

## Social Evolution: Before and After the Hirak and the Health Crisis in Algeria

**Abdelkader Abdellaoui\***

*Lab'Urba (UPEC France) and Avicenna Virtual Campus Network, Paris, France*

**\*Corresponding Author:** Abdelkader Abdellaoui, Lab'Urba (UPEC France) and Avicenna Virtual Campus Network, Paris, France.

**Received:** January 03, 2022; **Published:** January 31, 2022

### Abstract

The health crisis that the world is going through will have a very profound impact on societies and States. There will be, without doubt, one before and one after the crisis. The unprecedented, unexpected yet predictable crisis will have exposed, even in technologically advanced countries, the deficiencies and weaknesses of governance systems. It will have revealed in broad daylight the self-centered behaviors of some and the (almost spontaneous) solidarity of others, the very ones we least expected on these occasions because they were forgotten or considered unable to come to the aid of others to Great Nations of the World. But this crisis will also have shown, very fortunately, the strength of dedication and individual and collective abnegation of those who fight evil, day and night, exposing themselves and without counting their time.

The covid 19 pandemic is not, however, the first to hit the world. There have been many others as deadly, if not more; the bubonic plague, which reappeared in 1320 in Mongolia, however, remained endemic in the East, India and China. It appeared in the West in 1347 brought by Genoese sailors fleeing Caffa and caused the death of 25 to 40 million Europeans.

In Algeria, society has already changed profoundly in recent decades. The Other has gradually faded behind the Self; the general interest has eclipsed under the particular interest. But two major events will radically transform the situation: the hirak (Citizen Movement of great magnitude), first and this health crisis of a totally unexpected magnitude in Algeria. The combination of these two events allows us to say that the society before will make way, like it or not and at deadlines that cannot be apprehended today, for another society.

This work recalls the major global health crises and their consequences on societal changes. We then take the situation of Algeria, taken as an example of a border country between the South and the North where a societal movement has been able to contribute to modifying the political and social situation. Algeria is also hit by the pandemic. These two events tend to shape a new society. This article describes Algerian society before and attempts to draw its profile in the perspective of emerging from the health crisis.

**Keywords:** *Global Health Crises; Corona Virus; Hirak in Algeria; Social Pressure*

### Introduction

As everyone knows, the health crisis that the world is going through will have a very profound impact on societies and States. There will undoubtedly be a before and an after crisis because Humanity has known so many other crises from which it has survived; the ex-

amples are so numerous: the Spanish flu, with a particularly deadly virus, which was grafted on the First World War; the great economic depression of 1929 in the USA which spread over the world over the 1930s, the Antonin plague which struck the Roman Empire at the end of the Antonin dynasty, the plague of Athens which ravaged Greece from 430 to 426 to B-C, the bubonic plague which reappeared in 1320 in Mongolia and appeared in the West in 1347 brought by Genoese sailors and killing 25 to 40 million Europeans, cholera, typhus, tuberculosis, of all these health crises, the oldest and the most appalling remains the plague which plagued Eurasia for nearly two thousand years; it was first spotted in the Mediterranean basin in 541-542. The unprecedented, unexpected and yet predictable crisis will have exposed, even in technologically advanced countries, the deficiencies and weaknesses of governance systems; health systems, despite numerous alerts, were not sufficiently prepared to deal with such a crisis properly. It will have revealed in broad daylight the self-centered behaviors of some and the (almost spontaneous) solidarity of others, the very ones we least expected on these occasions because they were forgotten or considered unable to come to the aid of others to Great Nations of this World. It will have updated the real relations between Nations and States by reminding us of the old saying: each for himself and God for all. It allowed us to question whether there really is friendship in the relations between Nations or if, on the contrary, everything is built on interest. But this crisis will also have shown, very fortunately, the strength of dedication and individual and collective abnegation of those who fight evil, day and night, by exposing themselves and without counting their time but also of those who continue to collect our garbage, clean our hospitals, deliver our mail, provide us with all the products essential to our life and our health. It also made us vibrate with the many initiatives of solidarity and human ingenuity to find solutions to contribute to the fight: from applause to health personnel, to the preparation and delivery of meals to people who need it, through all the innovative ideas to create and produce the many tools of struggle.

Algerian society is deeply marked by its deep attachment to three essential elements which make up its specificity: religion, family and friendship; it also has a link, which one could describe almost as emotional, to the army, which is both the symbol of independence and the guardian of national security and stability.

The technical reports WV4(2018) [1] and WV6(2018) [2] that we have consulted support us in these assertions. These reports present the results of an international research project investigating the evolution of values and beliefs around the world and carried out through the collaboration of a large international network of contributors and researchers in the social sciences. Since 1981, samples from nearly 100 countries have been surveyed on the basis of the same questionnaire in each of six waves, the first of which dates back to 1981. The results of the two reports are given in the form of occurrence tables on two periods: 1999 - 2004 (for the WV4 report) and 2010 - 2014 (for the WV6 report). It should be noted, however, that these results relate to small samples of respondents (around a thousand); they nevertheless give an indication of trends. Two periods were taken for this study: i) 1999 - 2004 and ii) 2010 - 2014. From these data we have taken here the ten indicators, which seem to us the most apt to help us understand society. These indicators give on the one hand the importance of the topic in life and on the other hand the trust placed by society in institutions. We can thus note the following results:

- Population gives almost 100% importance to religion, family and friendship almost over the two study periods.
- Relatively little confidence in public institutions (government, parliament and trade unions, in particular); this confidence deteriorates in the second study period.
- Confidence in the media (especially national television) is very mixed over the first period (46% important against 54% not important); it deteriorates for the second study period (43% important versus 57% not important). Taking advantage of the arrival of the information superhighways, citizens tend to listen to foreign television channels; even the national dailies provide French television programs.
- Confidence in the army remains relatively high, even for the second period (58%) because it represents, in the eyes of society, a factor of stability and national cohesion, even if it played a key role in the appointment. Governors since independence; a role she never gave up.

- For leisure, we note 77% important against 23% of not important in the first period and 68% important against 32% for the second period, therefore in deterioration. This could be explained by a more rigorous return to religious practice and the interpretation of texts.
- The importance of work is almost 100% as important for the first period against only 89% important for the second period; this could be explained by the increase in unemployment but also by mistrust of public institutions. When you ask someone if they are going to work, they spontaneously say, "I'm going to work"; like it was a chore to do.

But society has already changed profoundly over the past three decades. The Other has gradually faded behind the Self; the general interest has eclipsed under the particular interest. In this atmosphere, the intellectual, the one that the Company has trained, at a high price, to have a share of knowledge and know-how, has lost his notoriety in favor of one who has a very full pocket. But two major events will radically transform the situation: the hirak (Unprecedented Citizen Movement), in the first place, and this unexpected health crisis, so unexpected that many did not even believe it. Population before will make way, for another situation, but at a time frame that cannot be predicted at the moment. From the beginnings of 'Hirak', there was a tendency to say that Algeria will never be the same again and some were already starting to talk about the idea of a second republic. Of course, many things have been achieved. And the first achievement is that of popular assembly in a common voice, in a common attitude of maturity, collective solidarity, high responsibility, and calm. The endurance of the action and its so peaceful nature aroused curiosity first and then general admiration. The cancellation of a fifth term for an already helpless president, unthinkable in until 2018, the resignation of the president under pressure, the judgment and then the arrest of people considered to be definitively untouchable are as many other achievements as no one can dispute. However, we are witnessing, at least in a first phase, a barely disguised renewal of the system, with a government made up of almost a third from the seraglio, the same chambers, the same political parties and probably other centers and forms of decision-making. The pandemic that is sweeping the world, and Algeria, will it continue the work of the hirak and will it be able to contribute to a profound change in the situation in Algeria? Another factor could have changed the situation: attachment to the Muslim religion. If Islam had been well understood, interpreted and applied with intelligence, always remembering two verses heavy and deep with meaning and implications: i) اُقرأ a reading order for a prophet who does not know how to read to say that 'it is not impossible to learn to read and what to read. And ii) verse 4 of sura 96: يذلق مِلَقْلِقِ اب مِلَع [The one who taught, 'who taught you' with the quill] who explicitly uses the term مِلَقْلِقِ (the quill, the pen) symbol of writing, of civilization, Knowledge and Science.

In Algeria, Islam is the state religion according to the Constitution; it is in fact, theoretically and understood in this way, the unique religion of all citizens and anyone one meets is potentially perceived as a believer and a Muslim. If the person has a pronounced foreign facies, he is generally perceived as non-Muslim. We are making two major amalgamations here: i) that a foreigner cannot, a priori, be a Muslim; which is obviously a mistake and ii) an Algerian can neither be converted to another religion nor quite simply not believe in God at all; which is another misinterpretation. In reality, this is not just a perception because it is taken for granted that an Algerian is a Muslim "from birth" and that it cannot be otherwise. This is not peculiar to the Muslim religion or to Algerian society in a particular way but common to any religious social group since the child is "baptized" from an early age, generally before one year. For social groups with a dominant religion, or even a single religion, this authorizes, in the eyes of many, the appropriation of the authority of "call to order" in the event that the "supposed believer" commits "a fault", in particular. if this fault generates an "aggression of morality" to the community such as for example eating in the street during the month of Lent for a Muslim society or entering a church in "light" clothes for the Christian society.

Fasting, the third pillar is generally respected by all, by conviction and faith, or simply by the weight of tradition or that of social pressure. But we also note that the Society is less demanding for the accomplishment of prayer, which nevertheless represents the second pillar. Finally, it should be noted that in Maghrebian Muslim society, there is not, strictly speaking, an act indicating to the child that he enters "consciously" into religion at an age when he can be responsible for it. The boy's circumcision, around the age of three, has over

time become much more of a social manifestation rooted in tradition; it represents for the principal interested (the boy) only a party during which he is surrounded by care and where he receives new gifts and comfort.

Muslim societies, including Algerian society, have transformed while remaining dependent on a Western system that is both envied and rejected. Malek Bennabi [3] wrote in 2013: “the human landscape that reigns from Tangier to Djakarta is a panorama of economic structures, and the social type - filthy and ragged - is a product of these structures”. Algeria is located in Tangier and Djakarta; this analysis also concerns her. The author further adds: “The Muslim man has fallen into the colonialist net; thus, he had become the enslaved, exploited customer of the modern economy, unable to find in himself, in his traditions, in his habits, a way to tear himself away from his alienation”.

The family having long lost the capacity for religious education of its children, this is entrusted to the national education system and naturally integrated into the school curriculum from primary school. But the schoolmistresses are not specially prepared for theological education and even less for spirituality. The teaching is mainly based on learning a number of verses from the Quran and methods of behaving, praying, fasting, etc. These courses are often tainted by the personal interpretation of the educator who often takes himself for Imam in front of the child.

In its transformation, Algerian society is marred by another flaw with profound consequences both at the societal (collective) and spiritual (individual) level: the misinterpretation of the precepts (or their forgetting). We invoke God all day long while performing actions as reprehensible as each other. Who hasn't tried to find someone to pass them in front of the others; we will justify this by saying that everyone is doing it and that if I don't do it myself, others will and I will come last! You don't realize that walking past someone is like stealing their place, and therefore stealing it. In addition, we too often forget that the Koran specifies through verse 56 of sura 7: (اودسفت الو) (اهحالص! دعب ضرأا اي ف) that could be translated as: “do not damage the earth after we have repaired it “. There are two ideas to remember from this verse: i) in the term “do not damage” we could easily understand the idea of preserving the earth, not polluting it; we could also understand from this verse that it is necessary to save and respect the creatures that God created on this earth; and ii) the verse concerns the land and does not specify the land of the Muslims; this might suggest to us the idea of preserving the environment wherever we are.

The question of the societal drift and of the slide of Muslim societies in general towards the increasingly marked backwardness compared to the high technology and knowledge societies is not entirely new since the reformist Muslim thinkers of the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century (like the Persian Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, the Egyptian Sheikh Muhammad Abdou or the Syrian Mohammed Rashid Rida) wondered about the backwardness in scientific and technical matters. These founding fathers of modern reformism were not addressing their criticisms of the way Islam was historically constructed but of the bad practice of Islam by Muslims. Thus, according to Hourani [4], “al-Afghani (1838 - 1897), a great thinker of Islam as a religion and as a body of doctrines, reflected in depth on the causes of what he considered to be a decline of Muslim countries”. But, nearly half a century later, we are asking again the same question of the assimilation of the faith and its integration into the acts of the daily life of the Muslim. The reflection that we make of it in relation to the Algerian Society can, in certain aspects, easily extend to the Muslim Society (or the community) in all latitudes.

The present work, without claiming to find an answer to all the very difficult questions, at least tries to question us if the health crisis which is currently hitting Algeria will not bring, perhaps in compensation, the profound change so hoped for by the Society.

### **The pandemic: The unexpected, unconsciousness, awakening and solidarity**

On the site: <https://graphics.reuters.com/world-coronavirus-tracker-and-maps/fr/countries-and-territories/algeria/> Accessed December 29, 2021, we read that there have been 217,265 cases of contamination and 6,254 deaths linked to the corona virus identified since the start of the pandemic. We also note that the cases of covid-19 are on the rise with 302 new contaminations identified every day. This represents 20% of the peak in infections. But these statistics should be taken with caution; the reality can be very different. The vac-

cinated are few; those who wear the mask are seen as abnormalities. By comparison, in France, nearly 200,000 cases were recorded on December 29, 2021.

### The unexpected and the unconscious

The pandemic was unexpected; it succeeded where power had failed: putting the hirak to sleep. However, initially, many Algerians did not believe it. Gatherings and demonstrations of all kinds (parties, cultural or sporting events and even the hirak) took place without concern. Some even thought, and said aloud, that it was all about intoxication, a maneuver of the powers to stop the citizen movement. Later, still unaware of the gravity of the pandemic, some began to suggest sparing solutions, from the most “natural in a” believing “society to the most extravagant.

### First declarations, first outbreaks, first measures

In Algeria, the Covid-19 pandemic spreads from February 25, 2020, when an Italian national tests positive for SARS-CoV-2. From March 1, a source of contagion formed in the wilaya of Blida: sixteen members of the same family were infected with the coronavirus during a wedding party following contact with Algerian nationals in France. The wilaya of Blida is becoming the epicenter of the coronavirus epidemic in Algeria. After a period of floating, gradual restrictive measures are taken depending on human and material resources: i) establishment of a national commission to watch and monitor the evolution of the COVID-19 epidemic on March 2019, ii) setting up of a large information and awareness campaign, iii) decision of total confinement of the wilaya of Blida and partial for the wilaya of Algiers, iv) extension of partial confinement to all wilayas. Initially, total or partial confinement is not rigorously followed for various reasons (unconsciousness, defiant attitude, fatalism as well as the social conditions of housing such as overcrowding, unsanitary conditions, etc.

### Awakening and solidarity

As everywhere, a momentum of individual or collective solidarity has taken hold. We will point out both awareness of dangerousness, mobilization of cleaning campaigns, assistance to people in difficulty. Many initiatives have been launched all over the country by single people, groups of friends or associations: collection of food products for families affected by the slowdown in economic activity, production of protective measures for caregivers, production of meals for hospitals, creation of awareness spots, etc... Youth played a primary role in these actions. But the less young have also contributed by initiating, according to their means, specific actions. This is the case of this 49-year-old man from Béjaia, owner of a village hall who offered to host homeless people; he was therefore at his home, self-confined, when he wrote his very first post on Facebook, on March 22, “I offered to make my room available to the homeless” and the project immediately attracted the membership: individual, collective and public mobilizations. Donations have poured in. We cannot ignore either the initiatives of public and private companies to contribute to the manufacture of materials necessary to face the crisis (ventilators for example) and the involvement of universities for products that health structures need.

## Algeria, the societal movement of 2019: Constraints, achievements, hopes and disappointments

### Before the hirak

The fight against the invader of all origins has always animated the Algerian people and their many ancient tribes, proud of their origins, their history and their traditions and strong in their convictions. But over time, the Algerian Society has changed profoundly. We are interested here in the current era (mainly after the end of the 80s), which marked a societal evolution marked by globalization: globalization of trade, travel, communications, influences by the media. An evolution in visible acceleration, to make up for... lost time: the time of imitation, the time of dreaming, the time of looking at the World, the time of acceding to ‘happiness’, to comfort, to well- to be. In this societal change of the last twenty years, the individual looks differently at his neighbor or simply at the Other who is no longer a “fellow

citizen” but a competitor who must be overtaken at every turn. The individual now sees his system of governance differently, his rulers in whom he no longer trusts. More generally in popular consciousness it is believed that the Administration is in its majority run by corrupt, opportunists, incompetent people, people placed by their peers to serve and nurture “a system” which is itself totally corrupt, for which even paying tax becomes sin. We forget that the system is also us, it is each individual. We forget that everyone is more or less corrupt, actively or passively when we do not react. Ask someone at random about the meaning of ‘STATE’ and you will be completely taken aback by the answers that are as unexpected as they are imprecise. The first answer is, in the majority of cases: “khallina”, mean by that: drop it or move on”; this response reflects both linguistic or cultural ignorance that we do not want to admit, the aversion of a global system of societal organization from which we want to exclude ourselves and the desire to show, without doing so explicitly, that we have solutions to a situation considered otherwise catastrophic as long as their advice is required. But we go even further! The individual finds himself complete in finding “proof” of the failure of the system. He thus puts himself immediately outside the cause of the alleged bankruptcy.

The individual puts himself in the place of the head of department, the mayor, the elected official, the minister or even the President of the Republic. He finds a solution while forgetting that he himself is part of the criticized System and that he participates at his level in its bankruptcy by performing actions that contribute to the disruption of social organization. The individual, however, does not stop at the proposed solution which he does not actually have the skills to bring to fruition. On many occasions, he establishes himself as an expert craftsman (mason, mechanic, electrician, plumber, even entrepreneur) without having the skills or an expert teacher without being aware of it. The expert technician will sometimes perform “fairly correct” work for you, but often full of faults that you discover, at your expense, as and when use. He will perform work without standards, without warranty and always billed at the market price of supply and demand, that is to say at full price, take it or leave it. When you make a point, he will allow himself to give you “advice and solutions”. And you accept because you can’t help it.

The individual henceforth integrates the very concept of Nation and Fatherland in a different way to the point of no longer having the courage to project into it inside, to the point of losing hope and forgetting that the Nation still has it. ability to produce children who are able to stand up with a single strong voice to cry out their exasperation, despair and fed up. And came the repeated candidacies of a dying man, present in the political field by his shadow (or his frame), his photo to which some dedicate an exaggerated admiration, a recognition probably facade, a veneration such as one offers a living horse. to a paper frame. The declaration of the candidacy for his own succession of a ‘president in a wheelchair’, unable to speak to his people, unable to rise up, brings to light the manipulation of too much of an entourage wanting to stay in power in all cost. It was the “initial accident” for P. Veyne [4] or the “moral shock” for N. Belakhdar [5] that would have resulted in the outbreak of the hirak. Of course we can ask ourselves the question of the cause (or causes) of such a situation and we cannot ignore the action, visible or underground, of predominantly Western systems, which continue to exert pressure, by all means, including through the media, on the countries of the South, holders of a number of wealth.

### **The Hirak: unprecedented citizen movement**

#### **Warning signs**

It is estimated that between 1962 and 2018 the Algerian population experienced a demographic growth of more than 263%. This means that approximately 72% of citizens were not born at the time of independence. It is also estimated that more than half of the population (54%) is under thirty, a period that covers the black decade and the twenty years of Bouteflika’s four successive terms. It is therefore easy to understand that the difficulties, needs, benchmarks and hopes of the 2019 population are now very different from those of the 1962 population. The situation is so complex that the new generation cannot help but express their despair, their deep pain, their very contained anger and their hopes. With your permission Algeria, lift your foot, you crush all my dreams, wrote a young person in a post. An outburst of anger was foreseeable; its timing, form, and scale were not. Figure 1 shows the deep anger of a young person during the student demonstration on September 10, 2019.



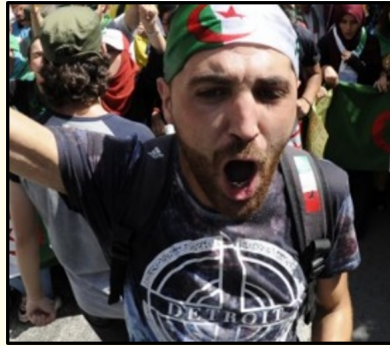


Figure 1: Anger, September 2019.

There is already a great deal of work on the Algerian hirak, this citizen movement that was perhaps not expected with such breadth and citizen mobilization. It will be enough for us to quote a few of them to realize it: Baamara L [6,7], Belakhdar N. [6], Dris C [8,9], Serres T [10], T Desrues and É Gobe [11], G Fabbiano [12].

The protest and the expression of the fed up do not however date from this famous Friday, February 22, 2019. It will suffice to remember the salient facts that we will not comment on: Berber Spring of 1980, Black Spring of 2001, the movement of the unemployed in Ouar-gla in 2011, the voices that were already raised in 2013 and 2014 against a fourth term, the wave of citizen opposition in southern Algeria during the first months of 2015 and the voices that were raised in the stadiums and in universities. In figure 2, we see the protest against shale gas at the top and at the bottom, the citizen movement (the hirak which unites the People in the same challenge against power). We could legitimately ask the question whether the citizen movement was spontaneous or “piloted”. T. Desrues and É. Gobe note: “the most recent research on social movements is suspicious of spontaneous.” We will not comment on this delicate point in more than one respect.



Figure 2: The permanent protest.

Regardless, spontaneous or not, the hirak has made history. As Giulia Fabbiano (ibid) so aptly writes, noting that: “Seven months after the start of the popular uprising, if its political outcome is uncertain, its inclusion in the long term of history has, on the other hand, been confirmed. Grandiose by its scale, its duration, its national roots, its pacifism and its creativity, the hirak is renewing the relationship of an entire population to itself, to its past and to its future”. The Algerian hirak aroused curiosity, then questioning and finally admiration around the world; some people no longer hesitate to cite him as an example of mobilization, civility, bravery, restraint, solidarity, maturity and calm: “silmia, silmia, silmia, silmia” [peaceful, peaceful] chanted the crowds while time and everywhere. The hirak, a democratic impetus and an anger that does not cease, even if the citizen movement for the moment leaves its place to the corona virus.

### The slogans and the hopes

For Fadéla Boumendjel-Chitour, Le Hirak gives the feeling “of therapy, of catharsis, of extraordinary social harmony, especially after the terrorism which has painfully shattered all social ties. The Hirak arrived as a vital necessity”.

In a Facebook post, he told his country: “With your permission Algeria, lift your foot, you crush all my dreams”. Ramzi Yettou dies in hospital on April 19 after being severely beaten on Friday April 12! An innocent post expressing in all simplicity despair both long contained and deep, so deep. Hope cut short by an unfortunate “accident” that went almost unnoticed and a long-lasting trial plunging her parents into despair.

The slogans strongly expressed the desperation of a new generation that no longer wants to bow to a power it no longer recognizes and forcefully rejects. A corrupt power that had, for too long, prevented him from speaking out about his misery, his needs and his hopes. A power that had not trusted its youth and its capacity for constructive initiative, its multiple skills, its ingenuity. A power that had traced and decreed the future of this youth and its future. Figure 3 shows the crowd celebrating in Algiers, on Saturday February 22, 2020, the first anniversary of the hirak.



**Figure 3:** On February 22, 2020, the hirak celebrates its birthday.

We’re not going to go through all the slogans; we will confine ourselves to examining those that seem to us the most significant: “No to the 5<sup>th</sup> term” was the first slogan to assert that Algeria and its Nation needed a President and not a cadre to govern it. This slogan is quickly followed by “silmiya” (peaceful) to show that the movement is really peaceful, without animosity, without hatred and that there is no will to attack the police, considered as part of the People and therefore concerned itself by anger and protest. And soon: Get out! (Figure 4).





**Figure 4:** 'Get off' - the shocking slogan, inconceivable until recently!

“Get off” is perhaps one of the terms that express anger loud and clear. He will later give way to “clear all” which expresses dislike of a corrupt system to its deepest roots. But we cannot forget another strong signal chanted so many times by the crowds: “el jeich, achaab - khaoua khaoua” [the army and the People... brothers] to renew confidence in the Army as an institution. national guardian of security and stability, but also to say that it comes from this People who cry out their anger and that they are therefore concerned by this legitimate anger just as much as they are.

**The main achievements and the first disappointments**

The first achievement is, without a doubt, what was requested first: abandonment of the fifth term; this is an achievement of very symbolic weight, symbolic in the sense that the 5<sup>th</sup> term was presented and considered a fatal outcome, written in history. Symbolic also because it writes History in a different way from that which is decreed in high places. The departure of Bouteflika Abdelaziz, abandoned by some of those who supported him, is another achievement requested and chanted by the crowds: get out!

During the hirak, languages are loosened; videos abound on corruption, ill-gotten gains, embezzlement, and denunciations of all kinds. We finally say aloud what the People guessed and said quietly. The Chief of Staff puts himself on the front page and savior. He denounces, he provokes, and he summons and calls for justice to judge the wrongdoers. The “great people of the world up there” are judged, imprisoned; greats who until now were believed to be untouchable, including the very brother of the ousted president. This is the third major achievement.

But throughout the hirak, hearts were opened, unsuspected solidarities appeared, people felt, for a moment perhaps, FREE (free to express themselves, free to speak, free to cry for joy, free to express their sorrows) and new hopes were born. And this is the fourth and probably the most important of the hirak’s achievements.

Yet the disappointments are just as numerous. The most important is the fact that we finally get the feeling that the system we wanted to bring about has been given a facelift. The transitional period that many called for has gone by the wayside. The idea of a new style of government has been eclipsed. Candidates who are militant, committed, responsible and equipped with adequate capacities to save the boat Algeria have not shown themselves, perhaps out of fear, out of discouragement, out of the conviction that they are unable to change things. Mouloud Hamrouche himself (former prime minister and respected figure) basically said: “I cannot answer your call because I do not want to lie to you; I know I won’t be able to do anything”. The hirak itself has failed to establish itself as an interlocutor or to appoint leaders because of the fear that has continued to hover like a bad omen in the Algerian sky. Here we have the deep disappointments.

Discussion

It is necessary to note that, everywhere in the world, the exit from the health crisis is inevitable; Algeria is no exception to the rule. On the other hand, it is difficult to determine now with precision the extent or the real consequences on the population, on national activity, on the economy, or on politics. It is recognized that these consequences will be disastrous, especially at the economic and industrial levels. They will also be at the level of individuals and households, especially the most fragile. What is certain, however, is that there will be a very different aftermath than before. We draw below, with a relatively low risk of error, an outline of the fields of activity to be reviewed from top to bottom in the particular case of Algeria.

Health in the first place

Since independence, health has been a concern of the powers that be, who have tried to set up a system that would provide care to all citizens. Until the early 1980s, a lot of effort was put into it and many results were achieved. Thus, life expectancy increased from 50 years in 1962 to 63 years in 1985.

But the policy implemented until 1986 experienced a sudden slowdown at the end of the 1980s, due to the fall in oil revenues and Algeria’s indebtedness, as well as the increase in demand for health care in because of their gratuity. The health program fell sharply from 1986/1987, putting the public hospital sector in great difficulty (management of hospitals or maintenance of equipment). And in 1994, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) imposed on Algeria the structural adjustment program (SAP), the objective of which is to reduce imports of drugs as well as health spending. Kebaili R. and Youcef B [13]. Over the past ten years, the state has allocated \$ 27.9 billion to the Ministry of Health, Population and Hospital Reform. Significant public and private investments have been made in health and pharmaceutical structures.

Unfortunately, we must point out that, according to the “Global Health Security index” published in 2019, page 28 (ibid), which reports countries according to their capacity to cope with international health crises, Algeria is considered as the 173rd of the “least prepared” countries and comes in 173rd place in the general ranking which includes 194 countries (Figure 5, photo a). Photo (b) of figure 5 represents the national commitment to improve national capacity in funding and compliance. Note that Algeria is at the level of Congo Brazzaville in (a) and at the level of Mauritius in (b); nothing to be proud of. For once some would say, we’re happy to be at the back of the pack! The journal The Lancet published on February 20, 2020 a study qualifying Algeria among the three African countries most at risk of seeing the emergence of cases of COVID-19 infections in the company of South Africa and Egypt, however, the three countries remain the least vulnerable because their health systems are the best prepared on the continent.

170	Angola	25.2
171	Tonga	25.1
172	Dominica	24.0
173	Algeria <b>a</b>	23.6
173	Congo (Brazzaville)	23.6
175	Djibouti	23.2

183	Iraq	29.5
184	Algeria <b>b</b>	29.1
184	Mauritius	29.1

Figure 5: Algeria at the back of the pack.

Everyone knows the disastrous state and the very limited capacities of public hospitals: advanced degradation, lack of various equipment and care products, administration and care of patients; very often, to be admitted for treatment or hospitalization, we use privileges and knowledge to be well followed. But even more, the ramparts to the care are drawn up by the System and also by the complaisant society. Professor Fadéla Boumendjel-Chitour reports: "The day when, in the service I was heading, a patient said to me, 'Finally, I come to your place, professor', I was shocked. I thought I was accessible. I had done everything to be. The system was building ramparts. The patient and the student were no longer the priority. Everyone suffers from it". This one testimonial that we have selected says a lot about our healthcare system and it is not useful to give an exhaustive report here. This situation leads those who can to have recourse to foreign private clinics (especially in Tunisia). Some manage to get drugs from abroad, via the diaspora. There are certainly private clinics; these institutions charge prices that are too often inaccessible to the majority of the population.

### The revival of activity

The health crisis we are going through has shaken all economic and production systems in all countries. Algeria is no exception to the rule; quite the contrary and whatever may be said, it suffers more strongly the impacts because the country depends heavily on the oil windfall. The price of the barrel conditions an economy of rent and consumption! It will certainly be necessary to make sacrifices, heavy sacrifices, to help businesses (small, and those of artisans) to recover. We will also have to support the weakest in society. But we must be vigilant so that these concessions do not bring the country into another era of dependence (economic, financial, political, social, cultural). The recovery program should be built on the basis of promoting smart initiative, confidence, skills, technology and knowledge. The road will be long and difficult but doable if we manage to establish the essential and double confidence (confidence of society in its children and confidence of the citizen in its system of governance).

**The national economy:** It must be rethought; several points will need to be reviewed, including: A serious reflection on an exit from the system of annuity and dependence of the oil and gas manna.

- The development of a strategy of regional and territorial solidarity.
- Industrial promotion: it will be done by o
- Support for young people to set up their businesses, especially university graduates who need funds, logistics, management training, fair access to markets.
- An awareness campaign emphasizing that aid is neither free nor eternal; that the person (or people) helped is obliged to reimburse, in one way or another to the Company.
- State commitment to distributing allocations in a transparent manner and based on the seriousness of the projects, allocation equity and rigorous expenditure control.
- A serious reflection on the parallel market, on price and quality control, on competition and monopolies; a training campaign for state officials should be put in place.
- The review of public expenditure by: i) a review of the salaries and benefits of the highest political leaders (deputies in particular), ii) tightening of the constitution of the government by the regrouping of fields of action, iii) the implementation of place of specialized public expenditure control committees.
- Promotion and encouragement of public institutions to generate profit and therefore reduce conventional allocations. This should concern municipalities, universities and research centers and possibly other institutions.

- The development of vast awareness campaigns and mass civic education on: i) the preservation of the common good, ii) respect for work and commitments (quality, time), iii) the need for the concept of taxes and of citizen participation in the overall effort of national activity.

### Conclusion

We have shown throughout this text that the world is going through a crisis reminiscent of wars and which could plunge it into a situation of both economic and societal regression, a situation of profound technological and industrial changes where the best and the worst will come together. Algeria will not escape the rule; we could even fear that our situation is much more critical: our situation as consumers, our economic, technological, scientific, industrial and even cultural dependence will accentuate the impact of the crisis. In Algeria, the hirak could have changed the situation; but hopes have turned into despair: the System seems to have had a facelift, with a new virginity while relying on the same procedures for choosing those in command spheres. The attachment to Islam, in a society “declared” Muslim, could have brought about, in another way, a change, admittedly slow, but inevitable. But social changes, ‘increasingly superficial’ practices of the Faith, imported interpretations of the precepts have unfortunately derailed the road to change.

The health crisis will not fail to raise other questions, other questions, other hopes: in particular that of profound societal change; yes a societal change which alone will generate political change and the establishment of a new national governance. This change will be made on the express condition that we succeed in establishing double confidence: i) that of the Company in its children, all its children wherever they are and ii) that of each in the system of governance.

### Bibliography

1. WVS. WV4; WVS. WV4\_Results\_By\_Country; technical record; Study #; v20180912; period (2018): 1999-2004.
2. WVS. WV6; WVS. WV6\_Results\_By\_Country; technical record; Study #; v20180912; period (2018): 2010-2014
3. Bennabi Malek. le musulman dans le monde de l'économie (traduit de l'arabe par Nour-Eddine Khendoudi); imprimerie En Naamane; Algérie (2013).
4. Veyne. Comment on écrit l'histoire, Paris, Seuil, Coll. Points (1979).
5. Belakhdar Naoual. “L'éveil du Sud” ou quand la contestation vient de la marge. Une analyse du mouvement des chômeurs algériens”. *Politique Africaine* 137 (2015): 27-48.
6. Baamara Layla. (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 (2012): 161-179.
7. Baamara Layla. L'écart difficile aux routines contestataires dans les mobilisations algériennes de 2011; in HMED Choukri et JEAN-PIERRE Laurent (dir.); dossier “Révolutions et crises politiques: Maghreb/Machrek; Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales 211-212 (2016): 109-125.
8. DRIS Cherif. Algérie politique 2015: mise à la retraite du général Médiène et restructuration du DRS; *L'Année du Maghreb*, édition du CNRS; 17; Dossier: Genre, santé et droits sexuels et reproductifs au Maghreb 15 (2015): 185-202.
9. DRIS Cherif Lgérie. “Révision constitutionnelle sur fond de normalisation de l'impunité”. *L'Année du Maghreb*, 17; Moyen Orient, Monde Musulman; édition de l'IREMAM, UMR 7310, CNRS/Aix-Marseille Université (2016): 245-256.
10. Serres Serres Thomas. En attendant Bouteflika. Le président et la crise de sens en Algérie», *L'Année du Maghreb* 10 (2014): 59-75.

11. T Desrues et É Gobe. "Introduction. Quand l'Algérie proteste: le Maghreb au prisme du hirak algérien". l'Année du Maghreb; CNRS édition; décembre (2019).
12. Giulia Fabbiano. "Le temps long du hirak: le passé et ses présences". The Hirak, the past and its performances; l'Année du Maghreb ; CNRS édition (2019).
13. Kebaili R and et Youcef B. "Le système de santé Algérien - Réformes et perspectives; mémoire de master". université Mouloud Mammeri, Tizi Ouzou; année universitaire (2017).

**Volume 5 Issue 2 February 2022**

**© All rights reserved by Abdelkader Abdellaoui.**