants dispersée à Alge”, 12.02.2011. Available at: http://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2011/02/12/echauffourees-a-alger-avant-une-manifestation-de-l-opposition_1478998_3212.html [consulted: 07th of October 2015].
- Lipset, Seymour Martin. 1959. “Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy”, *American Political Science Review*, 53 (1): 69-105.
- Lowi, Miriam. 2004. “Oil rents and political breakdown in patrimonial states: Algeria in comparative perspective”, *Journal of North African Studies*, 9: 93-102.
- Lowi, Miriam. 2007. “War-torn or systemically distorted? Rebuilding the Algerian economy”, in Leonard Binder (ed.), *Rebuilding Devastated Economies in the Middle East*. New York: Palgrave Macmillian.
- Lowi, Miriam. 2009. *Oil wealth and the poverty of politics. Algeria compared*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Mahdavy, Hossein. 1970. “Patterns and Problems of Economic Development in Rentier States: the case of Iran”, in Michael Cook (ed.), *Studies in the Economic History of the Middle East*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Malti, Hocine. 2012. *Histoire Secrète du pétrole algérien*. Paris: La Découverte.
- Mañé Estrada, Aurèlia. Carmen De La Cámara Arilla, 2005 “Rusia: ¿Hacia una economía petrolera-rentista?”, *Revista de Economía Crítica*, 3: 69-96.
- Martínez, Luis. 1998. *La guerre civile en Algérie*. Paris: Karthala.
- McAllister, Edward. 2013. “Immunity to the Arab Spring? Fear, Fatigue and Fragmentation in Algeria”, *New Middle Eastern Studies*, 3: 1-29.
- Meddi, Adlène. 2015. “Algeria: the secret service never dies”. *Middle East Eye*. Available at: <http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/algeria-secret-services-never-die-237305750> [consulted: 30 January 2016].
- Mehlum, Halvor, Karl Moene and Ragnar Torvik. 2006. “Cursed by resources or institutions?”, *The World Economy*, 29 (8): 1117-1131.
- Meissner, Hannes. 2010. “The resource curse and rentier states in the Caspian Region: a need for context analysis”, Working Paper of the German Institute of Global and Area Studies. Available at: http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1612183 [consulted: 07th of October 2015]
- North, Douglass C. and Barry R. Weingast. 1989. “Constitutions and Commitment: the evolution of institutional governing public choice in seventeenth century England”, *Journal of Economic History*, 49 (4): 803-832.
- Ongba, Luc. 2009. “On the duration of Political Power in Africa. The role of oil rents”, *Comparative Political Studies*, 42 (3): 416-436.
- Parks, Roberts. 2013. “Algeria and the Arab Spring”, in Clement Henry and Jang Ji-Hyang (eds.), *The Arab Spring: Will it lead to democratic transitions?* New York/Seoul: Palgrave Macmillan/The Asian Institute for Policy Studies.
- Robinson, James A., Ragnar Torvik and Thierry Verdier. 2006. “Political foundations of the resource curse”, *Journal of Development Economics*, 79 (2): 447-468.

- Rodrik, Dani. 2007. *One Economics, Many Recipes: Globalization, Institutions, and Economic Growth*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press. Chapters 2 and 5.
- Ross, Michael. 2001. "Does Oil Hinder Democracy?", *World Politics*, 53 (3): 325-361.
- Ross, Michael. 2009. "Oil and Democracy Revisited". Available at: <http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/polisci/faculty/ross/Oil%20and%20Democracy%20Revisited.pdf> [consulted: 05th of January 2016].
- Ross, Michael. 2013. "The politics of the resource curse: a review". Available at: <http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/polisci/faculty/ross/Ross%20-%20Politics%20of%20the%20resource%20curse.pdf> [consulted: 07th of October 2015].
- Ross, Michael. 2014. "What we learned about the resource curse?". Available at: <http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/polisci/faculty/ross/Ross%20-%20What%20have%20we%20learned%20about%20the%20resource%20curse.pdf> [consulted: 07th of October 2015].
- Ruedy, John. 1992. *Modern Algeria: The origins and development of a nation*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Salhi, Hamoud. 2011. "Is Algeria immune from the Arab Spring". *BBC* 27th of July 2011. Available at: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-14167481> [consulted: 07th of October 2015].
- Sandbakken, Camilla. 2006. "The limits of democracy posed by oil rentier states: the cases of Algeria, Nigeria and Libya", *Democratization*, 13 (1): 135-152.
- Shambayati, Hootan. 1994. "The rentier state, interest groups, and the paradox of autonomy: state and business in Turkey and Iran", *Comparative Politics*, 26 (3): 307-331.
- Shedler, Andreas. 2006. *Electoral Authoritarianism: the dynamics of unfree competition*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Pub.
- SIPRI (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute). 2012. "Military expenditure by country: Algeria". Available at: <http://portal.sipri.org/publications/pages/expenditures/country-search> [consulted: 07th of October 2015].
- Skocpol, Theda. 1979. *States and Social Revolutions*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Slater, Don and Sofia Fenner. 2011. "State power and staying in power: infrastructural mechanisms and authoritarian durability", *Journal of International Affairs*, 65 (1): 15-29.
- Smith, Benjamin. 2004. "Oil wealth and regime survival in the developing world, 1960-1999", *American Journal of Political Science*, 48 (2): 232-246.
- Steinmo, Sven. 2008. "Historical Institutionalism", in Donatella Della Porta and Michael Keating (eds.), *Approaches and Methods in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Szomolka Vida, Inmaculada. 2010. "Los regímenes políticos híbridos: democracias y autoritarismos con adjetivos. Su conceptualización, categorización y operacionalización dentro de la tipología de regímenes políticos". *Revista de Estudios Políticos*, 47: 103-135. Available at: <http://www.cepc.gob.es/publicaciones/revistas/revistaselectronicas?IDR=3%20&IDN=687&IDA=27690> [consulted: 23rd of January 2016].

- Ulfelder, Jay. 2007. "Natural resource wealth and the survival of autocracy", *Comparative Political Studies*, 40 (8): 995-1018.
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). 2014. "2014 Human Development Report". Available at: <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/presscenter/events/2014/july/HDR2014.html> [consulted: 07th of October 2015].
- US Energy Information Administration (EIA). 2014. "Algeria". Available at: <http://www.eia.gov/beta/international/analysis.cfm?iso=DZA> [consulted: 07th of October 2015].
- Volpi, Frédéric. 2013. "Algeria versus the Arab Spring", *Journal of Democracy*, 24 (3): 104-115.
- Werenfels, Isabelle. 2007. *Managing Instability in Algeria: Elites and Political Change since 1995*. New York: Routledge.
- Wiens, David, Paul Poast and William Roberts Clark. 2014. "The political resource curse: an empirical re-evaluation", *Political Research Quarterly*, 67 (4): 783-794.
- Wiktorowicz, Quintan. 2000. "Civil society as social control", *Comparative politics* 33: 43-61.
- World Bank. 2015. "Total Reserves". Available at: <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/FI.RES.TOTL.CD> [consulted: 07th of October 2015].
- Zoubir, 2011, The Arab Spring: Is Algeria the exception? FOCUS article. IEMed Observatory of Euro-Mediterranean Policies.
- Zoubir, Yahia H. and Ahmed Aghraout. 2012. "Algeria's path to reform: authentic change?", *Middle East Policy*, XIX (2): 66-83.

Presentado para evaluación: 21 de octubre de 2015.

Aceptado para publicación: 2 de febrero de 2016.

LALA MURADOVA, Universitat Rovira i Virgili
muradova_lala@yahoo.com

Licenciada en Ciencias Políticas por la Azerbaijan University of Languages. Investigadora de la Cátedra UNESCO de Diálogo Intercultural en el Mediterráneo, en la Universitat Rovira i Virgili. Su área de investigación se centra en los recursos naturales y el autoritarismo.