The Role of Islam for National Liberation Movements: A Comparison of Algeria and Morocco

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Abstract. This paper compares the national liberation movements in Morocco and Algeria, including the phase of anti-colonial struggle and modernization. In contrast to structural determinism, this paper emphasizes subjective agency and explains the process of national liberation movements in Morocco and Algeria by sociological concepts including nationalism, symbols, and discourse. Morocco and Algeria are very different in the way they utilized and dealt with Islam, but they eventually came to similar results - a good balance between Islam and secular politics, preserving the fruits of liberation movements, and achieving modernization with national characteristics. Through comparison, this paper will summarize the different institutions by which Islam operated in the national liberation movements, reveal the laws of interaction between religion and secular politics, and provide a new perspective for interpreting the history of national liberation in Algeria and Morocco.

Keywords: Islam, nationalism, symbol, secularization

1   Introduction

The "national liberation movements", in the context of the article, refers to two phases: the anti-colonial struggle and modernization. Michael Walzer points out that "the nation has to be liberated not only from external oppressors—in a way, that's the easy part—but also from the internal effects of external oppression"[1].

In the 1950s and 1960s, Morocco and Algeria gained independence. The similarities and differences between the national liberation movements of the two countries are listed in Table 1:

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[1]   Michael Walzer, *The Paradox of Liberation: Secular Revolutions and Religious Counterrevolutions* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2015), 1.

Table 1. The comparison of the national liberation movements in Algeria and Morroco (made by the author)

	Similarities	Differences		
		Political system	The characters of major parties	The path to liberation
Algeria	1.ethnic composition of Arabs and Berbers; 2.once colonized by France;	Presidential Republic; Military government	1.FLN: Left→Authoritarian 2.FIS: Illegal, Islamic 3.FFS: Left→Democratic	Led by a left-wing authoritarian party
Morroco	3.successful anti-colonial struggle and late independence; 4.certain achievements in modernization; 5.Islam but currently relatively secularized	Constitutional Mornachy	1.IP: Arabism→Left 2.Royalist Party 3.Islamic parties	Led by an Arabist party and the royal family

There is a lack of comparative studies of national liberation movements in the two nations in the current scholarship. Existing narratives of the national liberation movements in the two countries often employ a colonialist narrative framework (as seen in Marcel Peyrouton's *A General History of Maghreb*), a Marxist-Leninist revolution, or a materialist narrative framework (commonly seen in China), or simply do not employ any. Without an unbiased narrative framework, the subjectivity of Algerians and Moroccans would be neglected when interpreting their history. Therefore, the paper sets a new framework based on the Marxist narrative framework, but rejects vulgar materialism and structural determinism, since the object of study is religion. It cites political and sociological theories from scholars like Bourdieu, Victoria Hui, and Max Weber to improve explanatory power.

2   A Review of the History

2.1   Algeria

Algeria had been reduced to a French "overseas department" since 1830. Before the rise of nationalism in the 1920s, Moroccans had launched several large-scale protests against the French colonizers, mainly for the same civil rights as the French, not for national independence. Such assimilation-oriented resistance continued until after the October Revolution (1917). Inspired by the success of the Socialist revolution, Mesali Hadj founded the North African Star (ENA) in France in 1926, initially intending to achieve Algerian national independence. In fact, before WWII, the explicit demand for "independence" was not mainstream. Instead, the main demand of Algerians was still "racial equality".

Algeria made outstanding contributions on the anti-fascist battlefield during WWII. Though Charles de Gaulle, the leader of Free France, had promised Algerians independence after the war, the French colonial authorities committed the inhumane "Setif Massacre" and shot peaceful demonstrators who were celebrating the victory of the war

and demanding independence. This incident convinced Algerian nationalists that national independence could only be achieved by their endeavor, not by the handouts of colonialists[2].

There were three main forces in the Algerian anti-colonial struggle. The first was the National Liberation Front (FLN) led by Ben Bella etc., which was guided by Socialist ideas and focused on the interests of the non-elite class. The second was the Democratic Union of the Algerian Manifesto (UDMA) led by Ferhat Abbas etc., whose political demands transformed from "assimilation" to "independence". The third was the Association of Algerian Muslim Ulama (AOMA) led by Ben Badis etc., which aimed to rejuvenate Algeria's Islamic identity and find a historical basis for Algeria's independence[3]. Since the FLN was supported by the latter two forces ultimately, it had the broadest mass base. As a leading force, it led the armed peasant uprisings and expanded from the countryside to the whole of Algeria.

Before the declaration of independence, the FLN was already entangled in serious internal strife, mainly because of the diversified constituents of both Arabs and Berbers, both supporters of Socialism and Islam, and both advocates and opponents of maintaining a military government. However, thanks to the presence of a common external enemy, France, the FLN managed to unite itself and mobilize the nation during the anti-colonial struggle.

Right after its independence in July 1962, the FLN suffered intense infighting and failed to develop an expected multiparty republican political system and a Socialist economy. In the late 1980s, the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) and the Socialist Forces Front (FFS), major opposition parties to the FLN, emerged. The FIS is an Islamist party that criticized the FLN for being too corrupt and secularized and advocated a pure Islamic state, whose main supporters included the unemployed, males, and Islamists. The FFS is mainly Berber and advocates democratic reforms.[4]

From 1992 to 1999, the Algerian civil war broke out as a result of the rivalry between the FLN and the FIS. The FIS declined after years of struggle and international counter-terrorism efforts.

Since 2000, President Bouteflika has carried out a series of successful political, economical, and social reforms, while continuing to combat extremist Islamists. With its rich oil and gas resources, Algeria ranks among the highest levels of development in Africa.

2.2   Morocco

France and Morocco signed the Treaty of Fez in 1912 and Morocco became a French protectorate state. Thereafter, France introduced the modern French education system

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[2] Huijie Zhao, "The Algerian War of National Liberation", *West Asia and Africa*, no. 6 (1986): 48.

[3] Hui Huang, ed., *Guide to the World States: Algeria* (Beijing: Social Sciences Academy Press, 2013), 64-65.

[4] Ibid., 96-97.

and legal system into Morocco, controlled the Moroccan administration[5], and directly manipulated the Moroccan Sultans as puppets.

Since 1912, Moroccans have revolted against the French colonizers and the puppet Sultan. The struggle for independence first broke out in the capital city of Fez, then among the Berbers in the Spanish-ruled areas, and finally spread to the whole country, with the Istiqlal Party (IP) and Sultan Mohammed V as the leading forces. After WWII, Morocco took advantage of the window of the world national liberation movements to revolt against France in terms of domestic and foreign affairs and finally declared independence on November 18, 1956. After independence, Morocco adopted a constitutional monarchy.

In 1957, Sultan Mohammed V was re-titled as king and reigned until he died in 1961 when Hassan II succeeded him.

During his reign from 1961 to 1999, Hassan II devoted himself to the modernization of Morocco and achieved outstanding results in various aspects such as economy, politics, religion, and education.

3   The Role of Islam in the Anti-Colonial Struggle

Islam contributes to the formation of national consciousness and nationalism. Benedict Anderson points out that nationalism, following religion, serves the function of transforming "contingency into meaning"[6]. First, a boundary is demarcated between Islam and French and Western culture. Geertz writes, "the only thing the colonial elite was not and ... could not become was Muslim."[7] Subsequently, Islam blends into the posterior nationalism in various ways, sustaining the imagination of the "community" as a symbol.

Islam was characterized by variability during the anti-colonial struggle in both countries. Variability here means the degree of the presence of Islam can be temporarily adjusted, depending on the colonial policies and the internal affairs.

3.1   Algeria: Low degree of presence

Having been colonized by France for more than a century, Algeria had very poor preconditions for the formation of nationalism. For example, the "Association of Native Parliamentarians", the predecessor of the UDMA, was formed by a group of Algerian elites who initially did not even demand independence. They had an Islamic and a French education and some even served in the colonial government. However, as evidenced by their initial political demands - "increase the proportion of Muslims in the

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5   Nan Li, "A Study on Moroccan History", (PhD. diss., Shanghai International Studies University, 2012), 52-54.

6   Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London & New York: Verso, 2006), 11.

7   Clifford Geertz, *Islam Observed: Religious Development in Morocco and Indonesia* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), 64.

native parliament[8]", they at least identified themselves as Algerian Muslims, not pure Frenchmen. Thus, the identity of "Muslims" and Islam was the root of Algerian national consciousness. By the time, the Algerian friend-and-foe perception was "French Muslims vs. French".

However, the FLN isn't an Islamist party but a left-wing party guided by Socialism. Throughout the anti-colonial struggle, Islam was only brought out by the FLN to mobilize and unite the UDMA and conservative Muslims. The FLN changed 3 times over what kind of Algeria to build. In 1954, the FLN called for an "Algerian state ... within the framework of the principles of Islam" in their manifesto over Cairo radio[9]. In 1956, in the Soummam Platform written by Berber leaders within the FLN, there was even no reference to Islamic principles. It even mentioned, "not the restoration of monarchy or of a theocracy". In 1957, the FLN compromised and called for "a democratic and social Algerian republic, which is not in contradiction with the principles of Islam". The leaders of the FLN were ardent advocates of Socialism and Marxism, so naturally, theocracy wasn't popular with them.

The leftist revolutionary theories prevailed in the anti-colonial struggle because of the class contradictions between Algerians and French settlers and colonizers. The direct suffering from poverty and discrimination blurred the class within Algerians and precisely divided it from that of the French, which happened to overlap with the distinction of nationality instead of religion - facing the most immediate existential crisis, ideological differences can be put aside. Consequently, leftist revolutionary ideas completely overshadowed religion in anti-colonial-phase nationalism. The Algerian friend-and-foe perception was "Algerian vs. French", which was the most favorable condition symbolizing the formation of a national community.

In summary, Islam was only scattered in the national consciousness in the 1920s and 1930s during the 132-year anti-colonial struggle. During the decisive and fierce eight-year anti-colonial struggle (1954-1962), Islam had a low degree of presence and was even forgotten for a time by the "new Algerians" who had fought for independence.

3.2   Morocco: High degree of presence

The French had penetrated more deeply into the Moroccan administration and could directly appoint and dismiss the Sultan, so many uprisings after 1912 were directed against not only the French colonizers but also the puppet Sultan. At this time, their friend-and-foe perception was "foreign colonizers and domestic puppet regime vs. the ruled people".

But the formation of Moroccan nationalism was "interrupted" by WWI. After the outbreak of WWI, during the reign of French General Lyautey and Sultan Moulay Youssef, Morocco and France maintained a calm, stable, and even "sweet" relationship of protection. General Lyautey introduced a series of reforms to Moroccan society, which, although essentially appeasement and assimilation by the colonizers, improved

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8   Hui Huang, *Guide to the World States: Algeria*, 63.
9   Michael Walzer, *The Paradox of Liberation: Secular Revolutions and Religious Counterrevolutions*, 10.

the lives of Moroccans to some extent. Such a relationship broke down again in 1921 when Abd el-Krim in the Spanish dominion defeated the Spanish colonists and attempted to establish the Republic of the Rif based on the Berber political system, different from the Arab Sharif Empire. The Republic struggled for independence for seven years before it was finally defeated. The Berber-led war of independence failed to mobilize the entire nation due to a conflict over religion between the Arabs and the Berbers.

After the defeat of the Berbers, the French colonial authorities, to continue their policy of appeasement and assimilation of Morocco, issued the Berber Decree in 1930, which implied non-interference in the Berbers' local partitionism[10] and the integration of the Berbers into the French judicial system[11]. However, this offended the Arabs who wanted to unify Morocco by the Islamic system, and they believed that France was dividing the two nations and affecting the unity of the Sharif Empire. As a result, these traditional Islamists looked up to Sultan Mohammed V, who was also a puppet, as their spiritual leader once again - for Mohammed V was the most direct symbol of Islam and Arabs. The Moroccan nationalists who believed in Islam were united under Mohammed V. At this time, their friend-and-foe perception was "the forces that impede the unity of the Sharif Empire vs. the Islamists who uphold the unity of the Sharif Empire".

Although the outbreak of WWII briefly interrupted this implicitly Arabist and Islamist nationalism (Morocco was protected from German aggression by France, and Morocco joined the war against fascism), by the end of the war the international structure had been reshaped, providing Moroccans with the perfect opportunity to fight for national liberation based on this nationalism. The IP, whose predecessor had opposed the French policy of partition and viewed Sultan Mohammed V as its spiritual leader, declared independence. The main leaders of the IP included Ahmed Balafrej, who considered religious restraint of the mass essential, and Allal-el-Fassi, a conservative and devout Islamist. The Arab League was established in 1945 and maintained secret ties with the Moroccan IP. The historic speech of Mohammed V in Tanger in 1947 demonstrated Morocco's tie with the entire Arab world. In 1952, France deposed Sultan Mohammed V and sent him into exile. As the only orthodox religious leader, Mohammed V had more symbolic power to "make a new group, through mobilization"[12], and thus, once again, Arabism and Islam were highly present in the Moroccan voices demanding independence. Their friend-and-foe perception then was "non-Arab colonizers vs. the Arab Islams".

In summary, during Morocco's 44-year anti-colonial struggle (1912-1956), Islam was overtly blended into the Moroccan national consciousness, functioning as the guideline of the resistance to France.

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[10] Marcel Peyrouton, *Histoire générale du Maghreb: Algérie, Maroc, Tunisie, des origines à nos jours*, trans. Shanghai Normal University (Shanghai: Shanghai People's Publishing House, 1974), 492.

[11] Nan Li, "A Study on Moroccan History", 55.

[12] Pierre Bourdieu, "Social Space and Symbolic Power", *Sociological Theory* 7, no. 1 (Spring 1989), 23.

Table 2. The comparison of the anti-colonial struggle in Algeria and Morocco (made by the author)

	The form and intensity of French colonization	The leading ideology	Stages and their duration
Al-geria	Direct, violent, armed suppression, assimilation, economic exploitation	Socialism, Nationalism	1920-1954 Rise of national consciousness and Nationalism 1954-1962 The FLN led the anti-colonial struggle
Mo-rocco	Indirect, appeasement, political penetration, covert economic exploitation, use of force against anti-colonial forces	Arabism, Nationalism	1912-1921 Several struggles against the Sultan and French colonizers 1921-1927 Struggles of Berbers 1927-1956 National struggles led by Mohammed V and IP

4   The Role of Islam for Modernization

4.1   Algeria: Reactively weakened by the civil war

As mentioned in 3.1, the leftist revolutionary theories were more popular with Algerians than Islam. Although they were applied to gain independence, they were still Western and the marketability of which was the result of long-term linguistic and administrative assimilation.

The Europeanization of ideology and the imitation of Western political systems led to a "delayed" mixture of Islam and nationalism post-independence. Alongside the corruption of the FLN was a frenzied revival of Islam in Algeria.

After independence, the FLN turned from a left-wing party to an authoritarian party, Islamic in its ideology but secularized in its policies. However, in terms of laws made for women, the FLN's ideology descended to Islam. It legalized polygamy. Women were not entitled to file for divorce unless they gave up claims for alimony[13], which wiped out the achievements of liberation.

In the 1980s, the FLN lifted the ban on political parties and the Islamic FIS emerged.

The external cause of the rise of the FIS was its corruption and dictatorship. After independence, the Ben Bella and Houari Boumediene administrations were nominally presidential and republican, but essentially military governments which had once existed during the anti-colonial struggle. Corruption and bureaucracy were serious in the established Socialist economy. Since Algeria's main source of income was oil, its industrial structure was single and fragile. After President Chadli took office, the economic crisis broke out due to the plunge in international crude oil prices. Chadli was forced to implement economic liberalization to stimulate market dynamics, which caused mass unemployment rather than saving the economy. Such typical liberal reform couldn't apply to Algeria, where contradictions between Islam and Western ideologies had been mounting ever since the UDMA criticized FLN for being Europeanized. The FIS took the opportunity of the reform to rejuvenate Islam combined with nationalist ideology.

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[13] Michael Walzer, The Paradox of Liberation: Secular Revolutions and Religious Counterrevolutions, 14.

The internal cause of the rise of the FIS, i.e., why it won the election, was the awakening of Islam from its low presence during the anti-colonial struggle and "delayed" hybridizing with nationalism to form a xenophobic chauvinism.

If the Algerian anti-colonial war had lasted not just eight years, but 44 years like in Morocco, Islamists would have clashed with leftists before independence. Assuming such a scenario, Algeria would instead have solved the problem better, because however irreconcilable the conflicts between the various factions were before independence, they had a common external enemy, then the most irreconcilable contradictions would have to be reconciled. More importantly, in the process of reconciling conflicts under external pressure, they would not presuppose each other as enemies, which could be a benefit that would extend after the external pressure disappeared. An example of this is found in the Moroccan anti-colonial struggle: when confronted with internal Arab-Berber ethnic tensions, the Arabs did not perceive the Berbers as foreigners and religious heretics, but rather as the victim of the French conspiracy to divide and rule all of them. After independence, the Berbers in Morocco did not form an opposition, and the Moroccan royal family not only used the Berbers to contain the IP but even let them provoke the Berbers in Algeria's Western Sahara to rebel against Algeria's tyranny.

Since Algeria failed to resolve the conflicts between Islamists and leftists in the eight-year anti-colonial struggle, they lasted until after independence and the loss of external enemies.
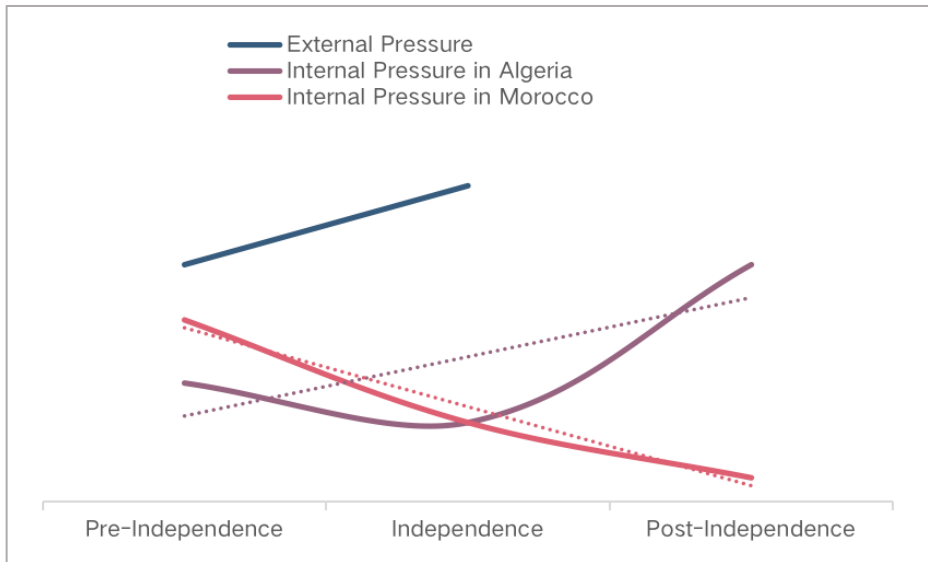

Fig. 1. Changes in the intensity of internal pressure with different phases (made by the author)

As already mentioned, the Islamists had accused the left of Europeanization before independence, which was already a tactic of manipulating nationalism to attack the left, but it was not successful during the anti-colonial struggle. However, after independence, the FLN, which corrupted itself and deviated from its original intentions, was

losing legitimacy. Although the FLN itself did not adhere to Socialism in ideology, it practiced Socialism in economy, so people questioned the FLN together with such unqualified Socialism, doubting if it was a legacy of the West. Thereafter, nationalists gravitated to Islam, a tradition that originated from within the nation. When nationalism and Islam merged, it became a kind of xenophobic chauvinism, denying the notion of "equality" and "liberty" from the outside.

However, nationalism is open to changes while Islam is rigid. The Algerian civil war lasted only nine years, from 1991 to 1999, and the FIS turned from the savior with great support to the plotter of terrorism. In the end, the blame lies with the extremist fundamentalists within the FIS. Their violent and bloody terrorist acts, such as the bombing on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the war of independence against France, not only betrayed nationalism but also accelerated the deterioration of people's attitudes toward them and brought about their destruction. In addition, international factors cannot be ignored. It's unlikely that a political party that has developed terrorism can be tolerated by the international counter-terrorist forces.

The end of the FIS also led to a reduction in the legitimacy of Islam. Following a series of reforms by President Bouteflika, Algeria has seen a significant increase in secularization, most notably the return of many women's rights. Algeria has even banned women from covering their faces in the workplace as a precautionary measure against terrorists, reflecting the fact that secular politics is always far more important to the government than religious beliefs.

4.2   Morocco: Proactive self-weakening

Moroccan political science believes that the primacy of the Alawite royal family (hereinafter abbreviated to "ARF") during the modernization phase was due to its ability to take advantage of the "Amir al-Mu'minin"[14], the "Chorfa"[15], and the "Baraka"[16].[17] However, these are just symbolic capitals that helped the royal family to establish a "naturally unstable"[18] Charismatic authority, as Weber argues, requires the charismatic hero to prove "his power in practice", or "it may appear to his followers that 'his powers have left him.'"[19] The puppet Sultans before independence lost their Charisma because they couldn't "work miracle" of resisting the colonizers, so it was hard for Moroccans to enchant their Sultans even if they also had the three symbolic capitals. After independence, the ARF asserted its authority through specific governmentality besides Charisma and by transforming symbolic capital into political power.

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[14] Namely "Commander of the Faithful", the king, the leader and arbiter in both the secular and religious world.

[15] The lineage of the Sharif.

[16] A form of luck that helps escape from disasters, which proves the love of Allah.

[17] Ruiheng Li, "The Islamic Factors in Moroccan Political Governance", (master's thesis, Beijing Foreign Studies University, 2017), 20-31.

[18] Max Weber, *Economy and Society* (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1978), 1114.

[19] Ibid.

I'll borrow Victoria Tin-bor Hui's "self-strengthening reforms" and "self-weakening expedients" to explain the essential reasons why the Moroccan royal family maintains stability. The two terms originally refer to the way a country carries out domestic transformation to handle international competition. The structure is the international competition and the actors are states. Here, I analogize Moroccan domestic politics as the structure and different forces and factions of domestic politics as actors.

Table 3. Self-strengthening reforms versus self-weakening expedients[20]

Internal balancing moves (Improvement of relative capability)	Self-strengthening reforms (Mobilization by enhancing administrative capacity)	Self-weakening expedients (Mobilization by relying on intermediate resource-holders)
"Increase military strength"	Establishment of a standing army by national conscription	Establishment of a standing army by military entrepreneurs and mercenary troops
"Increase economic capability"	Imposition of direct and indirect taxes; promotion of economic productivity	Tax farming for ordinary taxes; loans and credits for extraordinary revenues
"Develop clever strategies"	Replacement of aristocracy by meritocracy	Sale of public offices to private capital-holders

The ARF adopted the "balancing act" to ensure that the power of other political parties couldn't overwhelm that of its. During Hassan II's reign alone, his policy toward left-wing and religious parties shifted dramatically three times. Whether through coercion, solicitation, or amnesty, the royal aim was to bring all or some of these forces into the political system, to provoke the antagonism between extremists in the Islamist parties and the leftists in the left-wing parties, and thus ensure the absolute dominance in the ideological sphere. Meanwhile, due to the traditional "Clientelism" between the royal family and the tariqa, the royal family has directly benefited from taxation and political support. They have used Sufism as a tool to balance various religious extremists and secular opposition forces since the 21st century. In the process of absorbing various forces, the political system of the royal family has become more inclusive and holds the initiative to establish religious institutions and spread religious knowledge. Thus, the ARF has been carrying out "self-strengthening reforms". It's noteworthy that the ARF was warier of the ideology of left-wing parties than of Islamist parties. Hassan II openly stated that it was King Mohammed V's allegiance as the "Amir al-Mu'minin" that guaranteed Morocco's independence, not the nationalist movements led by the IP[21]. Only Islam, not leftist ideas became the ideological instrument of the official.

Conversely, even if Islamic parties resent and question the religious legitimacy of the ARF, the leaders of the Justice and Development Party (PJD) believe that their religious aims can only be achieved if they are incorporated into the political system by

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[20] Victoria Tin-bor Hui, "Toward a Dynamic Theory of International Politics: Comparing Ancient China and Early Modern Europe", *International Organization* 58, no. 1 (Winter 2004), 183, Table 1.

[21] Ruiheng Li, "The Islamic Factors in Moroccan Political Governance", 33.

the regime. To cater to the royal family, PJD has to make concessions on many issues to ensure its survival. Meanwhile, the ARF often takes advantage of the power of the PJD to suppress the AWI. Granted no amnesty, AWI is almost an illegal organization as categorized by the ARF and certainly does not have the symbolic capital to expand its legitimacy among Moroccans. For the PJD, it has ceded some of its interests and "sovereignty" to maintain its superiority over its peers and its legitimacy within the hegemony of its superiors, which is "self-weakening expedient". Even for Islamist parties, the mode of belief in Islam can be ceded in exchange for political and economic benefits. Islam was instrumentalized not only by the royal family but also by those who were supposed to advocate radically for Islam.
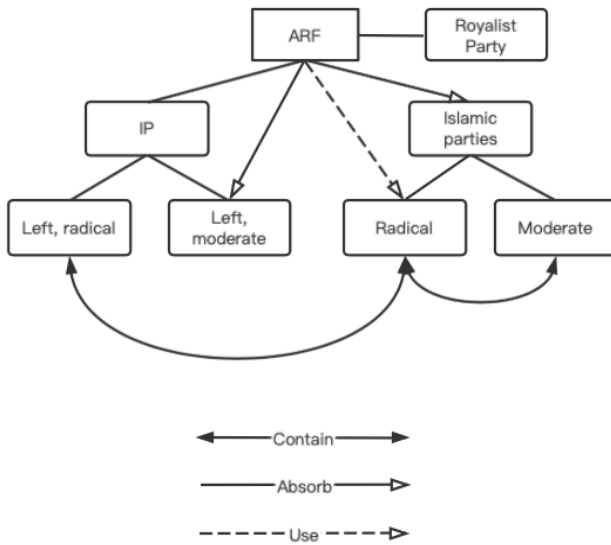
Fig. 2. The "balancing act" of the ARF (made by the author)

In sum, it is because of the "self-strengthening reforms" of the ARF and the "self-weakening expedients" of the Islamist parties that the royal family was able to perpetuate its dominance and amplify the advantages of path dependence. What's more, Islam is being used by all the actors as a political tool, which reveals that secular political interests outweigh religious claims. The royal family, left-wing parties, and Islamist parties are all weakening the secular effectiveness of Islam, which, in return, contributed largely to the modernization and secularization of Morocco.

5   Conclusions

Islam and the national liberation movements are a typical pair of contradictions in the terminology of Marxist philosophy. Contradictions have opposites and identities.

5.1   Opposites

Islam was founded to serve the unification of the Arabian Peninsula. It was fabricated by the Prophet Muhammad to provide legitimacy for the laws performed by the rulers and to build the community of Arabs in the Arabian Peninsula. He consciously created political symbols that could be translated into political power. Islam did not enter the political field but was born directly in it. It encompasses symbolic capital that can reproduce itself through cultivating the "habitus" of the community.

From a Marxist standpoint, for the lower classes, religion is a discourse that tames individuals' thinking to accept oppression and exploitation and be self-disciplined. When combined with nationalism, or when it evolves to the extreme, Islam creates an exclusionary chauvinism within a people that blindly rejects integration into the world order. The chaotic political situation in Algeria after independence is evidence. Islam is thus inherently and irreconcilably conflicting with national liberation.

5.2   Identities

Promoting the formation of national consciousness and mobilizing the whole nation to resist foreign aggression

During the anti-colonial struggle stage, Islam promoted the formation of national consciousness. One of the reasons for this is that religion can be a tool to distinguish between nationalities. Moreover, it is also related to the violent side of religion. Islam, based on the scripture, encourages violent warfare against heretics. The revolutionary struggle against colonization must be violent. Since religion can classify aggressors as cultural and political heretics, it naturally provokes its followers to wage violent revolution. Islam did have a positive effect on the anti-colonial struggle of the Arab peoples in North Africa.

Self-revision in the face of secular politics, followed by disintegration.

Already in Algeria and Morocco, rulers who are followers of Islam are seen to modify Islam rigidly or flexibly to reduce its negative effect on secular politics under the pressure from the secular world. Rulers do not outlaw the religion, but rather retain it, revise it, and use it, and once this process is underway, the secular effect of the religion will be crippled. The loss of Islam's political effect can liberate the nation to a greater extent and boost economic development during modernization.

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