Summary and Conclusion:

The state-society framework of analysis focuses broadly on the quantity and quality of the state's ties with society. The relation between state and society is complimentary and supplementary. The state governs over a society, and the society forms the subjects of the state. Both the state and society are mutually empowering forces and mutually destructive forces. Each tries to control and influence the other in its own unique manner. And since states are not the sole central actors in society, and are rarely free from the social forces, the latter can curb their powers. Even the most authoritarian regimes can face a check by social forces. The state-society equations define its social systems, the institutions of governance, modes of production, class and social formations. The chief actor in the state-society interface is the institution of the government. It is through the government that the state exercises its various powers. Different state responses to different social demands, and the different social demands on the state, yield different results.

The development of a specific state and social system cannot, however, be studied in isolation. With the passage of time, as the world has shrunk due to more economic, social, cultural, political interactions, so has the development of the two systems. Classification of a state system or a social system cannot be narrow or fixed. States and societies change with changes in regional, local and larger international arenas. The changes in one are responsible for the changes in the other. The post-colonial Third World is a case in point. The nature of the states in the Third World, have changed from socialist welfare to liberal democratic capitalist states.

Neither of the two actors, state or society can be taken as a homogenous unit or a single identity on its own. There are multiple layers of both state and society, and both interact at different levels in different fashions. These range from the political and policy-making levels of the government to charismatic leadership. They also include the other sections of government and society, which could be the lower rung of the government staff, or the government representatives in remote areas, or the services provided by the workers of the non-governmental organizations supporting an opposition party, are equally important in shaping the society or helping the government respond to the society. The role of the corruption of the bureaucracy in dealing with society in general is considered one of the most important factors for the confrontation of the state apparatus and the social movements.
The other feature about the non-homogeneity of the state and society in the modern world is the fact that they are part of the larger global world order. In the rapidly shrinking world they are capable of getting profoundly affected by larger changes in other parts of the world. Since neither state nor societies are static phenomena, they change every time they come in contact with other forces or with each other. All large and small changes in the larger world or within domestic policies either make the forces of state and society come closer together or will set them on a collision course. These interactions give both the state and society a fluid character, a changing set of goals and different ideological orientations with time.

There are no fixed rules by which the society can be made to abide, as the changes in the nature of society, its reaction to events and forces of change are random. The society accepts, resists or rejects change, as it deems necessary. The flexibility and arbitrariness of society gives it a unique character. In any given situation, two societies are capable of diametrically opposite reactions. The reaction to political religion, for example, in a particular region may vary considerably from country to country.

Societies make different types of demands on the state and the responses to these public demands are decided by the objectives of the state. The nature of the state, and its responses however vary according to the political history of the state. Political ideologies are usually formed on the basis of criticism of state policies and flaw in governance. Alternate political ideologies seek large social platforms to garner and mobilize support.

A strong and powerful social force like religion may never be able to solve most of the eco-political problems, and may never be able to gain enough strength to even become the ruling force, but it has the potential to be able to influence the small and larger policies of the state. Thus in West Asia, even though after independence the states opted for a socialist pattern of development, the pull of political Islam forced them to adopt measures to either blunt their socialism or adopt measures that can largely be called 'populist'.

The economic stagnation and the consequent impoverishment of the population, the falling per capita income, the reliance of the government an external assistance to retain power, the failure of democracy are all reasons for the masses to support alternative ideologies and political parties with a diametrically opposite agenda than what the regime in power offers. Due to the absence of any other ideological parties, the religion-based parties emerge the strongest in the region.
Political religion is to be understood as a socio-political activity disassociated from religion. It has characteristics that distinguish it from being a totally religious movement, and its' incomplete and partially developed political ideology do not allow it to be a totally political movement either. Political religion will have to be understood more as a social movement with a political leadership than as a political movement with a social backing. In West Asia and North Africa, political religion has served more as a political pressure group, which leads and guides the masses from religious platforms. Political religion does not offer an alternative to the system of governance or a radical change in the existing systems of governance. It represents more an expression of political grievances of the masses, in religious terms, giving the entire problem a religious framework and a channel for venting the suppressed aspirations of the masses. It acts as a link between the state and the society.

The focus of this thesis has been on the dynamics of political religion and its interaction with the state, at different points of time, beginning with the colonial era to the independence movements to the food riots of 1988 and the elections of 1995. The approach has been on the points where the state and society have interfaced. More specifically on the points where the society shapes the policies of the state and when the state influences and moulds the growth of the society. Since neither the state nor society are static phenomena, they change every time they come in contact with other forces or with each other. All large and small changes in the larger world or within domestic policies will either make the forces of state and society come closer together or will set them on a collision course. These interactions give both the state and society a fluid character, a changing set of goals and different ideological orientations with time.

In West Asia and North Africa, political religion has served more as a political pressure group that leads and guides the masses from religious platforms. Political religion does not offer an alternative to the system of governance or a radical change in the existing systems of governance, rather it represents more an expression of political grievances of the masses, in religious terms, giving the entire problem a religious framework and a channel for venting the suppressed aspirations of the masses. It acts as a link between the state and the society.

Significantly, the leadership of the political religionists consists of political leaders and professional politicians. It is the political leadership that is responsible for converting a social movement into a political one. They give the movement a definite agenda, an
ideology, an alternative to the existing system and an organizational structure which can carry the agenda and mobilize support from the remotest parts of the country.

Political Islam as a political ideology originated in Egypt, where the leaders of the twentieth century formulated a political ideology out of Islam. It sought to unify the entire Islamic world into a socio-economic-political and geographic force. The pan-Islamic, and the pan-Arab movements, which aimed at unifying the region into one block based on religion and race were inspired from this school of thought. Political Islam has to be differentiated from Islamic fundamentalism, resurgence and revivalism. All the terms are used to explain the various forms of political activism associated with religion. Fundamentalism refers to the political ideologies which are looking to the roots of the religion's history to find a solution to the modern day problems of poverty, unemployment, corruption, increasing Western influence in the socio-political fields. Religious Fundamentalism, as a term was coined to describe the earlier Protestant Christian movement, whose focus was the return to the fundamentals of the religion. A fundamentalist movement always attempts to restore the religion in its pristine and original form, and in that form, it seeks to find solutions to the contemporary problems. The difference between Islamism or political Islam and resurgent fundamentalism is that the former is a wider term, encompassing the ideas of political alternatives to the state, while fundamentalism just connotes a return to the basics of the religion.

Islamic revivalism, resurgence, fundamentalism, and political Islam are terms usually associated with the Iranian revolution. The unexpected ouster of the Shah and his replacement by a cleric as the leader left the world in a state of shock. Islam was now being seen as a powerful force that could overtake the polities in the region and disturb the equation between them and the rest of the world. It was also seen as an ideology that could fill the void left after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The US media saw in the rise of the Islamic revolutions, the rise of a new enemy which would be a much more virulent threat to the principles of capitalism, democracy, liberalism and freedom which the First World represented. It was seen as a regressive movement that would take the region and the adherents of the faith away from science and development.

The second feature of the state in society framework is that if states have to be viewed in their social contexts, it is important to study not only the peak organizations of states and key social groups, often located at the centre of the polity in the capital city, but also state-society interactions at the periphery. In the case of Egypt the peak organizations are the Muslim Brotherhood and the al-Azhar. Since political Islam has
been an active force in the country from the time of the European colonization, the
Islamism in Egypt has been an organized and well defined force. The al-Azhar
represents the school of thought that worked on and formulated the political ideology of
a political Islam. The Muslim Brotherhood, on the other hand was a political
organization whose purpose was to create a socio-political base amongst the masses. It
dealt with the peasants, the labour class, the professional syndicates, and political
parties as well. It developed a grass root programme to garner support from the
peripheral sections of society.

In Algeria, on the other hand, though the mosques and the lay clerics were active in the
struggle for independence, political Islam as a well-formulated ideology did not take
shape. The first time that the Islamists got a well-defined face and identity was as a
result of the 1988 food riots and the creation of the FIS in response to the
establishment of the process of political pluralism in the country. Once created, they
used the techniques of the Muslim Brotherhood to make and sustain a support base
from all sections of society. They learnt the art of formulating a political ideological
opinion from the al-Azhar and the political strategizing from the Muslim Brotherhood.

The third feature of the state-in-society framework deals with the fact that social forces,
like states, are contingent on specific empirical conditions. The political action and
influence of a social group are not wholly predictable from the relative position of that
group within the social structure. No class has a historically pre-designed social role.
Class compositions and their political powers can fluctuate with time.

The leadership of the FIS is an example to prove the validity of this statement. The
leadership fluctuated from the Western educated Abassi Madani to the madrasa
product, Ali Bel-Hadj. The sections of society they represented, the kind of support they
were able to muster and the following they received are all indicative of the fluctuations
in the class compositions and the changes in the political demands of the largest
opposition party of the country.

The differences between the radical Islamists and the moderates, in the two countries
indicates the shift in power bases of the social movements. They had a leadership and a
following cutting across all class barriers. What was important was the demands of the
leadership they were following and the manner in which the state was responding to
their demands.
Lastly, states and other social forces may be mutually empowering. A state society interface may not always be one of collision. Interactions between the state and social forces can be either mutually beneficial, or may favour one party over the other, or they may cut into each other’s powers and spheres of influence. In some cases, the state actors may ally with select social groups and try to play off one against the other. The real world situations do not conform to a set or specific pattern. The complexities of each state will vary and so will the state-society equations. The patterns of domination are undermined by key struggles spread through society’s multiple arenas of domination and opposition. Officials at different levels of the state are key figures in these struggles, interacting -- at times, conflicting -- with an entire constellation of social forces in disparate arena. Any individual part of the state may respond as much (or more) to the distinctive pressures it faces in particular arenas as it does to the rest of the state organization. The reactions of the Muslim Brotherhood and al-Azhar to the political developments in 1991 Gulf Crisis was a move to empower the government’s position vis-à-vis the society within the country and in larger global context.

To evaluate the state-society interface, and the changes in the equations between the two forces, the tracing of the developments in the political, economic and political fields of the two countries is important. For this the study was broken into three tentative phases. The first dealt with the colonial histories of the two countries, the second phase began with the post-colonial history dealing with the early experiments with socialism, and the third phase dealt with the problems in the transitions from socialism to liberalism, i.e., from the food riots of 1988 to the period of experimentations in economic and political liberalisms. The third phase formed the basis for the case studies taken up in the thesis. They focus on the changes the polity and economy underwent in the face of the transitions from socialism to liberalism.

The first chapter, was the concept chapter, that examined the various political scence **The second chapter that deals with the colonial legacies refers to the impact or the aftermath of the economic, political, social and legal structures and management techniques the countries inherited at the time of their independence. It refers to the legacies of modernization, economic integration into the global economic setups and the evolution of political-administrative structures, which facilitated the transition of the society, economy and polity towards a modern European society. The hallmark of colonization or the domination and control of one country over another was an increased interference by the state in every aspect on an individual’s life. It is an
indicator of the increase in centralization of control by the state, an attempt to make the colony dependent on the parent country for guidance in every aspect of its life. The dependence on the parent country was so strong, that the post-independence states looked to the former colonizers for economic, political and military support. England and France, till date provide their former colonies with the largest market, aid and help them in the political negotiations while dealing with the larger global diplomatic problems or with an economic backing by being their guarantors while they take loans from the IMF and the WB.

An important legacy of colonization has been the centralization of power and authority in the administrative apparatus of the state. The colonial state, with its coercive apparatus and an organized administrative machinery, proved that the most important force in play was the state. The new state decided the new socio-economic-political structure of the colony and re-structured the growth and development process of the colony. It managed to penetrate and extend its administrative machinery into remote hinterlands, which had traditionally been independent or autonomous under the Ottomans. The Europeans re-organized the entire socio-economic-political-legal and administrative setup of the colonies. Colonization had integrated the local domestic societies into the global community on all fronts, economic, political, social, cultural and even judicial.

Colonization, in part, was seen as a white man's burden to educate and civilize the natives. Once in charge the Europeans lost no time in arguing that the culture they had colonized needed to be civilized. Though the discrimination between the colonizers and colonized in North Africa was not on the basis of colour, a very strong discrimination was practised between the two communities on other cultural grounds. The civilizing mission resulted in disparaging the local cultures, customs, beliefs and value systems and replace it with the superior Western value systems.

Under the colonial rule the relation between the colonizers and the colony, particularly on the question of religion was very tenuous. For the colonized people, religion provided the most important and influential pivotal point around which the disgruntled masses could be mobilized. It provided an easy platform for political leaders, and it also provided the leadership for the resistance movements. The lay clergy in Algeria, and the educated leadership in Egypt worked towards formulating an ideological alternative and finding solutions in the tradition and history of their cultures. They provided the masses with a framework within which to comprehend and analyze the colonial policies,
strategies and practices. In response to the European onslaught on the traditions and culture, the mosques and religious institutions had become the focus of religio-social reaction of the masses. The reaction of the Islamists was to either look inwards and reform their religion and practices or to vehemently oppose everything Western and demand the establishment of an Islamic state after the ouster of the colonizers.

The state on its part was suppressive and hostile to the religion and its adherents. The colonial rule was marked by the hostility of the colonizers towards Islam and the accompanying legal and social value systems. They did not recognize the economic, criminal or civil laws of the colonies and at the very beginning worked towards acquiring an immunity from the local laws. Gradually the immunities converted themselves into privileges. It became the basis for enforcing a separate set of laws, which discriminated between the Europeans and the local populations. The Europeans considered the entire Arab-Muslim culture to be backward, regressive and inferior.

Whatever the kind of colony, whether direct or indirect, the attempt was to suppress the religion and culture of the colony. One of the moves to foster a domestic reaction to the local religion was to create a local middle class, which was urban, maybe partly educated in the West, affluent and aware of the power of the West. The division created in society by creating this class, and offsetting them against the local Arab-educated, stigmatized as backward and reactionary class, was permanent and the class conflict accentuated with time, particularly after the liberalization of the economy in the 1970s and 1980s. In both Egypt and Algeria it was this middle class, created from the Western educated urban sections of society, which received independence from the colonizers.

Also, the colonial legacy, in the field of economics consisted not only of integrating the colony into the global economy, but also the aftermath of destroying the traditional economic structures and replacing it partially with the new capitalist system. The second part of the economic legacy deals with result of the colonial management of the economy. It left behind poverty, unemployment, urbanism, a lop-sided economic development, and a large amount of foreign debt. The impact was felt more harshly in Algeria, where the French in a show of vindictiveness had burnt the administrative apparatus, buildings, records and had withdrawn its population.

The new post-independence governments did not reverse or even change the old economic, legal, educational, political setups. The logic was of retaining the setups
while diverting the profits for national development. It was assumed that since the people manning the administrative apparatus and the economy were local, their focus on development would be most beneficial to the masses. Consequently, the non-reversal to the food-cropping system, and the retention of the concept of large land holdings managed by few resulted in the country facing food shortages and becoming dependent on the external food aid. With time the dependency increased, and the excess rural population caused a growth in unemployment and urbanism.

The new governments inherited complete and unquestioned control over all resources. The new states had to deal with a small and insignificant bourgeoisie and a large unskilled, illiterate, poor population. It became the state's responsibility to invest capital and provide a welfare cover to the masses. The policy of centralization gave the state powers to regulate every aspect of society.

Though the state was not openly hostile to political religion, it retained a control over the role religion could play in governance, economics and politics. The state on a limited scale patronized religion, by allowing for the religious laws in certain fields. However the role of political religion as being the largest socio-political force cannot be underestimated. The government, with the backing of its coercive apparatus can only limit the scope of political activity and influence of its opponents. To accommodate the popular political and social demands, the newly independent states of Egypt and Algeria declared the official state religion to be Islam and incorporated some of the Islamic laws and codes into its legal system. However, the legal system that was established by the colonizers was retained. Neither was the traditional educational system restored, reformed or invested in.

The third chapter deals with the politicization of Islam or the use of religion as a political tool by political forces seeking state powers. In modern history, it has been an important force, particularly for the independence movements, to gather together people of diverse economic and social backgrounds and fight the impact of imperialism. Post-colonial political Islam is seen as the need for the opposition to continue using the tool of religion to fight what it perceived as the failure of the new regimes to deliver the promises made during the struggle for independence.

The process of politicization of Islam started not as a social movement fighting imperialism, but a tool of European imperialism. The Europeans used religion as tool to extend their control and authority over their colonies. The fight against the religion of the colony and its followers took the form of curbing the rights and the practices of the
Muslims in the colonies. The colonizers used religion to entrench their rule more firmly in the colony. It gave them a chance and an instrument to intervene in the colony as never before. This legacy of the colonial rule has been carried on in the post-colonial states. The governments have been using the tool of religion to legitimize their rule, to centralize their powers and to intervene in society on a large scale. They have been using religion to legitimize its policies, decisions and give its apparatus a sanction to govern the population. Most importantly, it is used by the governing party to gain a social sanction for its political ideology, functioning and administration.

The politicization of Islam and political Islam in the global context will have to be understood in the context of state in society framework. It will have to seen in the light of the smaller nation-states and their societies trying to either fit in the larger global world or reacting to it. It will have to be understood against the background of neocolonialism where the Third World is facing the problem of a second colonialism due to its failure in the economic fields and a developed world trying to economically subjugate them through the multi-lateral funding agencies. Political Islam will have to be understood as a response to the challenges thrown by time. The politicization of the religion has been a two-way phenomenon with the state and the larger global players on one hand, and the regional, domestic socio-political movements on the other. The task of the political religionists in the region has been to counter the ideologies and policies of both the local governments and the global colonial forces.

The wave of Islamic activism which has spread over North Africa from the 1970s has had complex causes. Stimulated by the military defeat of pan-Arabism in the 1967 war with Israel, encouraged by Saudi Arabia (catapulted to a position of enormous wealth and influence by the quadrupling of the oil price in 1973) and Sadat's de-Nasserisation and rapprochement (partly mediated by the Saudis) with the Muslim Brothers around the same time, it received further boosts from three almost simultaneous events. These were (i) the Camp David accord between Egypt and Israel finalized in 1979, which de-legitimised both the Egyptian state and Sadat personally in the eyes of Islamists as well as nationalists; (ii) the Iranian Revolution of 1978-79, which encouraged Islamists elsewhere (Sunnis as well as Shites) to believe they could gain power and prompted the Saudi authorities to promote Sunni Islamic proselytism in the West Asia, North Africa and South Asia (notably Pakistan) to counter Teheran's revolutionary Shi'ism; and (iii) the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in January 1979 and the ensuing mobilization for jihad, in which thousands of young men from across the Arab world took part alongside the Afghan resistance movements. After a lull in the mid-1980s, Islamic activism
received further boosts from the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989-1991, which prompted experiments in political pluralism in North Africa in imitation of Eastern Europe; the victory of the Afghan jihad with the withdrawal of Soviet forces in 1990; and the U.S.-led war against Iraq in 1990-1991, which sharpened hostility to Western policy in the region, provoked huge demonstrations across North Africa and upset the Islamist-regime relationship in Algeria and elsewhere.

There are two aspects to the political activism of Islam. The first is the politicisation of the religion by the state; and the other is of its politicisation by the socio-political forces. The concept of official Islam is to keep a check on the powers of the opposition by political Islam, while the role of social movements in keeping a check on the powers of the state would refer to the role of alternative Islam, or an alternative interpretation of Islam compared to the official interpretation of Islam.

Political Islam cannot be taken as one homogenous social movement covering the entire region, or even the areas where Islam is the religion of the majority of the population. The borders and boundaries of the nation-states do not allow socio-cultural-political-economic movements to travel across borders. The movements may influence each other, but their leadership and character will vary from border to border. Moreover, the priorities and actions of a state or a social movement within its border vary. Their outreach is limited and this defeats the possibility of homogeneity of political or socio-economic movements over large areas.

On the smaller domestic front, the challenge of political Islam came from the official or state Islam is the alternative Islam propagated, supported and created by the state to counter the force of political opposition coming from the direction of political religionists. It works not just by curbing the power of the clergy, restricting them to the theological and spiritual level, and not allowing them to enter the field of politics. It also works by creating and supporting an alternative interpretation of the social-political-religious norms. It works by creating an alternate clergy and a school of thought that will mould and reshape the religious norms to accommodate the political ideologies the governments want to subscribe to. The state has devised its own machinery, appointed its own clergy and theologians who would interpret the Quran according to needs of the government and assist the government in its functioning. The state is capable of co-opting as well as repressing the religio-political movement. It has the power to
manipulate the movement to its side or co-opt the ideas of the movement while suppressing the concept of political unrest.

With the failure of the government to deliver on its promise of social welfare, equality, justice and political pluralism, the religious opposition adopted new techniques to counter the official Islam. They tapped on the failure of the governance and the concept of civil society to fill in the lacunae and get support from the masses. The emphasis had shifted from the fine details of a fundamentalist state to the concepts of welfare and justice. The merging of people's welfare with religion produced a sort of secularised religion. The civil governance and the welfare activities were used only to show the flawed nature of governance by the secular regime. The Islamists did not use the charitable and other institutions as platforms for launching their political movement. On the contrary, by the early 1990s they had mobilized the support of the professional unions, which were organized, vocal, articulate, with a membership of people who belonged to a fairly well to do class and with the ability to take the government head on issues like corruption, globalisation and other modern day challenges.

The chapter dealing with the introduction to the case studies deals with the development of the state and the religio-social movement of political Islam from the time of independence till the food riots of 1988. The factors that affected the changes in the two countries included the external factors of the failure of the three Arab-Israeli wars, the Iranian revolution, the Iraq-Kuwait crisis and the domestic problems of economic and political transitions.

Apart from Israel, the massive Western military presence in the region to safeguard their economic interests international the form of oil and gas reserves. The Iranian revolution was a major setback to the Western powers, as they feared the loss of the oil reserves from the country. The Western powers have been against the nationalization of any or all the natural resources in the region. The first case was the bitter war fought with Egypt, over the nationalization of the Suez Canal. The discovery of oil and gas and the threat of loss of control over the resources has been a major factor for the Western powers supporting the trouble shooting country of Israel, keeping a large military presence in the region and finally in trying to force the countries into economic and political liberalization.

The emphasis on shifting the economy from socialist, with the obligations to provide for social welfare, to a capitalist economy was made mostly by the Western powers. With
the development of the socialist model of development, the economy needed more money for its expansion and progress. The money being credited to the economies came with the strings of liberalization in the economic and political fields. It came with the conditionality of integration into the world market system and re-structuring the economy according to the IMF and WB patterns.

Under pressure both the economies of Egypt and Algeria were forced to shift from the socialist to the capitalist system from the mid 1980s. The programmes for changes were called *infitah* in Egypt and *infinitah* in Algeria. Whatever the name of the programme, their focus was to liberalize the economy in a manner that the global economic powers were able to access the national resources and industries as investors, and had an access to the domestic markets. Since the changes in the economic structures were not extremely friendly or welcome, they had to be accompanied by a system of governance that was suppressive, powerful and with centralized power in the government. With the concentration of the coercive and administrative forces in the centre, the governments would not have been able to implement any of the changes in the economy.

However, it must be remembered that even under the most powerful and dominating regimes, the religio-political movements have played a complimentary and a supplementary role in the government. Even though the control of the government in the functioning of the al-Azhar and the Muslim Brotherhood grew at an unprecedented pace, the organizations were also able to get their own mileage out of the increased state control over the institutions. For getting the *fatwas* and sanctions from the al-Azhar, the government had to pay a heavy price. This was most visible in the amount of funds the institution received from the state over a period of time. From the 1960s the al-Azhar gained state resources and funding for many of its diverse projects. The increased resources helped it to expand its activities and its area of influence.

The fourth chapter is the first case study of the development of the state and political Islam in Egypt. It deals with the contestation of legitimacy of the government in Egypt that led to a violent confrontation between the state and the political Islamists, it is an example of how the state increased its powers at the expense of the social movements and the latter, though suppressed was able to retain its identity as the only legitimate and largest opposition group in the country. The contestation for legitimacy in Egypt peaked from the end of the 1970s to the mid-1990s. State-society interfaces during this period had started taking an exceptionally violent and confrontationist character. The economy and polity from 1988-1995 belong to the presidency of Hosni Mubarak.
hallmark of his rule has been the legitimization of the government through the process of elections, and the centralization of power and authority as a result of the electoral process. The political system has been marked with the most efficiently rigged elections and a system of manipulation that eliminates all opposition. The Islamic movements were the only opposition who could question the legitimacy of the regime. They were able to effectively represent a dissenting voice, a voice of disagreement and had the strength to question the credentials of the government.

The case of Egypt is important to understand the impact of social movement in the running of the state. The strength of the social movements and the manner in which they impact and affect the functioning of the government, show the ability of the social actors to control the state. The manner in which the larger political, economic and social developments affected the Islamists movement and changed the relations between the government and the socio-political movements is most prominent in Egypt. The government was able to strengthen its coercive powers, yet at the same time it was forced to strike a balance with the social movements by accepting the changes suggested by the political Islamists. After the international pressure of Islamic terrorism gained momentum, the government was free to use its coercive powers to suppress and control any individual or party or organization that opposed it, yet at the same time it was forced to accept changes advocated by the Islamists to retain their hold on the socio-political movements. The increase in funding and autonomy of the al-Azhar in exchange for the socio-political stability was an important development in the state-society interface.

The significance of the political developments in the period lies in two very different spheres: the first being the changing state-society relations due to the changes in the economic, social and political developments within the country; and the second in the manner in which the international political developments affected the socio-economic developments within the country.

The state-society relations within the country were very strongly affected by the changing economic patterns of the domestic economy. The economic changes in Egypt typify the problems of the changes faced by the changing economic patterns of the rest of the Third World, where the government in power defined the economic character of the state. The transition of the economy gave the government more powers rather than limit it. The government variously became the largest capitalist investor in the economy, or the only authority with powers to control the fate of the economic resources of the country. The government had the unquestioned power to decide how the economy
should earn an income, how the income should be utilized and how the economy should be moulded in the larger global economic structures.

On its part, the socio-political movements, or the Islamist movements changed their interpretation of history, politics and economics to survive and sustain their momentum. The political tactics involved the careful usage of the political space allowed by the government, electoral alliances with other opposition parties and a careful usage of religion as a paradigm to interpret the political developments. The Muslim Brotherhood was extremely careful in opposing the government during the 1991 gulf war. It changed its stand from opposing the occupation of Kuwait by Iraq to opposing the US intervention in the issue. It supported the government in its efforts to seek an Arab solution to the problem, but opposed the government's non-opposition to the US moves. Both the Muslim Brotherhood and the al-Azhar avoided an open confrontation with the government, as they were aware of the coercive powers of the latter.

The role of the social service networks of the Muslim Brotherhood was an important part of the state-society interface. It worked on the hypothesis of the state-society relations being complimentary and supplementary to each other. On the one hand it blunted the harshness of the impact of the economic policies and curbed the masses from revolting or rising against the system, on the other it represented the failure of the regime in power to fulfill its role as being a social welfare provider to the masses. In its failure to provide social welfare, the state had failed both as a socialist state and also as a state which was adhering to the principles of Islam.

The system however blunts the reaction of the masses to a harsh economic decision of the government. If the masses did not have a buffer leadership that would not allow it to react very strongly, or allow for a civil unrest, the legitimacy of the regime would not only have been questioned but also the possibility of an overthrow of the government was very strong. The Muslim Brotherhood, by acting as buffer negotiators between the government and the masses was able to circumvent difficult situations. The government, till the earthquake of 1992, did not stop the welfare activity of the Brotherhood. Till then it was filling up the lacunae of the economic deficiencies of the government. At the time of the earthquake, however, the government realized that the efficiency of the parallel welfare system was likely to question their credibility and legitimacy, and hence they ensured that in another natural disaster, the relief would be supplied only through the government machinery, and spruced up the machinery to ensure that it was more efficient then earlier.
The question of democracy raises the question of legitimacy of the existing regime to stay in power. The rigging of elections has been very effectively used by the ruling NDP in the national and presidential level. The history of the democratic process is full of the amendments made at the level of local elections, trade union elections and at various levels to ensure the exclusion of the Muslim Brotherhood or any other party that could pose a threat to the existing regime.

The elections at various levels and the electoral conflicts reflect the conflict between the various sections of society that were trying to stake a claim or attempt to control the various state resources for their own benefit. Whether it was the urban middle class, or the peasantry or the military regimes or the landed elite, the attempt to transfer power to their own section has dominated the democratic process in the country. This is particularly true in Egypt where the disparities in incomes have been stark.

In the electoral process, the importance of the ruling regime and government being from the same political party was reflected in the fact that the government was able to ban the largest political opposition of the country, the Muslim Brotherhood. This is important, as in the attempt to control the opposition from the religious quarters, the al-Azhar had been taken over and was under the total control of the government. Their ability to become a political force had been nullified. The only religio-political opposition that the NDP could face would have come from the Brotherhood, the organization that was organized as a political party and could question the legitimacy of the ruling party. The constant friction between the government and the Islamists, and the failure of the latter to succeed was responsible for the rise of radicalism in political activism. The period of the early to the middle-1990s was characterized by the rise in violence and the constant confrontation between the government and the Islamists. The rise in terrorism and the counter terrorist measures, all took a toll of nearly 60,000 people from the years 1988 to 1995.

It took the government of Mubarak an unprecedented amount of violence, the aid of the Western military intelligence and finance and a lot of political manipulation to retain its hold on the state system. To counter the political strength of the Muslim Brotherhood in this new situation, the government resorted to a violent crackdown on the leadership of the Brotherhood. The second step was to strike at the funding sources and expenditures of the organization. With the ability of the state to legislate and formulate new laws, policies, taxes and other forms of control the government was able to curb the strength of the activities of the Brotherhood. The government legislated, regulated and took charge of all the funds that were at the disposal of the Brotherhood. The
government also decided the manner of its utility and set regulations on the nature of the organizations run by the Brotherhood.

The period, from 1988 to 1995, was marked by a series of measures and counter measures that represented as tension in the relations between the state and the social movements. The government tried the legal and the confrontationist methods to suppress the Islamists, while the latter also looked for loopholes in the system to weaken the strength of the ruling party from within. For example, the takeover of the professional syndicates and the trade unions, by the representatives of the Brotherhood. One of the methods of government retaining control over the administration and the governing powers of the state have been the constant state of emergency in the country. The emergency laws have been in force since the time of the country’s independence. As a result the situation in the country has been termed as normalization under emergency.

An important aspect of the 1993 re-election of President Mubarak, was the involvement of the armed forces in the democratic processes. As soon as he was elected, Mubarak promoted the Minister of Defence, Gen. Muhammad Hussain Tantawi, to the rank of Field Marshal, and other senior defense officers were also promoted. Some observers saw this as a move to placate the army, the ultimate power behind the regime, after Mubarak’s refusal to appoint a Vice-President, a post the military had traditionally regarded as its own. Others argued that Mubarak had drawn closer to the armed forces as the security situation had deteriorated as a result of the Islamist violence. The episode marked the political activism of the armed forces. The Field Marshall, had said in an interview, that the armed forces was the last line of defence against the Islamist attempt to change the government and if needed, the army would not hesitate to step in to maintain internal security. The army had decided to help the Ministry of Interior in combating the Islamist threat.

The newly elected President, once assured of his position, announced that the national priorities under his third term would be security and stability, economic reform, social justice, combating unemployment, overpopulation, reforms in education and improving administrative services. Political reforms however, were not on the agenda. What was important was the focus of the threat of the radical Islamists to the national economy, prestige and social-economic-political structures. The war against the Islamists was carried out in the media and in the administrative terms of repression. The government
was able to portray the political Islamic organizations as aberrations in normal socio-political developments.

The failure to allow for a political vent for the disgruntled masses, or even contemplate on the idea of a political change led to the unprecedented violence in the country. The Islamists termed it as a reaction to the political suppression of their movement, while the government termed it as terrorism by the radical Islamic movements. The violence rocked the country for nearly a decade from the mid-1980s. The targets of attack varied from intellectuals to tourists to students to suspected Islamists or suspected government agents.

The fallout of the political developments till the 1993 elections amounted firstly, to the weakening of the Brotherhood from the political process. The legislations and policies curbing the influence of the Brotherhood in the professional syndicates, struck at the heart of the mission to acquire a base by the political Islamists. Alongside came the curbing of the social service networks of the Brotherhood. The legislation controlling the funding and the works of the social welfare activities were an important part of the government's efforts to curb the political Islamic opposition.

The government's moves are an important example of the state trying to assert itself as the most important player in society. It is an example of the state-in-society interface where the state uses its entire apparatus to decide the nature of the social movement. It used its government machinery to gain a political and economic legitimacy, and then intervening in the functioning of the social movements by deciding the limits of their powers and functions. By framing laws for elections in syndicates, checking the functioning of the social service organizations and curbing the political outreach of the Islamic organizations the government had intervened in areas that had not seen any official action earlier.

When the time came for negotiating peace with the Islamist forces, the government was unable to give concessions to the opposition. The recommendations, however, were seen as an eyewash. They were given to the president, who was under no compulsion or obligation to implement them. The exercise was only to divert the populism of the Islamists and once the Ministry of Interior had declared in 1994 that the Islamist threat was under control, there was no need for the suggestions and the recommendations to be implemented. Most importantly, the non-participation of the major political parties, the Muslim Brotherhood and others meant that the government was concerned about a genuine dialogue, but only a show of political liberalization. The
government had total control and command over all the changes that were to be made. They decided the content of the agenda and backed it with the powers of the state machinery to execute it in the manner it deemed correct. The national dialogue is a prominent example of the manner in which the state can intervene in social developments and decide the character of the equations between the state and the social movements within it.

Partly as a survival technique and partly within the framework of the social movements conforming to state norms, the al-Azhar and the Muslim Brotherhood were able to blunt their stands vis-à-vis that of the government. For example the al-Azhar could condemn the radical Islamic groups by declaring that violence and the killing of innocent people in the name of a religious warfare was un-Islamic. But at the same time it could point out that it was not condemning the Muslim Brotherhood as they had condemned the violence themselves. Later they had subtly started showing open sympathies for the extremists. For example, in October 1994, Shykh Jad al-Haq outlined the reasons behind the rise of the Islamist movements, explaining how they emerged in reaction to the mishandling of religious matters by the state. He subtly criticized the excessive control by groups within the state over the functioning of the al-Azhar. He argued that militants had emerged as a reaction to the attacks on religion by intellectuals and the media, and because of the social effects of changing economic conditions and the mishandling of religion by state authorities. The emphasis was on giving al-Azhar more autonomy and more say in key areas of social policy for its' word to be more effective.

The relations between the state and the social movements though tenuous were also mutually empowering. All the forces involved realized the need to strike a balance between each and with the world at large. The Brotherhood and the al-Azhar have been aware of the kind of hostility the country might face if revolution of the Iranian variety took place in Egypt. They have also been aware of the fact that it is easier for them to influence the government rather than try and run it. A religious state in Egypt would not find it easy to survive in the hostile international environment. They have struck a balance by being the largest political, economic and social lobby in the country and by condemning the radicals, they have gained a kind of international recognition as being reformist and progressive.

The government and the ruling party, on its part has been aware of the need to strike a balance between the international secular image and the national image of being an Islamic state to acquire a semblance of political legitimacy. The rigged elections, the use
of coercive arm of the state all showed the delicate situation of the ruling regime. This was particularly true in the case of the 1991 gulf crisis where if the Islamist parties or the New Wafd had managed to withdraw support to the government, the country would have had to face a civil strife. Thus the relations between the Brotherhood and the ruling party were never cordial, but they worked in a manner that ensured that the country did not have to face a civil or religious unrest and the relations between the two forces, though uneasy remained stable.

The sixth chapter deals with the case of Algeria from the period 1988 to 1995. Political Islam in Algeria was not the product of rationally, deliberately organized school of theology as in Egypt. Here it was the small time ulama, preaching from small mosques who garnered support for the nationalist independence movement. From the time of independence to the economic-social discontent of the 1980s, riots and the subsequent political pluralism in the country, Islam as a political force to be reckoned with did not exist. What set the Algerian Islamism apart from the rest of the official Islamisms was the fact that the political party in power appointed the new clergy from its own ranks and with an indoctrination of its own ideology. The new recruits of the state sponsored clergy were drawn from within the ranks of the FLN. Thus, later when the FIS was formally formed, its leaders proclaimed that they were the lawful and true heirs of the revolution and of the original legacy of the FLN. The state in Algeria was a much more centralized and coercive state than that of Egypt. Since it did not have an organized political opposition to grow with, the ruling regime comprising of the FLN and the military leadership was more adept at political manipulation, had a much more resources at its disposal. Not only were they able to govern the country without a constitution, they were also able to manipulate the kind of political combinations that would be allowed in the country. These included changing the kind of political pluralism the country was to have, the kind of elections to be contested, whether a party that contested today was illegal tomorrow, and the manner in which the masses were supposed to vote. The manipulation of the Islamist movement was not the last of the manipulations. By manipulating the Islamist movement, and by sifting the FLN, the state was re-asserting itself as the most important player in the socio-political arena. Not only was Madani pushed to the extent that he and the rest of the FIS members re-turned to a confrontationist position vis-à-vis the state, but the FLN was also manipulated into loosing and making the task of sifting members and leaders simpler. At the end of the
counting of the election results of the 1990 elections, the FLN too had been transformed as to ensure that the pace of economic changes were not too radical, the character of the state was asserted as secular, and the Islamists were disparaged as a threat to the country and the army and the FLN re-asserted their position as the most competent political forces, who had the potential to be in charge of ruling the country. The systematic discrediting of the FIS and the Islamist movements had been launched with a vehemence, to the extent that in the case of any future elections, even if the FLN did not get the popular votes, the FIS would also not get a straight majority. It was due to the sudden opportunity that the political opposition of Algeria got in the riots of 1988, that the alternative political ideology received a face. The flaw in the setup was visible when the party suddenly started winning in the national elections in 1991. As a party that got the majority of the seats in the first round of national elections, the FIS was suddenly faced with the task of having to present a coherent alternative to the existing ideology. Except for the fact that religion was a common bonding factor all that the leaders knew was that they wanted an Islamic state that would provide the people with a clean, just and honest administration. They did not have any proper economic, political, diplomatic or even administrative alternative to the existing system. It is for this reason that the political Islamism of Algeria has been referred to as a movement seeking a peaceful transfer of power. As the FIS was not a homogenous body, it did not have either an established political ideology or a well-formulated foreign policy. Since the FIS was the first and the most influential Islamic party to be established in Algeria, its foreign policy and ideologies are of utmost importance in dealing with any form of political Islamic movement in the country. And since a large part of the activities of the FIS involved survival, the amount of space in their literature given to economics and foreign policy is very limited. The other aspect of the FIS's foreign policy lies in the fact that their world view and attitudes regarding international issues were associated with, not how they would affect the Muslim world in general but on how it would affect the Arab Maghreb conditions in particular. The foreign policy agenda of the FIS was different from the Islamists of the other countries. Their focus was much more local and more focused on domestic issues. Their international priorities were limited to the Maghrebi politics and issues affecting the local regional development.

The striking feature of the state-society interface in Algeria, is the result of the strengthening of the state powers in the country. It is typical case of a state-in-society.
The state with its infrastructure of administration, military and economic powers, has been able to make major inroads in the social structure and composition in Algeria. The only time when the social movements could have challenged the existing state structure, it was crushed with an intensity that did not allow it to be a potent force ever again. The changes in the constitution and the manipulation of the political process ensured that the contester of legitimacy of the ruling regime was declared an illegitimate force on its own.

By incorporating the major demands of the Islamists in their agenda and by declaring Islam as the official religion, the state had already taken the leadership of the social movements. By allowing for political pluralism and allowing the Islamists to convert their social movement into a political one, the state had ensured that political Islam as a political force would never succeed in Algeria. The Islamists in Algeria were more social workers, lay clerics and a diffused movement that was working towards the creation of an Islamic society. By allowing them to enter into the political arena, Ben Jadid was giving them an opportunity to realize their utopia of establishing an Islamic state from the top. All opposition to the state-sponsored religion was allowed to come in the open.

The failure in Algeria was not just of political Islam, but of the process of political pluralism and democracy. After nearly thirty years of single-party rule, the concept of power sharing with other political parties could not be accepted to the ruling regime. The time given to the entire experiment of democracy did not exceed two years. All political opposition, of any ideological colour and hues, was expected to have the ability to counter the establishment of the FLN. Even if the opposition was able to garner the electoral support base and contest in elections, they did not have the means to stop the alteration of the constitution or check the electoral fraud, the rigging or simply the power to impact the legislative process of the country. The reversal of the electoral results proved the point that the entire system of political pluralism was an experiment by the ruling regime to strengthen its own powers.

In the case of both Egypt and Algeria:

The importance of the period lies in the transition economy. Under pressure from the international funders, the economic transition had been put into motion by the government. However it failed to solve all the problems of the economy, and the partial development greatly increased the economic disparities between the rich and the poor, making a clash of the economic classes inevitable. Though the economic liberalization
was an effective measure by the government to recover its losses and run its economy more efficiently, it failed to reach the masses. The fall in the human development index is an indicator of the failure of the structural adjustment programmes as an economic policy involving the country at large. It may improve the government budgets, help it in bringing down the external debt, but it does not work in the field of welfare of the masses.

The economic ills plaguing the countries were the same: illiteracy, poverty, urbanism, excess foreign debt, stagnant industrialization, corruption in the bureaucratic setup and the lack of an efficient administrative system. One analyst explains the phenomena of corruption, nepotism, mismanagement and bad governance as part of the concept of neoliberalism. The mechanism of neo-liberalism ensures a free play for the more dominant market forces. It encourages open competition, ownership of wealth as a personal profit, and the growth of individual wealth as a dream that can be achieved. On more practical terms, it talks of budget deficits getting reduced and the economic activity bringing in more money to the economy, which would mean more resources for the state to use for the welfare of its people. The reality is very different. The impact of the unlimited and uncontrolled urban boom, which is extremely beneficial to a few but to the vast masses would appear to be an extravagant display of wealth which could have been put to better use. The ways in which globalization has eroded national sovereignty, so that crucial policy areas are no longer the subject of domestic political decisions, has been a much greater constraint on democratic reform than is generally recognized.

The process of democracy in the region was more a result of acquiescence to the demand of the international funding agencies for political liberalization. The agencies and the Western powers have been more interested in the appearance of the democratic process, rather than in the validity of the system being established. In both Egypt and Algeria, the voter turnout has been extremely low, the election process has been rigged very blatantly in favour of the ruling regime and any opposition to the process was suppressed with the most ham-handed manner. The suppression of opposition has been recorded by the human rights agencies as the most violative of the human rights norms, yet the Western political and economic powers do not intervene and comment on the process. They are satisfied as long as the regime supports the economic system of capitalism and the policies of liberalism. The monstrosity of Islamic terrorism indirectly legitimizes the actions of the Western powers when they support the
unpopular regimes, the low voter turnout at elections and the suppression of the opposition by the regimes.

It was with the approval of the larger global polity that the Egyptian and the Algerian states were able to rig the elections and change the socio-political equations within the country. The manner in which the regimes projected themselves as secular, competent and the best alternative to the Islamic opposition was an extremely successful exercise to garner support and assistance in the economic, political and military fields. While dealing with the international factors, it must be remembered that whatever the process of political liberalization, however rigged or tampered the process, the government got its legitimacy not from a domestic recognition or approval, but from the international approval. The external support to the government has been a key factor in helping the ruling regime retain its legitimacy. The covert and overt support to the governments, whether by allowing the use of military forces, intelligence and equipment, or by actively giving them financial aid, was responsible for the establishment of the junta rule in the two countries.

The most important actor in the political, economic and social field that will have to be considered is the military. The military forms the backbone of the entire state setup in both the countries. It is the largest consumer of the national income, is the largest or the second largest industrial project, and the most important political force in the country. The head of the state, in both cases has either been an ex-military member or has had the support of the military-junta. Together with the largest party that received independence from the colonizers, the military has been able to form a ruling junta that has decided on the political, economic and social ideologies that would be prevalent in the country. From being secular, socialists to being the champions of liberalizations and anti-fundamentalists all decisions of the government have had the backing of the military. It was the coercive powers of the military, which was responsible for curbing the food riots, and the civil strife after the reversal of the democratic process in the country.

The second important point about the military in the period under consideration is the fact that the largest amount of defence personnel and military resources were consumed in the domestic sector. They were not used so much to safeguard the borders of the country, or wage larger battles in the region, but to control the opposition from within the country. The amount of money used for this purpose made the governments take separate loans for defence purposes. A large chunk of the external debts that the countries were struggling to repay, and which it had to
implement the structural adjustment programmes was the loans taken to upgrade the
ammed forces and the military technology.

The other feature of the case studies was the manner in which the political
developments of Algeria and Egypt impacted each other. The Egyptian suppression of
the political liberalization grew and the banning of the Brotherhood from the political
arena took place soon after the Algerian elections of 1991. The government was scared
of the Brotherhood winning the elections and demanding a peaceful transfer of power.
In the win of the FIS the Brotherhood had found an unprecedented political tool of
legally gaining power. The FIS on the other hand had learnt from the Brotherhood the
political techniques of organizing a socio-political movement into a full political
movement. They adopted the same techniques of Brotherhood of recruiting party
workers, providing social services and strengthening their propaganda techniques.
The usage of the modern advocacy tools also reflects the flexibility of the otherwise
conservative belief system. It shows the ability of the Islamists to adjust to the
technological advances of the day. The Islamists have used the new age technology of
the internet and the new systems of communication to canvass support for their cause
to not only the upper echelons of their own society, but also from the rest of the world.
The successful usage of the new age technology dispels the beliefs that the Islamists
are a retrogressive force that would take the country and its social culture to a primitive
era. On the other hand, the turf for warfare between the government and the Islamists
has increased to a very large extent. If the government curbs the freedom of the press
within the country, the organization can not only continue to function, but also discredit
the moves of the government from other parts of the world.

What is important in studying the state-society relations is the manner in which the
social movements reacted to each other and the manner in which the state reacted to
the movements. The constant tussle between the religious and the government forces
is symptomatic of the struggle between the social movements and the ruling regimes
trying to overpower and control each other. The relations between the government and
the society were affected by the economic conditions and shifts in the economic
priorities of the former. Externally they were affected by the larger economic and
political changes taking place in the region. The large amount of socio-political and
economic changes in the region led to a change in equations between the state forces
and the social movements. The changes also affected the manner in which the socio-political movements reacted to each other and to the state.

With the suppression of democracy in Egypt, the power to check the government no longer came from the Brotherhood which was undergoing a survival crisis at the time. It came from the official al-Azhar that gained in strength at the expense of the weak government position. It gained more autonomy with the growing dependence of the government on it for a legitimacy. The most effective check on the powers of the government and the nature of the religio-political movements came from the radical Islamists who rose not from the margins of society most affected by the economic and political changes that the government was implementing.

In Algeria too, the radicals took over from the FIS after the rescinding of the electoral process. The FIS was exiled, but the local Islamists faced the repression of the government forces everyday. They organized one of the most violent backlashes to the government in the recent times. For nearly eight years, from 1988-1996, the history of Algeria has been a repeat of the violence that the country faced in their movements for independence.

Though both the Muslim Brotherhood and the FIS were accused of harbouring the radicals, and were banned or outcasted as terrorists, they have worked very hard to disassociate themselves from the later, and work towards negotiating a peace settlement between the government and the radicals. In both the countries, the relations between the three groups is extremely delicately balanced. The radicals are representative of the illegitimacy of the regime in power and the record human rights violations the government commits in its attempts to retain power. The moderates, while trying to strike a balance between the government and the radicals, are also working towards the idea of a peaceful transfer of power from the regime to them. They are trying to incorporate the changes and dynamism of the modern world in their ideology by reassuring the Western powers that they are not opposed to democracy or economic liberalism, at the same time they are trying to represent the grievances of the radicals. The government, on its part has been using the policy of partial-co-option and partial suppression to deal with the situation. As and when possible, it incorporates the changes suggested by the Islamists, but are opposed to the idea of them being part of a political part and an organized group that can take over power from them.

The period from 1988 to 1995 has been marked by a rise of violence and counter-violence in the two countries. One is the notion that posits a simple chain of cause and effect: absence of political reform generates Islamism which in turn generates
terrorism. This simplistic analysis ignores the considerable diversity within contemporary Islamic activism, the greater part of which has been consistently non-violent. It also overlooks the fact that the rise of Islamist movements in North Africa has not been predicated on the absence of reform, but has generally occurred in conjunction with ambitious government reform projects. The expansion of Islamic political activism in Egypt occurred in the context of President Sadat's audacious economic and political opening -- infitah -- in the 1970s; the spectacular rise of the Islamic Salvation Front (Front Islamique du Salut, FIS) in Algeria in 1989-1991 occurred in the context of the government's liberalization of the political system and its pursuit of radical economic reform.

The problem of Islamism has not been its doctrinal outlook -- this has been varied and variable -- so much as the difficulty the Egyptian, Algerian and Moroccan states have had in accommodating the more dynamic forms of non-violent activism and, in particular, their inability to integrate a major Islamic movement into the formal political system. Egypt has refused to legalize the Muslim Brothers. Algeria, having legalized the FIS and allowed it to contest and win two elections, then decided it could not cope with the consequences and took the fateful decision to dissolve the party.

In both the countries, the dialogue between the government and the Islamists failed on account of lack of political will of the government. In Egypt, the negotiations on 1994 resulted in failure, as they were a series of recommendations to the president to be implemented if he found them suitable. The arbitrariness of the president failed to see any of the recommendations implemented. The national dialogue is an example of the manner in which the state can intervene in social developments and decide the character of the equations between the state and the social movements within it. In Algeria, the failure of the Rome Platform is a classic example of how the government was determined to exclude any opposition in the political field. The Algerian government tampered its political constitution to the extent that after the Rome meeting, the FLN was re-incorporated in the political system, a new party that would represent the ruling junta (the RND) was floated, and the FIS was still excluded from any form of re-entry into the country.