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Identity in Conflict

A critical discourse analysis of the formation of a Palestinian
national identity

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Abstract

This paper has adopted a discursive approach in examining and analyzing discursive formation of Palestinian national identity under the circumstances of conflict and through the impact and channels of politics. Through the methodology of Norman Fairclough's critical discourse analysis and Daniel Bar-Tal's theory about societal beliefs, two political and public speeches are analyzed. The speeches held by the two prominent Palestinian leaders, Mahmoud Abbas and Khaled Mash'al help to understand the process of constructing, maintaining and reproducing national identity. Further this contributes to the understanding of the political importance of national identity and the relation between identity, politics (power and language) and conflict dynamics. The analysis shows that national identity can be understood and used as promoter of both peace and conflict. Mostly it is not used as either or, but rather constitutes as discursive mix. This is also how it has been used in Palestinian politics. The study further reveals the importance of the discursive character of the concept of identity. This implies a hegemonic struggle which contribute to reproduce and/or transform the order of discourse, and therewith the existing power relations in the conflict. The concept of national identity has hence political importance since it offers opportunities to change.

Keywords: national identity, critical discourse analysis, societal beliefs, Israel-Palestine conflict, discursive power

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1 Introduction

We live in an increasingly globalized world where international collaborations stretch across national boundaries. Global citizenship has become a familiar concept and the borders that constitute our countries are in some aspects blurred out. The world is becoming more and more borderless. Yet, states are still the cornerstones of the international system, and instead there are other types of borders that our attention is drawn to - social boundaries, cultural boundaries. Religious and economic boundaries. Factors that determine which group in society we belong to, and which group we do not belong to. In our times, the term society is often used to describe “national societies” that embody a quality of nationality with certain own systems, culture and sovereignty over a bounded territory. National belonging, which is connected to identity, continues to be important. Although individuals belong to various groups, a membership in a national society is to a large extent an important, if not the most important, basis for social identity. Further, beliefs and attitudes of an individual are often acquired through their role as a member in a national society (Bar-Tal, 2000, xvi). For people and societies in conflicts and disagreements belonging is especially important. In situations where people perceive themselves as threatened and thus a need to defend themselves and reaffirm their position. In situations where the state continues to play a major and often decisive role in the socialization of the society. The group's own identity is distinguished from the others. It is depicted clearly what the norms are and what is deviant. The Israel-Palestine conflict is a conflict in which the concepts of nationality and identity are important aspects (Slocum-Bradley, 2008, 62). The intertwined history and the interplay between different senses of identities has strongly influenced and affected the emergence and conceptions of both the own identity and the identity of the other (Khalidi, 1997, 5). The Palestinian identity, a potential national identity which is the focus in this thesis, cannot be fully understood without a context. The context in this study is mainly focused on national politics. The nationalistic self-assertion is a part of politics and its creation of meaning, which therefore makes the concept of identity, and more particularly national identity relevant.

1.1 Purpose and research question

Identities are created and constructed in contrast to other people and groups. That is, there is no “us” without a “them”. Through identity formation it is thus possible, in an effective manner, to create a strong image of one's own group and a clear view of “the other”. A group becomes stronger and can show greater resistance through the means of a unified picture of the group, and of themselves as a part of the group. A conflict requires at least two parties

with conflictual ideas, and begins with the perception that a group's own goals are incompatible with the goals of another group (Bar-Tal, 2000, 125). This thesis is based on the ideas of social constructivism, an approach that interprets identities as constructed and therefore changeable and not stable (Rouhana, 1997, 4). The identity concept is hence a most efficient tool and significant aspect of conflicts. Consequently, it is of interest to investigate how the construction and maintenance of identities, and eventual change might be manifested in conflict. Identities can be formed in several areas of a society, but since social constructivism and hence identity formation in many aspects is a question about power, the area that will be examined in this thesis is the political sphere. The overarching area of analysis is the direct or indirect usage of the concept of identity in Palestinian politics and specifically political speeches. The intent is to examine the relation between politics, or more specifically Palestinian politicians, and the formation of national identity. Palestinian national identity is the empirical example from which the study derives from. Through a discursive approach and analysis, the purpose is to examine in order to understand and explain national identity formation in Palestinian politics under the circumstances of conflict, and therewith look into what possible impact this might have on conflict dynamics and progression. The overarching area of interest and question is:

- How can discursive formation of national identity be understood under circumstances of conflict through the impacts and channels of politics, and how does this further affect the conflict?

To be able to discuss and answer this question a sub-question first needs to be examined and analyzed:

- How have Palestinian leaders discursively constructed and reproduced Palestinian national identities through public speeches?

Through the methodology of Norman Fairclough's Critical discourse analysis (CDA) and Daniel Bar-Tal's Societal beliefs used as theory, an attempt will be made to analyze the area which the research questions highlight. The method; the critical discourse analysis, is a text-based analysis and thus requires texts as a basis. Therefore, the material consists of transcribed texts from two political and public speeches broadcasted on various Arabic television channels. The speeches are made by two leaders in the Palestinian political sphere that has been prominent the past years; Mahmoud Abbas for the Palestinian National Authority (PA) and Khaled Mash'al for Hamas. By discursively examining and analyzing these speeches, representations of reality (discourses) can help to understand and analyze the influence and significance politics has on the formation of national identity.

1.2 Limitations and motivation

The identity concept constitutes a significant part and is an important aspect of peace and conflict research. Furthermore, and as mentioned above, it is an important aspect of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. However, in this study the topical issue is limited to the Palestinian aspect. This choice is mainly due to the limitations of the study in terms of textual space as well as the choice of method which is not composed of comparative features. Since the purpose of the study is not to conclude through comparing, but rather to implement a discursive analysis and draw conclusions from this, the empirical basis is limited to national identity formation in Palestine. The choices of the speeches are a result of a consideration of internal Palestinian politics. Firstly, both Mahmoud Abbas and Khaled Mash'al are politicians both of whom have been active the past years. Why this is important in this context and thesis is motivated in the section of 'Selection of empirical material'. Secondly, they represents one part each of the political and geographic split which separate Palestine into two; the West bank and Gaza (Bröning, 2011, 97).

2 Epistemological framework; social constructivism

Social constructivism is the perspective this thesis is based on. Social constructivism is an epistemological approach that goes against the idea of identity as a natural given category (primordialism), or simply an act of will (instrumentalism). Instead it claims reality or aspects of reality to be socially constructed, that is products of human interaction and collective action. The perspective of social constructivism perceive the formation of identity to be a constant process in which individuals both shape and are shaped by the reality they live in. The individual defines herself in different ways depending on the context. In this sense social constructivism challenges the essentialist notions that claim that the individual can only have one identity based on a number of specific characteristics (Kinnvall, 2003, 12).

3 Methodological framework; critical discourse analysis

The study rests on the methodology of Norman Fairclough's critical discourse analysis (CDA). It is a specialization within the field of discourse analysis and differs from other discourse analytical approaches by adopting a more post-structuralistic approach to discourse and the social aspects. The implication of this is demonstrated by the perception of discourses as both constituted and constitutive (Fairclough, 2001, 30f). Thus, one sees the dynamic role of the discourse in social and cultural change (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000, 94f). The choice of the specific approach in the field of discourse analysis is partly based on the CDA approach to discourse as a non-structuralistic system. A system through which a creative use of language not only reproduces the discursive systems, but also can change them (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000, 76). This approach goes together with the epistemological grounds of social constructivism which the concept of identity rests upon.

In discursive analytical approach language is the focal point. The idea is that language does not reflect reality directly, but is rather involved in shaping it (Bergström & Boréus, 2005: 305). CDA is as mentioned above a specialization in the field. Moreover, it is also seen as an extension of the area because of its integration of linguistics with social sciences. The model includes a variety of concepts that are bound together in a complex three dimensional discourse approach which distinguishes between discourse as *text*, *discursive practice* and *social practice* (Fairclough, 2001, 21). The model is well reflective of the purpose of critical discourse analysis; examining the relationships between discourses and social structures (Bergström & Boréus, 2005: 322).

3.1 Methodological strategies

Hereinafter the methodological strategies and methods of operationalization will be presented based on the model of critical discourse analysis.

The aim of critical discourse analysis is to explore links between the use of language and *social practice*. Focus is the role of *discursive practices* in the maintenance of the social order and in social change. According to Fairclough, in any analysis, two dimensions or levels of discourse are important focal points:

1. The *communicative event* - an instance of language. In this case political and public speeches.
2. The *order of discourse* - the configuration of all the discourse types which are used within a social institution or a social field. In this case, the discourse of the scheme in the political

sphere in Palestine (Fairclough, 2001, 23ff).

The three dimensions that constitute the *three dimensional model* is part of a communicative event. The model is an analytical framework and is therefore used as the basis which structures the thesis (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000, 74). The selected texts, the speeches will be analyzed separately in each dimension, in order of: 1. *discursive practice*; 2. *text*; 3. *social practice*, and will then be linked together in the section of discussion. The three dimensions of the model are shortly presented below:

1. *Discursive practice* - Analysis of discursive practice focuses on production and consumption of texts. It is through the discursive practice that the relationship between texts and social practice are mediated. (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000, 75).
2. *Text* - The focal point of text analysis is the formal features from which discourses are realized linguistically. The main linguistic focus in this thesis will include; metaphors, vocabulary and grammar (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000, 87f).
3. *Social practice* - In this stage of the analysis a contextualization is made. The social practice is the wider context in which the discursive practice and the text is part of, and enclosed by. The method of discourse analysis is though not in itself sufficient enough to explore the wider social practice, since social practice encompasses both discursive and non-discursive elements. Hence, a social theory is needed to complement the discourse analysis. Daniel Bar-Tals theory about Societal beliefs (presented further down) will be the additional theory (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000, 90). It is at this stage, in the analysis of the relationship between discursive practices and the wider social practice, that conclusions can be ascertained. Questions associated with the study's research question and purpose is now possible to answer (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000, 90).

3.2 Methodological obstacles and considerations

One of the most important aspects when conducting research is intersubjectivity. An aspect which requires clarity and a concrete course of action (Teorell & Svensson, 2007, 54). Therefore, obstacles and considerations concerning the methodology and the methodological strategies are presented below.

One obstacle in this study may be the vagueness of Fairclough's discourse analysis in terms of the implications of the distinction between the discursive and non-discursive. The boundaries between discourse analysis and the analysis of *social practice* are not defined. Hence, there are difficulties of knowing which social theory is best suited for the model of the method and how much space this should take (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000, 93f). An attempt to overcome these obstacles is done in this study by using a theory based on the same

epistemological basis as the Critical discourse analysis is based on, namely the constructivist perspective. The theory of Societal beliefs, which is the theory used as a complement in the *social practice*-analysis, is also strongly linked to sociology, which is one of the fields of study proposed by Fairclough as relevant (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000, 75f).

3.3 Defining key terms

Below two important concepts are presented whose definitions have a direct impact on the understanding of the paper, and interpretations of the same. The objective of defining concepts is to increase transparency and accessibility, and thus intersubjectivity.

3.3.1 Discourse

There is little agreement about what discourses are, how they work or how one should analyze them. Various positions advocate and propose different definitions, but a general way of defining the concept of discourse is that of a particular way of talking about and understanding the world, or a segment of the world. A basic idea is that there is no way of speaking which in a neutral way reflects the world around us, our identities or social relations. But it plays an active role in the creation and modification of them (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000, 7). In the perspective of Fairclough, discourses contribute not only to shape and reshape social structures and processes, but reflect them too. According to the thoughts of Fairclough, to suggest that discourses are only constitutive is equivalent to claiming the social reality only to be a result of the human mind (winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000, 68). This implies a relational epistemology – the social world is created and consists of social relations. The social relations are ceaselessly defined by the discursive practice, meaning communication (Hall, 2003, 115).

3.3.2 National identity

The concept of national identity is not easily understood and need to be dissected in order to be defined. Identities are elusive and cannot be studied objectively. They should not be seen as static structured, but rather as dynamic and contextualized depending on a series of complex processes. Identities are both affecting and are affected by the evolving political and social forces within, and outside a society. Identities are hence discursive in the sense that they are constructed and fluid which make them potentially changeable (Rouhana, 1997, 4). Understanding the construction of identities is therefore of great importance since it helps us to understand and explain the society with all its functions, processes and the members within it (Kinnvall, 2003, 11). It should be noted that individuals belong to various groups and can thus have various identities. Identities work as contrasting, competing and overlapping.

However, in this context and interest of study the membership of an individual in a national society provides a crucial importance for the social identity (Bar-Tal, 2000, xiv).

An identity shared by a group is a collective identity. There are several forms of collective identities and national identity is just one of them. The quest for sharing an identity may have something to do with the need of the individual to ensure the survival and security. But it also has a psychological aspect to it in the sense of the need for belonging and the attachment to a group that shares the same experiences and values (Rouhana, 1997, 5). There are different important aspects and factors in the constructional process of different identities and one thing certain is that individuals living under threat in violent environments tend to identify strongly with other people and groups that experience the same thing (Strömbom, 2010, 35). In this case, with the conflict between Israel and Palestine, many of the issues concerns aspects of sovereignty and nations, and hence issues regarding nationality and national identity.

4 Material; limitations, motivation and strategies

The material used for the empirical study consists of transcribed texts from two political and public speeches broadcasted on various Arabic television channels. The two speeches are made by two leaders in the Palestinian political sphere that has been prominent the last decades; PA Chairman Mahmoud Abbas and Hamas leader Khaled Mash'al. The material is dependent on several factors. In this case, the selection is primarily due to requirements of the method and accessibility of material. The accessibility to public speeches made by Palestinian leaders is relatively high. Either they are broadcasted on television or they are easily accessed on the internet. This aspect is important, as the intersubjectivity and hence the credibility increases (Teorell & Svensson, 2007, 54). To examine the political sphere from a discursive perspective is further motivated by a relevant link with the important concepts and beliefs that the Fairclough discourse analysis rests on; discourse, power relations, ideology and hegemony (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000, 79ff). Thereto, it is interesting as the forum of politics and political speeches are both creating discourses and reproducing them. Holding political speeches also means that the speaker will most likely weigh the words carefully in order to convey a particular agenda. A text-based discourse analysis is thus relevant in this context.

4.1 Selection of empirical material

The selection and choice of two speeches and not more is due to several reasons. Partly it is a question of textual space and its limitations. It is also, as mentioned before, a result of the internal politics in Palestine and its split into two. This is both a political and geographical split which separate Palestine into two; the West bank where PA is prominent politically and Gaza where the political movement of Hamas is in majority. The leaders of these groups are Mahmoud Abbas and Khaled Mash'al. The speeches chosen are hence a result from this; they are representing each of a split in the political sphere. Consequences of only using two units of analysis can be difficulties in generalizing the results. However, aware of this problematic, a counteract can be looking at the study as a case study with few cases. Thus most studies with generalizing ambitions can to some extent be seen as case studies. These studies with few cases are not generalizable in a statistical sense, but they are however analytically generalizable (Esaiasson et al., 2012, 158f). A further analytical discussion is thus necessary in order to secure the aspects of reliability.

When it comes to strategies for the collection and selection of materials the time aspect is important (Teorell & Svensson, 2007: 104). The Israel-Palestine conflict is a protracted

conflict with variation in intensity. The purpose and method determines which aspects are important when it comes to time. The purpose of this paper suggests that the selected texts with advantage should have taken place and been produced and consumed during roughly the same time period. This is to the larger social and political context an important part of the critical discourse analysis and comparison of texts are facilitated thereby. In addition will the plausibility and authenticity with greater probability be ensured (Teorell & Svensson, 2007: 104).

4.2 Criticism of sources

The material used in this study consists of both primary and secondary sources. A strategy to increase the important aspects of reliability and validity is to adopt a critical approach concerning the material being used in the research (Bjereld et al., 2009: 115ff). The secondary sources consist in the form of mostly literary works and research. When using secondary sources, it is of utmost importance to be critical of the information provided. A way of strengthen the validity and detect possible bias in the information is to use the method of triangulation of material, a method used in this study. Triangulation is the method of using different types of independent material and through this evaluate the material (Höglund & Öberg, 2011, 191).

When it comes to the primary sources; the speeches, it is most essential to be aware of, and challenge rhetorical methods and methods that are being used by politicians to convey an agenda. It is thus a matter of being critical towards any tendency (Teorell & Svensson, 2007: 106). These aspects are however part of the discourses that the study intends to investigate, and are thus of interest for more than one reason. Another possible aspect of concern could be the internet websites where the speeches can be found; MEMRI (the Middle East Media Research Institute) and Al Jazeera English. Both transcriptions and the selections of which speeches to publish are decisions made by them. However, since the awareness of these aspects, and as none of the websites are obviously biased, these are not major aspects of concern.

5 Theoretical framework; theory of societal beliefs

The method of CDA is as an all encompassing tool which includes both methodological and theoretical aspects. The methodology is thus not just a method but constitutes the main part of the study and hence controls how it is conducted. In addition to the theoretical aspect of the CDA, the theoretical framework is based on Daniel Bar-Tal's theory of Societal beliefs. Nonetheless, this does not make the theory of Societal beliefs less important. With the help of the theory, the political and social consequences of the *discursive practice* and thus the impacts on the conflict can be analyzed and discussed. This will be done in the last section of the 'Results and analysis'. The following is a description of the theory, its relevance and how it is operationalized along with the method and empirical data.

5.1 Societal beliefs

Societal beliefs are community members' collective perceptions of matters and concerns with regard to life in a social framework. It is through these glasses that community members see their own society and themselves. The public perception is according to the theory an important aspect of the creation of social identity by providing knowledge society members share and to which they can relate to (Bar-Tal, 2000: xiv). The definition points to the fact that Societal beliefs characterize a society. This characterization is perceived by the society members and the beliefs are recognized as a major influence on societal functioning. These beliefs appear in various parts of society such as public debates, media information, educational material, or as in the example of this thesis; leaders' speeches (Bar-Tal, 2000, 39). The Societal beliefs thus exist as transcendent characteristics of the society, which is imparted to the society member, who then again perpetuate them in their products (Bar-Tal, 2000, xiv). Societal beliefs are furthermore durable, but not stable as they may change with time (Bar-Tal, 2000, 69).

5.2 Theoretical approach and strategies

The choice of theory is due to the methodological requirements of the CDA of some form of social theory. Since *social practice* both have discursive and non-discursive elements, a

complementing social theory must be used (according to Fairclough). The discursive analysis is not enough to analyze the wider *social practice* (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000, 75). Moreover, since the focal point of the Societal beliefs theory is the collective ideas of a society it goes hand in hand with the concept of (national) identity. Thereto, the discursive approach of the theory makes it conformable with the epistemological approach of the thesis – social constructivism.

The theory will be used under the heading of 'Results and analysis', and more precisely in the third dimension of the CDA method; the *social practice*. There are several societal beliefs and those created and their relevance depends on each situation and society. In this case the societal beliefs about *security* and *deligitimization* are used as operationalization tools. Societal beliefs about security are developed when a society are perceiving insecurity and prolonged and serious threats (Bar-Tal, 2000, 87). Delegitimizing beliefs are negative images and stereotypes of other groups or societies with clear affective and behavioral implications (Bar-Tal, 2000, 121). These beliefs can hence contribute to the understanding and explanation of why a group perceives their situation as threatening and why the other group threatens and predict actions from this. This is further how the theory of Societal beliefs are used in this study.

6 Background

Initially, before the analysis of the speeches and the results of this, the case of a Palestinian national identity is presented. It constitutes the basis for the analysis and therefore need to be elaborated.

6.1 Introduction to the field; the emergence of a Palestinian national identity

Because this thesis only concerns certain aspects of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and especially since it first and foremost concerns Palestinian aspects, the introduction to the field will not be a thorough review of all its history and scenarios. Instead it will shortly present selected events that are relevant to the questions of the thesis and the areas of interest. Events that are related to the history of Palestine and hence the shaping of Palestinian national identity.

Certainly there are several ways to look at the emergence of an identity. But as stated before, this thesis is based on the ideas of social constructivism. It has also been presented that identities are dynamic and changeable. Consequently they are responsive to historical evolution. As interpreted and comprehended in this study, the particular affecting modern historical events can be divided into *three* chronological periods. However, there are discussions and different opinions about the origins of a Palestinian identity. One opinion is that the Palestinian identity and the Palestinian nation is of recent origin. That Palestine and Palestinian nationalism is a reaction to the state of Israel, an artificial invention used as a tool to fight the Jewish population. Another perception is that Palestinian national identity goes long back and was a mixture of overlapping identities connected to regional and cultural identities. Thereto, there was a national political identity emerging around the turn of the twentieth century and along with the British Mandate (Khalidi, 1997, 177). Assuming the ideas of Societal beliefs developed by Bar-Tal, the important thing is not whether the beliefs or the identity are based on reality or imagination. What counts is the perception and the meaning attributed to it by the society members and the functions it fulfills for the society (Bar-Tal, 2000, 57, 125). Thus, the argument that the Palestinian identity is or was an invention does not contradict its nationalistic legitimacy. All identities are constructed and hence inventions.

If one departs from the idea that there was a Palestinian nationalism and identity before the emergence of the state of Israel, the particular affecting modern historical events, as stated before, can be divided into three chronological periods. The *first* is the thirty years of

the British Mandate from around 1920 up until 1948. These years were marked by the desperate and losing struggle of newly formed Palestinian National Movement against the Great Britain, the greatest imperial power of this time, and its protege, the Zionist movement. This period ended in violence as the fighting between Arabs and Jews inside Palestine intensified in 1947 and culminated in 1948 with the first war between the Arab states and Israel (Khalidi, 1997, 177f).

The *second* period takes place from 1948 to 1967. It starts with the traumatic event of al-Nakba, “the catastrophe”, which costed half of the Palestinians their homes, making them loose their majority status in Palestine and their hope of controlling the country (Khalidi, 1997, 177f). This created a massive refugee problem. A problem that is still an issue and often talked about as the national aspiration of “The Right to Return”. The implications of these events together with the declining action of the National Movement had an effect of solidifying the national identity (Webman, 2009, 30). At first, during the years of pan-Arabism – a form of Arab collective, it was an event that characterized the identity of all Arabs, but gradually it turned into a tragedy that concerned only the Palestinian identity. The end of the pan-Arabism in the mid 1960s made this definite. The Nakba can be seen as one of the most important elements of Palestinian national consciousness. It represents the defeat, the displacement, dispossession, exile, dependence, insecurity, lack of statehood, and fight for survival of the Palestinians (Webman, 2009, 29). The shared story helped to reconstruct a collective identity, a new kind of national imagining, which replaced old persistent identities and loyalties such as family, region, village and religion. It reshaped the national consciousness of an older generation of Palestinians and the fact that the Palestinians now where scattered in the surrounding Arab countries sharpened the unique Palestinian identity and intensified the feeling of “otherness” (Webman, 2009, 30) A common sense of threat made more and more Palestinians feel that they shared a common fate and what they now shared was greater than what separated them (Khalidi, 1997, 193f). According to the Palestinian historian Issam Nassar, within the framework of Palestinian national discourse, the Nakba was more of a rhetorical shift rather than a beginning or an end of an era (Webman, 2009, 30). One can thus, alternatively, see the Nakba as an event which divides the development of a Palestinian identity in two periods; the one before and the one after the Nakba.

The *third* period is the one post 1967. The Six Day War in 1967 and the time after can be seen as another milestone in the development of a Palestinian identity. It was a defeat even worse than that of 1948 upon the Arab states and further led to loss of faith in pan-Arabism and reliance on the Arab countries as saviors of Palestine. However, the emergence of Palestinian liberation movements such as the PLO (Palestine Liberation Organization), created a new sense of optimism and determination. The Palestinian national movement gained international visibility and a new political dimension of Palestinian nationalism emerged requiring self-determination and independence (Webman, 2009, 30).

The shared experiences and events; the defeats and the dispossession have all contributed in the process and formation of a Palestinian national identity. Palestinian national identity is thus now not so different from other national identities in the Arab world and elsewhere. It has been set in some respects by boundaries that are rather recent, but still it has based itself on elements of identity that go back far in time, before the construction of these

boundaries (Khalidi, 1997, 193f). Consequently, the Palestinian national identity is not a new construction; it has been reshaped, reworked and changed according to events in order to fit the new conditions and demands. It is dynamic, fluid and contextually dependent, just like all other identities. However, it should be noted and recognized that there is never only one identity or one nationalistic line. There are other orientations in Palestinian nationalism, especially when regarding the political dimension and this description represents a mainstream and generalized image of the Palestinian national identity and its history. Furthermore, there have been a number of more important events and occasions that have affected the Palestinian people and its national identity than the ones brought up above. Some of these are the two Intifadas, the various peace agreements and efforts to peace and the 2012 United Nations upgrading Palestine from an “observer entity” to a “non-member observer state”. Central in this context is however the emergence of the Palestinian national identity and the focus is hence more on early historical aspects of its emergence.

7 Summary of speeches

Before the sections of results and analysis a short summary of the speeches are presented. This is to give an overview of the material and thus make the analysis more comprehensive.

The speeches are made by two prominent Palestinian leaders at two different occasions, but both within the past five years. In this thesis they are studied as transcribed texts. It should be noted that even though the speeches have been broadcasted and are thus moving images, the analysis does not comprehend body language and the connection between text and images. Thereto, the transcription does not cover details such as intonations and silences. The analysis is in accordance with the CDA essentially of a linguistic character. It should also be noted that the speeches should be seen as taken out of context –there have been important political and social events and changes both before and after the speeches were held that are not considered in this analysis.

7.1 PA Chairman addresses the Palestinian people

The following are excerpts from a speech given by Mahmoud Abbas, aired on Al Jazeera English TV on December 31, 2008. Length: 07:18. (Al Jazeera English).

Mahmoud Abbas overarching message and purpose is calling for national unity in the fight towards independence. He motivates this action by assuring that they are all fellow countrymen and that they; the Palestinians together with the rest of the Arab and Muslim states, are supporting each other. The fight is also motivated by them sharing the same blood and the history they have in common. He calls for holding the responsibility and keeping steadfast. “We cannot give up”. Abbas compare this steadfastness with the countrymen in Gaza and the establishment of the Fatah movement and portray them as role models. He further speaks about the sacrificing people that have fought this fight for many years. That all their achievements are standing as sources of pride, binding the people together geographically and politically. He sums up this tribute to the martyrs, the wounded, the prisoners, the women, children, elders and leaders by saying “It is Palestine, the homeland of sacrifice and martyrs”. Abbas concludes his speech by speaking about the goals and aspirations of a sovereign state. A state of prosperity, pride, dignity, peace and independence. He states that this is the only way to end the struggle.

7.2 Hamas leader Khaled Mash'al: We will not relinquish an inch of Palestine, from the river to the sea

The following are excerpts from a speech delivered by Hamas Leader Khaled Mash'al, which aired on Al-Aqsa TV on December 7, 2012. Length: 09:27. (MEMRI).

Khaled Mash'al begins the speech by clarifying that Palestine is the land, the right and the homeland of Palestinians and belongs to the Arab and Islamic world. Under no circumstances there will be any relinquishing from even a inch of it. He continues to state that since the occupation is illegitimate, the state of Israel is illegitimate. The liberation of *all* of Palestine is the responsibility of Palestinians and the Arab and Islamic nation and the means of doing this is Jihad, resistance and armed struggle. He asserts that there are no, and has never been, other ways to restore Palestine and Jerusalem, to implement the Right of Return and to put an end to “the loathsome Zionist occupation” than through the way of resistance, battle and sacrifice. Mash'al makes clear the principle of Hamas; there are no substitutes for Palestine and the unity of Palestine refers to Gaza, the West Bank, and the land within the 1948 borders. Lastly he proclaims, while addressing “comrades” in various factions, that liberation will precede statehood. Liberation is the only way to regain and create a sovereign state (Khaled Mash'al, 2012).

8 Results and analysis

It is in the analysis where the empirical data of the speeches are connected with the method of Critical discourse analysis and the theory of Societal beliefs. The analysis is structured with the help of the *three dimensional model* of the CDA. As presented under the heading 'Methodological strategies' the *discursive practice* is first analyzed, thereafter the *textual* dimension, and finally the wider *social practice*. It is through the analysis that results and conclusions can be drawn. The purpose of the discursive analysis is investigating how discourses can help in understanding the political significance of national identity and vice versa.

8.1 First dimension; discursive practice

In the dimension of *discursive practice* the interest lies in finding out how the texts are produced and consumed. However, in most concrete analysis's Fairclough focuses more on the linguistics of texts. The purpose is to find out and analyze which discourses the texts are based on (inter-discursivity) and eventual inter-textuality, which are *communicative events* that build on past events. It means that one never starts from the beginning and words that others have used before are used over and over again (winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000, 77). This purpose is also the focus of this analysis.

The *communicative events* of the two political speeches are part of a political *order of discourse*. A main discourse in the net of discourses, all part of the *order of discourse*, is a national discourse. This becomes clear when Abbas and Mash'al speak of their people and its identity - the Palestinian national identity, as given. They construct and reproduce this national group with some differences, particularly in regards to the way of conveying their messages, but basically they are using arguments based on the same discourses. These are historical discourses, religious discourses, discourses about victimization and about identity.

The degree of inter-discursivity in both speeches are fairly low. Indeed the arguments and statements are based on several discourses; these are however articulated in a *conventional* way. According to Fairclough a conventional mix of discourses are a sign of maintenance of the dominant *order of discourse* and thus the dominant social order. The opposite is a *creative* use of discourses, creating a new inter-discursive mix and hence a sign of discursive and societal change (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000, 77).

Inter-textuality is as stated above the relationship of *communicative events* building on past events. This is to a large extent what is done in the speeches held by Abbas and Mash'al. When comparing the two texts the use of words are similar. Words such as

liberation, independence, martyr, sacrifice, responsibility, sovereign and history are all recurrent in both texts. Inter-textuality refers to the impact of history on a text and to the impact of a text on history by texts building on previous texts. According to Fairclough this contributes to either stability or instability, to continuity or change. By using existing discourses in new ways changes are made. But the opportunities to change are limited by power-relations which in turn partly control and frame various actors access to different discourses (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000, 77f). In this case and analysis the inter-textuality are to a larger extent implying stability and continuity. This suggests that the speeches reproduces the existing discourses and *order of discourse* and rather perpetuates them than change them. A further analysis of these possible conclusions are analyzed and discussed in section 8.3, social practice.

8.2 Second dimension; text analysis

With the *discursive practice* analyzed, the next step is looking into how these discourses are constructed, reproduced or maintained through the use of certain linguistic features (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000, 178). As presented before the features focused on in this analysis are metaphors, vocabulary and grammar. The most distinct features of the two texts are presented and analyzed under the following headlines. Firstly it should however be made clear that the two speeches are not selected or used with the purpose of demonstrating texts or discourses opposing each other. Obviously, there are both differences and similarities between the texts but the purpose is to examine and analyze how political discourses are influencing the formation of national identities and how this is realized textually. This is done by using two examples; the speeches.

8.2.1 Palestinians as one unit

A common feature used by both Mahmoud Abbas and Khaled Mash'al in their speeches is the term “us”. “Palestine belongs to us and to nobody else” (Mash'al, 2012). Other variants, but with the same meaning are “we” and “our”. “Do not despair, we will continue our journey” (Abbas, 2008). By using these deictic markers they are presenting the people, the Palestinians as one unit with themselves and their parties/groups as part of this unit. United as a “we” the differences disappears. Both between the politicians and the people, but also the differences that exist between the people in the society. The minorities both within the political sphere and among the people are made invisible. Moreover, by using these terms Abbas and Mash'al are making themselves representatives of Palestine and the Palestinian interests, and the discursive position are allowing them to assess issues and concerns on behalf of Palestine.

8.2.2 The Palestinian identity

As seen above Abbas and Mash'al are using an inclusive discourse which helps conveying a unified Palestinian identity. By using certain words and combinations of words (collocations) they are creating or conveying an identity for them whom they are addressing (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000, 178). And since they are addressing the population of Palestine, they are constructing a Palestinian national identity. As Abbas and Mash'al are speaking to the Palestinians as one unit, as seen above, they are creating a single Palestinian national identity, without considering differences within the group. However, fractions are recognized but then as opposing fractions. They are nevertheless addressed in friendly terms. One example is Mash'al addressing various fractions in Palestinian politics as “my comrades”. There is also an inclusion of the bigger Arabic society into the frames of the own group and identity, thus making the Palestinian identity wider and more inclusive. This is done by both speakers but most frequently Mash'al;”You are supported by your fellow countrymen and the Arab and Muslim states” (Abbas) and ”It [Palestine] belongs to the Arab and the Islamic World” (Mash'al).

The method used, especially by Abbas, to create the Palestinian identity is by describing “us” with words and qualities that (should) represent a Palestinian.

Despite the occupation, the settlements and complications of the region we have never deviated of course. We never relented or faltered, or sacrificed our established principles. These principles and rights are the center of our consensus. We are perusing them in prudence, defiance and in firm belief. With patience and forbearance and preparedness to sacrifice (Abbas, 2008).

There to, the Palestinian identity is made specific and clear by distinguishing the own identity from the “other”. The way of using words as “Zionist”, as both Abbas and Mash'al are doing, is a way of both naming the other, creating a distance and disparage them. By not using the term Israeli they are not recognizing the state of Israel and hence its legitimacy. Another disparaging phrase is “[...] this barbarian enemy”, used by Abbas in his speech. Even the opposing factions of Hamas is as written above addressed as “my comrades”.

When addressing the recipients of the speeches, the Palestinians, as a unit with specific personal qualities Abbas and Mash'al claim authority over both their own and the recipients' identity (“we” and “you”) (winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000, 89). At the same time, speaking in terms of “we” and “you”, the leaders and the people, as sharing the same duties, rights, goals and purposes (as Mash'al puts it) or even sharing the same blood and trait (as Abbas says), a seemingly personal and equal relationship between them is simulated. A simulation that only further strengthens the authority of the construction of identities. This authority also legitimizes the exhortations made in both speeches. Exhortations about standing united against the enemy. This is the tone used in both speeches, a admonishing yet positive tone. Both Abbas and Mash'al clarifies that Fatah respectively Hamas will stand behind their people in this fight and gives examples of previous honorable fighters.

To the martyrs, the wounded and the prisoners - until we achieve our victory, until we achieve our independence, on our soil with Jerusalem as a capitol, on the same route, on the same journey, extending to epitomize the aspirations of our people; we bow in honor (Abbas, 2008).

How wonderful was your shelling of Tel Aviv. May your hands be blessed. May your hands be blessed. We are proud of what you have done (Mash'al, 2012).

By appealing to fame and fortune Abbas and Mash'al further dilutes the idea of a Palestinian identity. The identity of a martyr and a hero. One that sacrifices everything for the Palestinian cause. The Palestinian identity as a martyr is a recurrent statement in both speeches and by using obligatory modalities such as “we cannot give up” (Abbas) and “The liberation of Palestine – all of Palestine – is a duty [...]” (Mash'al) the choice of not taking on this approach and identity seems less and less of an option. The fact that both speeches concludes with the statement that there is only one way to achieve their goals add on to this feeling. These goals are however not the same. Abbas proclaims the strong state as the only tool to end struggle whereas Mash'al advocates liberation as the only way to create sovereign statehood and finally end of struggle. These ways of expressing with obligating modalities with high degree of affinity (assent) has implications for the construction and structures of the discourses, and hence the social relationship between the author and the receiver and the systems of knowledge and meaning (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000, 88).

Identities are indeed social constructions but one shall not think that it is a question about subjective perceptions of reality. The fact that national identities concerns individuals does not mean that the assimilation of an identity has something to do with a subjective act of will. Instead, the basis for the social construction and the construction of identities could be seen as the political question about power. It is necessary for the existence of identities, and in this case national identity to constantly be reconstructed. But this reconstruction also means a constantly renewed exercise of power. If one accepts nations as given, objective entities the power relations which helps to create the constant social constructions of the nation are simultaneously denied. However, perceiving nations as subjective creations has the same consequence. By individualize the process of identity formation one ignore the power that exists over the subjective, and power does not exist or occur subjectively, only in collective contexts. To state that Abbas and Mash'al through their speeches are singularly producing Palestinian national identities are thus a simplified and incorrect analysis. As stated above when defining the concepts of constructivism and discourses, these concepts are both representations of reality and constructing reality. A discourse cannot act by itself. The leaders are both producing and reproducing discourses. The people, the recipients, are a part of this communication and relation, and are hence a part of this process. Together they are creating, maintaining and changing the discourses about national identity. Since power only can be exercised in concrete social relations this is done when it is articulated discursively in concrete situations, such as in speeches. One could, however, see it as if the power lies in the relation itself. Moreover, the discourse can be seen as a success when it is perceived as an ontological truth. When the national discourse about Palestinians as a people is something that just *is*, objectively (Hall, 2003, 112f, 118).

8.2.3 Presentations of the truth

The way of speaking and presenting facts or opinions as truths is a method used by both

Abbas and Mash'al in their speeches. “[...] since Palestine belongs to us[...]” (Mash'al). “Despite the occupation, the settlements and complications of the region we have never deviated of course” (Abbas). These objective, categorical modalities have a high degree of affinity; the speakers fully agree in their claims and since the speakers, the leaders have authority so does their truths (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000, 88). Mash'al is even more frequent than Abbas in using this rhetoric. Thereto, he seems uncompromising by using phrases such as “There will be no relinquishing or forsaking even an inch or small part of it [Palestine]”, whereas Abbas speaks more admonishing and not as adamant. Mash'al is furthermore not as diplomatic and delicate in his language as Abbas is. Neither is he accurate in some of his arguments. The sentence “[...] we must never recognize the legitimacy of the Israeli occupation of it [Palestine]. The occupation is illegitimate, and therefore Israel is illegitimate and will remain so throughout the passage of time” (Mash'al, 2012). This is an example of a circular reasoning turned into formal fallacy, which is an argument based on a perversion of the laws of logic. An argument that can only lead to logistically inaccurate conclusions. Only because A is true; the occupation is illegitimate, does not necessarily mean that B is true; the state of Israel is illegitimate, or vice versa. To draw the conclusion that because of this Israel will remain illegitimate throughout time is inaccurate. Hence, based on the A to B reasoning, if the occupation would end Israel would become legitimate, this is however not the conclusion of the argument.

Throughout both speeches religion and history (history specifically in the Mash'al speech) are used as legitimate reasons to why the land and its holy shrines belong to the Palestinian people. “Our fathers and our forefathers were born there [Palestine]. We lived there. It retains our memory and our history” (Mash'al). Thereto, Hash'al uses a rhetoric that portrays the situations and past events as if they had no choice than to act as they did or have done. They disclaim responsibility. “[...] but history and the laws of Allah tell us that victory and liberation cannot be achieved without resistance, battle, and sacrifice” (Mash'al). These, the factors of history, and religion in specific, are factors that are demanding to argument. Faith and holiness are abstract, highly personal and untouchable experiences and feelings and thus difficult to argument against with factual arguments.

8.3 Third dimension; social practice

The speeches have now been analyzed as *discursive practices* and as *texts*. In accordance with the *three dimensional model* these two aspect are now put into relation with the third step; the wider *social practice*, the context. This contextualization has *two aspects*. The first is considerations of whether the *discursive practice* reproduces or restructures the existing *order of discourse*. The second is what consequences this has for the wider *social practice*. The purpose with the second aspect is trying to map out the partly non-discursive relations and structures that create the framework for the *discursive practice*. Since a discourse analysis is not enough to analyze the wider *social practice* (according to Fairclough), as to the *social practice* having both discursive and non-discursive elements, the theory of Societal beliefs is

used as a complement (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000, 75).

8.3.1 First aspect; discursive practice and the wider social practice; change or status quo?

It was concluded in section 8.1, discursive practice that the *discursive practice* is rather reproducing the discursive order than transforming it. This contributes to maintain the social order of the wider *social practice*. It should however once again be emphasized that the speeches must be seen as taken from a specific time and context, and also as two speeches made by two different speakers. The Israel-Palestine conflict is an ongoing conflict and there is constant change, also in intensity. Even though both speeches were held relatively recently there has happened much since they were held, also considering the time difference between 2008 and 2012, especially when it comes to political changes inside Palestine (and the outside reaction to these) (Bröning, 2011, 5ff). The purpose of this thesis is however to examine and analyze how discourses, that is representations of reality, can help us to understand and analyze the influence and significance politics (language and power) has on the formation of national identity. The speeches made by Mahmoud Abbas and Khaled Mash'al are used as two examples in this analysis. But since a further purpose is to examine the eventual impacts this has on the conflict it could still be relevant and of interest to make a short contextualization with the ongoing political processes in Palestine. This contextualization is presented below.

Even though the analysis of the *texts* and of the *discursive practice* resulted in the findings of the speeches mainly reproducing already existing discourses, which are a part of the political *order of discourse*, one can see signs of the changes that have occurred the past years. Some of these changes are ideological and personal developments in Fatah, the programmatic reinvention of the Hamas movement and efforts to state-building by former Prime Minister of the PA Salam Fayyad (Bröning, 2011, 5). The concluding remarks by Abbas in his speech about a strong state as the only tool and way to end struggle can for example be understood in the light of the changes regarding PA's previous dogma of 'liberation before state-building' from the 1988 proclamation of the Palestinian State. In 2009 former Prime Minister Salam Fayyad and President Mahmoud Abbas began to implement a comprehensive plan for Palestinian state-building (Bröning, 2011, 6). The current PA state-building discourse can hence be seen in the speech by Abbas from 2008. Another discourse found in both speeches is, as presented above, is the one of Palestinian identity and unity, and thereto Arab and Muslim unity. This discourse can be seen as an, at the time ongoing discursive change and hence changing process of the *discursive practice* and *order of discourse*. Partly since the failures of Camp David in 2000 there has been a perception and discourse about the lack of a Palestinian partner in the peace process. Re-inforced by the Israeli perception of Palestinians from the second Intifada, this narrative and discourse has been increasingly accepted in the Israeli public opinion (Bröning, 2011, 4). The Palestinian national identity discourse and the Arabic and Muslim states as a part of this unity can hence be seen as a reacting development towards the narrative about the non-existing Palestinian partner. Indeed there has been, and still is a split in the Palestinian body of politics, especially regarding Hamas and Fatah. It is problematic not only in terms of internal politics but also has the split has provided Israeli

Governments with an easy excuse to reject compromise on the grounds that there has not been any obvious unified Palestinian leadership (Bröning, 2011, 96). The rift between different fractions does not however mean that there has not been, or are any partner or partners to negotiate with. Through the discourses of a Palestinian and Arabic collective identity and unity, Abbas and Mash'al are demonstrating that the Palestinian side are represented by not a single homogenous group, but rather by an understanding between the most relevant political players (Bröning, 2011, 8). There is however a difference between the pan-Arabism flourishing in the 1960s about the Arab nation and the belief about Arab identities today. Today it is largely recognized that there are *different* Arab identities. Palestine can thus be both a part of both an Arab community and identity and still be seen as a people (Nassar, 2001).

One could see this use of identity and unity discourse through the *discursive practice* as a process of change into a new *order of discourse*. A *order of discourse* that to some extent questions some of the political internal power relations by presenting and hence constructing the reality and the social relations in a new way. This assumption is partly confirmed by the internal political changes the past years. A transformation of the *order of discourse* implies, according to the CDA, possible change. A possible change in the wider *social practice*. Moreover, in the social constructivist approach and in line with the CDA discourses are, as stated many times above, both constructed and constructive. Even though some aspects of both speeches are implying continuity and reproduction, as presented under the section of *discursive practice*, other aspects are as now presented and analyzed indicating continuity and change. This analyze confirms the perception of communicative events and orders of discourse as not either constructed or constructive, they can be both. Thereto, identities are not stable; they are fluid and hence changeable and changing. It is these changes, the possibilities of change concerning identity in general and Palestinian national identity in specific that are of relevance and interest in this thesis. As the results of the *textual* analysis showed, the traits and common features of the Palestinian national identity were largely reproduced through the use of already existing discourses. This identity was however extended by being more inclusive towards opposing fractions, all of the Palestinian population and the Arabic and Muslim states.

8.3.2 Second aspect; societal beliefs about security and deligitimization and the wider social practice; consequences

It is now obvious that the *discursive practice* of the speeches are acting as both constructive and reproducing, and hence maintaining of the political *order of discourse* and its net of discourses. In some aspects of the national identity discourse there is change and in others there is not. The political and social consequences from this and the impacts on the conflict are through the help of the theory of Societal beliefs discussed below.

National identity derives from the concept of the nation. The latter is however a concept that has been used for more than two thousand years, while the former only two hundred. Today the national identity does not only imply self-identification or self-categorization as a member of a nation. Other key elements construct a community or society

which includes a sense of belonging, unity, loyalty and solidarity (Bar-Tal, 2001, 4) These elements can be seen as collective ideas shared by society members, also called Societal beliefs (Bar-Tal, 2000, xiv). Societal beliefs are a part of the national identity, and the idea of the national identity is a shared belief in a society. It is not unusual that national identities collide over issues such as self-determination, territories, rights and goals. Sometimes this leads to intractable conflict and in those cases it is fully possible that one or both nations construct a notion or a discourse that its own national identity is threatened as long as the other national identity exists. This scenario can be translated to the case of the Israel-Palestine conflict. To some extent one can thus see the conflict as a conflict between national identities. For many years both sides did not want to recognize the existence of the other. This has however developed and progressed into a much more understanding relationship, but there are still aspects of antagonism within each national group which contribute to perpetuate the conflict. This could be seen as a result of the assumptions that the two sides have opposed national goals and contradictory collective memories (Bar-Tal, 2001, 4f). The Societal beliefs about security and about delegitimization can be used as tools in understanding these scenarios and behavior.

Societal beliefs about security are developed when the society are perceiving insecurity and prolonged and serious threats. This development is also dependent on the perceived ability to cope with the threats. These threats may include existential threats such as threats to independence, self-determination, autonomy, freedom or to the well-being of society members (Bar-Tal, 2000, 87f). All factors included in the speeches used as empirical examples in this thesis. Thereto, since these beliefs concerns the ability to protect and cope with the threats, status and prestige are ascribed to the persons whose role is to maintain security. These persons can be, among others, political leaders, in this case Mahmoud Abbas and Khaled Mash'al. Beliefs about security are further essential for coping with threat and therefore, a society and the actors in charge of maintaining security, makes every effort to impart these beliefs to its society members. Furthermore, since security beliefs often are imparted from external sources, speeches from leaders can have a decisive impact. Whether a situation is perceived as threatened depends on previous knowledge. Existing knowledge is influenced by situations that provide ambiguous information about threats and ways of dealing with them. Cognitive factors therefore play an important role in the identification and evaluation of threats (Bar-Tal, 2000, 88ff). The actors mediating the knowledge of threats, here represented by Abbas and Mash'al, are therefore in a superior power position. The societal beliefs about security helps to understand the power relation between the producer and the interpreters in a discursive practice, and hence the power-relation in the wider society. Fairclough calls and categorize this power relation as hidden power. It has a one-sided character of communication and creates a sharp divide between the roles as producer and interpreters (Fairclough, 2001, 41).

Societal beliefs do not only concerns the own society, but also consists of beliefs of other groups or societies. Delegitimizing beliefs are negative images and stereotypes with clear affective and behavioral implications (Bar-Tal, 2000, 121). All conflicts starts with the idea that the goals of the own group are not compatible with the goals of another group (Bar-Tal, 2000, 125). As noted above, those ideas and perceptions exist in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. These perceptions can create delegitimizing beliefs about the other to explain and

manage the conflict, but the delegitimizing beliefs can also, the other way around, create the perceptions of colliding goals. Just like the security beliefs, these beliefs about delegitimization are partly communicated through external sources, such as speeches. Rhetoric such as “barbarian enemy” used in the speech held by Abbas can be seen as delegitimizing and both formulates threats and increase the perception of them. It indicates that the out-group is capable of serious brutality and therefore increases the perception of insecurity. Abbas (and Mash'al) is as noted above in power of defining the situation and are hence impacting the consequences of it. The rhetoric and discourses formed from this are thus contributing to perpetuate the conflict through exacerbating and constructing the perception of insecurity. This analysis demonstrates how the use of delegitimizing beliefs helps to understand the exemplifying speeches through another aspect than the strictly discursive one. It also helps to understand the intractable aspect of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; through the perception of high threat the ambiguity decreases, narrow the range of considered options, leads to antagonism and raises the need for structuring and control over the situation (Bar-Tal, 2000, 125). It is partly through delegitimizing rhetoric that the unifying identity discourse are constructed and reproduced. Delegitimizing beliefs namely sharpens the differences between groups to an extreme. Using them to nourish and maintain a unity is therefore fruitful for that purpose (Bar-Tal, 2000, 135f). A lack of uniformity may cause low cohesiveness and thus an impression of a lack of a unified society and leadership (Bröning, 2011, 96). To use a language that construct or gives the impression of the own group as one entity is therefore strategic, both internally to strengthen the own group and in relations to other groups. A unified group is a strong group. National identity, which creates unity, is hence an important aspect in the representation of the nation.

The above analysis, conducted through the help of Societal beliefs about security and delegitimization has motivated and contributed to a deeper understanding of the discursive linguistics and rhetoric of Mahmoud Abbas' and Khaled Mash'al's speeches, which were analyzed in the two first parts of the *tree dimensional model*. This together with the analysis in the first section of the Social practice; 9.3.1, has further helped to understand and explain the consequences the discursive political language has on the Palestinian national identity and therewith on both society and on the conflict dynamics and progression. With that it is possible to draw conclusions about the research questions and study of interest. This, together with a short discussion of its implications, is done in the next section.

9 Discussion and concluding remarks

With the concept of national identity there are several aspects accompanying it based on what it consists of. National identity hence implies certain requirements. These requirements refer to goals set by the national identity in order for the identity to be fulfilled. This fulfillment can be self-determination, independence or the establishment of a state (Bar-Tal, 2001, 4). All of these are aspects which have been goals and aspirations of the Palestinian people. The perception of a lacking Palestinian national identity which has been flourishing in recent years and decades, (elaborated on and discussed further up) can be understood and seen in the light of the fact that Palestine has not had a powerful machinery of the nation-state to support it (Khalidi, 1997, 194). The core of the conflict, as seen from the above discussion is that Jews have already fulfilled their goal and established the state of Israel. The Palestinians on the other hand are still struggling to fulfill theirs. The current situation is that of the Palestinians living under Israeli occupation, striving to realize the aspiration and requirement derived from their national identity; the establishment of a Palestinian state (Bar-Tal, 2001, 5). A state recognized not only by a majority of UN member states, but also by opposing internal forces and the opponents in the conflict. As concluded above the national identity is in many ways a crucial aspect of a society. Looking at it through the perspective of Societal beliefs it *is* the society. A state is hence what the Palestinian nation needs in order to meet and formulate the ultimate requirements for a national identity. This perception implies and further goes in line with the state-building efforts of the PA. Efforts with the hopes and beliefs of that independence and sovereignty would lead and result in liberation and end of occupation.

There is a double issue and aspect of the concept of national identity. A double aspect which lies as a problematic basis for this thesis and its area of interest. National identity is a recurrent force of conflict between peoples; it is however also a force that can motivate to collective struggle with the aspirations of realizing shared goals and ideas. How it used depends on how it is expressed, and vice versa. This is namely what this study has shown and research questions resulted in - national identity can be used both as a tool in or too conflict, and as a promoter of peace. And mostly it is not used as either or, but rather constitutes a mix, a discursive combination that are constructing ideas, maintaining them and transforming them. The study has also resulted in the knowledge about the importance of the wider context. The opportunities to change are ultimately a question about access to discourses, which in turn is depending on power and power relations. Power is not a property of an actor but are exercised through relations. The changeable character of discourses, which formation of identity is part of, can contribute to the understanding and explanation of the importance and impact of national identity in a political context. Discursive practice is an aspect of a hegemonic struggle that contribute to reproduce and/or transform the order of discourse, which it is a part of, and therewith the existing power relations in the conflict. The concept of national identity has hence political importance since it offers opportunities to

change. This is how the discursive formation and meaning of Palestinian national identity, under circumstances of conflict, through the impact and channels of politics and its leaders can and should be understood in this thesis.

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11 Appendix I

PA Chairman Mahmoud Abbas' addresses the Palestinian people

The following are excerpts from a speech given by Mahmoud Abbas, aired on Al-Jazeera TV on December 31, 2008. Length: 07:18

We are standing here. You are supported by your fellow citizens. You are supported by your fellow countrymen and the Arab and Muslim states. Those who believe in justice and in peace. Do not falter, do not relent. Hold steadfast in defiance, in the face of this barbarian enemy. Do not despair, we will continue our journey. Partners, sharing the same blood, the same blood running in our veins. Sharing the same trait, and sharing the same soil.

We will continue our journey as fellow countrymen, holding the responsibility and the trust. Holding steadfast to our established principles as we have sworn on the holy scripture to serve the interest of our country and to serve the interest of our fellow citizens. Raising the slogans of victory. We cannot fail you and we cannot wave, we cannot give up. This is the promise we made to continue our journey hand in hand in our struggle until we achieve independence and victory. My fellow countrymen in Gaza; the Gaza is the headline of a steadfastness and defiance - under the brunt, under this grave test and at this crossroad we are facing, and in this huge challenge we are meeting. It is reminiscent of the early days of the journey for struggle, for sacrifice. Forty four years in the history of defiance, sacrifice and steadfastness. It is reminiscent of the first of January, 1965; the establishment of the Fatah movement. Fatah - the option and the decision of the people, erupting its modern revolution and devising its struggling factions.

People have been a part of the journey of struggle, in the search for independence. The journey continues, determined to achieve the goals with tangible results, regardless of the sacrifices. Continuing our journey in firm belief until we achieve victory. With all the achievements which stand as sources of pride, epitomizing the entity of our people, geographically and politically, deep rooted in history. While writing chapters of struggle and coping with the painful struggle, people tried to achieve independence and freedom. How about the struggle we are experiencing as a result of the disproportionate lack of balance of power here in the region. Despite the occupation, the settlements and complications of the region we have never deviated of course. We never relented or faltered, or sacrificed our established principles. These principles and rights are the center of our consensus. We are perusing them in prudence, defiance and in firm belief. With patience and forbearance and preparedness to sacrifice. To write in history, in golden letters, the journey of a struggle. Writing them in blood with the will to continue. It is reminiscent also of the first martyr, the first prisoner, the first wounded and the last martyr falling today in Gaza and Ramallah. And the wounded who are still bleeding and the prisoner who is added as a number to the eleven

thousand prisoners lying behind the Israeli bars. To the martyrs, the wounded and the prisoners - until we achieve our victory, until we achieve our independence, on our soil with Jerusalem as a capitol, on the same route, on the same journey, extending to epitomize the aspirations of our people; we bow in honor. Honoring the memory of all the martyrs, women, children, elders and leaders. We also pray for the wounded. Their wounds will remain medals on our chests and we emphasize to all the prisoners; our freedom is your freedom, it is looming large and every cloud has a silver lining. It is Palestine, the homeland of sacrifice and martyrs. We are honest countrymen over the past four decades, and until we seize our independence and freedom as sovereign state to all its people, a state of prosperity, pride, dignity, peace and dependence and partnership of civilization - this is the course we are taking, this is our goal and aspiration which is secured under the international stipulations. It is the only tool to end the struggle in this region which has been and still is suffering.

12 Appendix II

Hamas Leader Khaled Mash'al: We Will Not Relinquish an Inch of Palestine, from the River to the Sea

Following are excerpts from a speech delivered by Hamas Leader Khaled Mash'al, which aired on Al-Aqsa TV on December 7, 2012. Length: 09:27

Khaled Mash'al: First of all, Palestine – from the [Jordan] River to the [Mediterranean] Sea, from its north to its south – is our land, our right, and our homeland. There will be no relinquishing or forsaking even an inch or small part of it.

Second, Palestine was, continues to be, and will remain Arab and Islamic. It belongs to the Arab and the Islamic world. Palestine belongs to us and to nobody else. This is the Palestine which we know and in which we believe.

Third, since Palestine belongs to us, and is the land of Arabism and Islam, we must never recognize the legitimacy of the Israeli occupation of it. The occupation is illegitimate, and therefore, Israel is illegitimate, and will remain so throughout the passage of time. Palestine belongs to us, not to the Zionists.

[...]

The liberation of Palestine – all of Palestine – is a duty, a right, a goal, and a purpose. It is the responsibility of the Palestinian people, as well as of the Arab and Islamic nation.

Fifth, Jihad and armed resistance are the proper and true path to liberation and to the restoration of our rights, along with all other forms of struggle – through politics, through diplomacy, through the masses, and through legal channels. All these forms of struggle, however, are worthless without resistance.

[...]

Politics are born from the womb of resistance. The true statesman is born from the womb of the rifle and the missile.

Announcer: Say: “Allah Akbar.”

Song: Oh Abu Al-Walid, oh Mash'al, prepare the way, come on.

Our journey must be completed. Allah is with you.

Khaled Mash'al: May Allah bless you.

Oh Palestinian statesmen, oh Arab and Muslim statesmen, learn your lesson from Gaza.

Anyone who wishes to take the path of diplomacy must take a missile along with him. He must rely upon the infrastructure of the resistance. Your value, oh statesman, is derived from the value of resistance.

I, along with my dear brother Abu Al-Abd Haniya, the entire Hamas leadership, both here and abroad, our comrades, the leaders of the resistance, in Gaza, in the West Bank, here and abroad – by Allah, we are indebted to the leadership of the Palestinian military wings. If not for the great commanders of the military wings, we would have no statesmen. This is thanks first to Allah, and then to the heroes of the resistance.

How wonderful was your shelling of Tel Aviv. May your hands be blessed. May your hands be blessed. We are proud of what you have done.

Jihad and resistance are the path. This is not mere rhetoric. Events have shown us that Jihad and resistance are the most advantageous and reliable option. This option is not a delusion or a mirage. By no means. The resistance is a palpable, visible, and envisioned thing. It marches on the ground, spreading light to its people, and unleashing fire upon its enemies. That is the resistance.

[...]

For us, resistance is the means, not the end. I say to the entire world, through the media: If the world finds a way other than through resistance and bloodshed to restore Palestine and Jerusalem to us, to implement the Right of Return, and to put an end to the loathsome Zionist occupation – we will welcome it. But we gave you a chance for 64 years, and you did not do a thing. That is why we opted for resistance. Don't reproach us. If we had found another way – one that did not involve war and battle – we would have proceeded upon it, but history and the laws of Allah tell us that victory and liberation cannot be achieved without resistance, battle, and sacrifice.

[...]

Jerusalem is our soul, our history, our collective memory, our past, our present, and our future. It is our eternal capital, to which we hold fast and which we will liberate, inch by inch, neighborhood by neighborhood, stone by stone, every place sacred to Islam, and every place sacred to Christianity. Israel has no right to Jerusalem.

[...]

The Right of Return means the return of all the refugees, the displaced, and the exiled to the land of Palestine – to its cities and its villages, to the neighborhoods of Gaza, the West Bank, and within the 1948 borders. We own every inch of our land. Our fathers and our forefathers were born there. We lived there. It retains our memory and our history. The Right of Return is sacred to us, and it cannot be depreciated.

When my brothers and I entered the Gaza Strip yesterday, we began the fulfillment of the Right of Return, Allah willing.

[...]

Hamas has a clear-cut principle: no to resettlement of refugees and no to an alternative homeland. There is no substitute for Palestine.

[...]

The unity of Palestinian land refers to Gaza, the West Bank, and the land within the 1948

borders. That is the land of Palestine – it is all Palestine, every part of it is Palestine.

No part of it will be separated from the other parts. Anyone who believes that Gaza can be kept far from the West Bank is delusional. Gaza, the West Bank, and the land within the 1948 borders are all beloved parts of the great Palestinian homeland.

Isn't that so, Abu Al-Abd [Haniya]?

Announcer: Say: "Allah Akbar."

Crowds: Allah Akbar.

Announcer: Say: "Allah Akbar."

Crowds: Allah Akbar.

Announcer: Say: "Allah Akbar."

Crowds: Allah Akbar.

Khaled Mash'al: The West Bank is inseparable from Gaza, Gaza is inseparable from the West Bank, and they are both inseparable from Haifa, Jaffa, Beersheba... and Safed.

[...]

Man: Oh Mash'al, our beloved...

Crowds: Oh Mash'al, our beloved...

Man: Your army shelled Tel Aviv...

Crowds: Your army shelled Tel Aviv...

Man: Your army struck Tel Aviv...

Crowds: Your army struck Tel Aviv...

Man: Oh Qassam, do it again...

Crowds: Oh Qassam, do it again...

Man: But this time, strike Haifa...

Crowds: But this time, strike Haifa...

Man: But this time, strike Jaffa...

Khaled Mash'al: Allah willing...

Man: Say: "Allah Akbar."

Crowds: Allah Akbar.

[...]

Khaled Mash'al: Hear me well, my comrades in the various factions. Liberation will precede statehood. A real state will be the fruit of liberation, not of negotiations.

There is no alternative to a free Palestinian state with real sovereignty on the entire land of Palestine.

[...]