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Shaping Identity

A study of the construction of national identity in
two royal speeches

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Abstract

This study examines the construction of national identity in two speeches, held respectively by King Abdullah II of Jordan and King Mohammed VI of Morocco, during the height of the Arab Spring in 2011. These speeches were a response to public uprisings and contained numerous reforms, which may have been instrumental for the continued rule of the Jordanian and Moroccan regimes. Using theories on national identity rooted in linguistics and sociology, this thesis investigates if and how national identity was emphasised and linguistically constructed in these two speeches. Given the political situation in the countries and the entire Middle East at the time, the kings should have been eager to unite their people around a common goal, an exercise in which a strong national identity might play a crucial part. This study is of interest due to the numerous similarities these speeches and speechmakers share, including the countries they rule, the outcome of their speeches and personal similarities between the kings themselves. Through the analysis of the speeches, it became evident that both kings emphasised and linguistically constructed a national identity for their respective countries. However, this was done employing different means and arguably to various extents.

Keywords: National identity, King Abdullah II, King Mohammed VI, Jordan, Morocco, political speeches, construction of national identity

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1. Introduction

Contrary to what is being debated in some European countries today, the idea of an autochthonous national identity is not real. Even though there might be an idea of an “identity” which could be considered as “national”, it is likely to be a construction invented to serve a purpose.

Apropos, identity in itself is a fluctuating phenomenon. According to the objectivist perception of identity, there are objective factors defining one’s identity, such as a common origin, language, culture, religion, psychology and connections to a certain territory. The subjectivist perception, on the other hand, tells us that the only thing defining to what community or group one belongs is one’s sense of belonging to that specific community.¹ Stuart Hall argued that “the fully unified, completed, secure and coherent identity is a fantasy.”² Instead, it transforms itself to suit new purposes. The same is true for *national* identity, simply because nations do not have natural identities – the identities of nations are “incessantly negotiated through discourse.”³ They are taken from history and shaped by historical events and memories. Hence, they can be remade in history just as easily.⁴

According to Denys Cuche, national identity has become a state concern, as the modern states of today are much more rigid in their control of identity than traditional societies were. The modern nation state engages in mono-identification. This means either only recognising one cultural identity as *the* national identity, which according to Cuche is the case of France, or recognising a certain cultural pluralism while still defining what Cuche calls “reference identity” as the only true legitimate identity. Cuche states that this is more often the case in historically more culturally diverse countries, such as the United States.⁵

Today, the question of national identity is frequently brought up in Europe as extreme right-wing parties with xenophobic agendas gain support across the continent with nationalist arguments. Often, the question of what is “Swedish,” “French” or “Hungarian” is at the centre of the debate, as this “identity” is something that, according to the proponents of these parties, needs to be protected from the influence of cultures brought in to the countries by immigrants. At the other side of the spectrum, national identity is sometimes questioned or contested in newly established states or former colonies (Ukraine and South Sudan being two very recent examples), as those countries are often made up of various linguistic or ethnic groups that never sought to create a sovereign state together. Even though Hall states that all modern nations are “cultural hybrids”,⁶ many of these nations have a history of linguistic and cultural continuity and were, in some sense, shaped from their own initiative. This is true for most European nations. It is, as said, not true for many former colonies, as they are in fact nations invented by other nations. Therefore, some of these countries’ leaders are consciously

¹ Denys Cuche, *La Notion de Culture dans les Sciences Sociales* 4th edition, Paris, La Découverte, 2010, p 100

² Stuart Hall. “The Question of Cultural Identity”. In *Modernity: an Introduction to Modern Societies*, edited by Stuart Hall et al., Malden, Mass., Blackwell Publishers 1996 , p 598

³ Michael Lane Bruner, *Strategies of Remembrance: The Rhetorical Dimensions of National Identity Construction*, Columbia S.C., University of South Carolina Press, 2002, p 1

⁴ Bhikhu Parekh, *Discourses on National Identity*, Political Studies (1994), XLII, p 504. Cf. also Yasir Suleiman, *The Arabic Language and National Identity*, Washington D.C., Georgetown University Press, 2003, p 7

⁵ Cuche 2010, p 106-107

⁶ Hall 1996, p 617

working on creating and promoting a certain national identity in order to unify their nations. This thesis will look at two speeches held by leaders of two Arab countries in a time of regional political turmoil, and aims to examine whether or not national identity was being emphasised in those times of crisis. This will be done using theories rooted in linguistics and sociology that will be applied in the analysis, which hopefully will highlight important aspects and tools employed in the construction of national identity. If successful, this study will be able to point out whether or not the two speakers differ in their attempts of creating a national identity for their respective country.

2. Purpose and Research Question

Building on the above, the purpose of this thesis is to investigate whether or not national identity is under construction in my selected material.

The material comprises two speeches, one by King Abdullah II of Jordan and one by Mohammed VI of Morocco. The backgrounds of these two speeches are similar, as they were both given in 2011 at the height of the Arab Spring. Due to these circumstances, both regents are in their respective speeches introducing reforms in order to meet the challenges of the future. Apart from circumstantial similarities, the kings and their countries share many characteristics, the most obvious being that they are both monarchies with pro-Western foreign policies. Both Abdullah II and Mohammed VI can also claim descent from the Prophet Mohammed, lending religious legitimacy to their rule. Furthermore, both Jordan and Morocco are former colonies with non-homogenous populations, and do not have a history as independent nation states reaching particularly far back into the past.

Investigating national identity is interesting from both a linguistic and a political perspective. As for the latter, one could ask many questions such as what importance the topics brought up in these speeches actually had, and if they helped keeping Abdullah II and Mohammed VI in power. However, as this is a thesis focusing on the Arabic language, I shall try to investigate what they said and how they said it. Hence, I will need to ignore the political promises or reforms made and the effects of these. Hopefully, other studies will be able to answer those questions.

What I intend to investigate is the following:

Are the kings emphasising and linguistically constructing a national identity for their respective countries in these speeches?

If yes, are there any differences in how this is being executed?

3. Background

When Mohamed Bouazizi set himself on fire in December 2010 he set an entire region aflame. Inspired by the Tunisian street vendor, millions of people in the Arab World displayed their discontent with their regimes, as they demanded human rights, democracy and in many cases the departure of their despot rulers. In Egypt, Tunisia, Libya and Yemen, they succeeded. In Syria, the ongoing civil war is a bloody outcome of, among other things, president Bashar al-Assad clinging on to power after wide public uprisings.

The kings of the Middle East have notwithstanding remained in power. Despite protests in monarchies such as Jordan, Morocco, Bahrain and Oman, the kings proved to be more difficult to oust than the presidents.

The kings concerned in this thesis, King Abdullah II of Jordan and King Mohammed VI of Morocco, both decided to meet some of the demands made by the protestors by presenting new reforms while the Arab Spring was still ongoing, and it is the speeches in which those reforms were introduced that this thesis will analyse.

3.1. Abdullah II of Jordan

Abdullah II is the fourth king of Jordan. His great grandfather Abdullah I was instated as king of the Emirate of Transjordan by the UK, and subsequently became the first king of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan upon its creation after independence from the British in 1946. Abdullah I was born in Mecca, his father was the Sharif of the city and Abdullah I would himself become deputy for Mecca in the Ottoman legislature. He is considered as one of the chief architects of the Great Arab Revolt, (which his father proclaimed in 1916) during which Arab forces revolted against Ottoman power with the aim of creating a pan-Arab state.⁷

This Great Arab Revolt is important to the Jordanian royal family, since it serves as a source from which they draw political legitimacy. Abdullah II and his father Hussein have both used this to play the “Arabism card”, which is seen as one of three aspects of what is generally highlighted in the monarchy’s attempts to shape a Jordanian national identity. The other two are Jordan’s Bedouin culture and the king’s blood ties to the Prophet.⁸ According to Christopher Phillips, Abdullah II has focused on the monarchy as an institution rather than on himself in many of his speeches, a clear shift from his father, while at the same time focusing more on Jordanian nationalism and making religious references.⁹

Abdullah II is generally seen as a liberal ally of the West in an important and shaky region of the Middle East. In Jordan, he gets legitimacy from the fact that he is a direct descendant of Prophet Mohammed. Even though he praises Jordan’s Bedouin culture in his attempts to create national unity and identity, he was quoted in a now infamous interview with the

⁷ William L Cleveland & Martin Bunton, *A Modern History of the Middle East*, 4th edition, Boulder, Colo., Westview Press 2009, p 157-163

⁸ Christopher Phillips, *Everyday Arab Identity: The Daily Reproduction of the Arab World*, Abingdon & New York, Routledge 2013, p 41, 47

⁹ Phillips 2013, p 63, 68-70

Atlantic calling the Bedouin tribe leaders “old dinosaurs”.¹⁰ The fact that his family is not originally from Jordan is an obvious hurdle for Abdullah in his attempts to create united support for him. Furthermore, as the Jordanian regime is regarded as weak, there has been a need to broaden the concept of the Jordanian national identity in order to secure the continued rule of the regime.¹¹

The speech analysed in this thesis was held by Abdullah II on the 12th of June, 2011 in Amman on the anniversary of the Great Arab Revolt, Army Day and Coronation Day.

3.2. Mohammed VI of Morocco

Mohammed VI’s family is also not originally from the nation he is currently ruling, but the Alaouite family has been in Morocco since the 13th century, establishing the still ruling Alaouite dynasty in 1631. The Alaouite family claim descent from the Prophet Mohammed through the Prophet’s daughter Fatima and her husband Ali, the fourth caliph and the first Shia imam.¹²

Mohammed VI’s grandfather (sultan Mohammed V) carried out the “Revolution of the King and the People”, at the start of which he and his family were expelled by the French protectorate regime and sent to Madagascar in 1953. From his exile, he militated for independence through radio broadcasts. In 1955, the sultan returned to Morocco and negotiated his way to independence in 1956, transforming the nation into a constitutional monarchy in 1957.¹³ This event is obviously important to the history of Morocco, and Mohammed VI mentions it in the speech I shall analyse later in this thesis.

Mohammed VI has since his ascension to the throne to some extent moved away from the autocratic rule of his father, Hassan II, and is seen by the West as one of the region’s more liberal regents. Nonetheless, he has closed newspapers, cracked down on protesters in Western Sahara and promised reforms along similar lines of those presented in the speech analysed in this thesis (without fulfilling them) before.¹⁴ One outcome of the reforms presented in the speech concerned in this thesis was free elections, in which the Islamist Party of Justice and Development (PJD) won. They were subsequently rewarded with their leader being appointed prime minister.¹⁵ This could be seen as a step towards inclusion as Moroccan legislation has previously been restrictive on the PJD,¹⁶ showing that the king is willing to adapt to political realities and circumstances.

The speech analysed in this thesis was held by Mohammed VI on the 9th of March, 2011 in Rabat in a televised speech to the nation, considered to be a direct response to the protests in

¹⁰ <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2013/04/monarch-in-the-middle/309270/>

¹¹ Phillips 2013, p 48-49

¹² Albert Hourani, *De arabiska folkens historia*, Furulund, Alhambra förlag 1992, pp 68, 192

¹³ C.R. Pennell, *Morocco since 1830: a History*, London, Hurst & Co 2000, pp 283-296

¹⁴ <http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2058141,00.html>

¹⁵ <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2011/11/201111299577214517.html>

¹⁶ <http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2058141,00.html>

Morocco at the time.¹⁷

3.3. Summary

Both kings share a number of significant qualities. They can both claim descent from the Prophet, they are both viewed in positive light by the West and they have both displayed an understanding of the need to adapt for the better of their kingdoms and for the sake of their own continued rule, while at the same time showing autocratic tendencies. The countries they rule are also similar in numerous ways. They are both former colonies, they have heterogeneous populations and can show a good record of political stability compared to many of their neighbours.

These are all aspects important to my decision to analyse these two speeches, made at this particular time, by these particular kings. Taken together, these aspects will (hopefully) make my survey rewarding and interesting.

4. Theory

4.1. Theoretical base: three theories on national identity

The theories that will work as my theoretical base are the three theories on what constitutes national culture and national identity, and how this identity is created and upheld, presented by Stuart Hall, Leszek Kolakowski and Wodak, de Cillia, Reisigl & Liebhart. I shall try to present them briefly in this section.

Stuart Hall was a Jamaican-born British cultural theorist and sociologist. In his article *The Question of Cultural Identity*,¹⁸ Hall argues that identities are constructed by national cultures and that the meaning of “the nation”, with which people can identify, is produced by and contained in stories being told about the nation. These stories connect a nation’s past to its present.

According to Hall, the narrative of a national culture is constructed by a number of elements. Among these are the stories, contained in literature and media, which give meaning to everyday life in a nation. This narrative of shared experiences “lends significance and importance to our humdrum existence, connecting our everyday lives with a national destiny that pre-existed us and will outlive us.”¹⁹ There is also an emphasis on timelessness and tradition, and the invention of tradition in the “narration of the nation”, as Hall calls it. Finally, Hall believes there to be an evocation of an original people around whom the nation is founded, and foundational myths depicting the (often fictitious) foundation of a nation, present in the construction of national identity.²⁰

¹⁷ http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/10/08/the_reform_of_the_king

¹⁸ Hall 1996, pp 595-634.

¹⁹ Ibid., p 613.

²⁰ Ibid. pp 613-615.

Critique has been raised against Hall's notion of a narratively constructed national identity. Wodak, de Cillia, Reisigl & Liebhart have pointed out that these aspects are almost inseparable, and could in fact all be subcategories of the first element, the narrative of national culture.²¹ I would argue that, although some of the points share many similarities, they are distinguishable even though that might depend on what material is being analysed. Some of Hall's points will be brought up and re-examined later in this chapter.

The second theory is that of Leszek Kolakowski, a Polish philosopher best known for his analyses on Marxist thought. In *Über kollektive Identität*,²² Kolakowski argues that national identity is characterised by five elements: it contains the idea of a national spirit (a *Volksgeist*), a historical memory (remembering events of a nation's past in a manner serving a specific agenda), the way a nation anticipates the future, the idea of a "national body" (landscapes and physical artefacts) and lastly a nameable beginning to a nation, unspecific but widely recognized (such as "the founding fathers").²³

Neither of these two theories is perfect. To some extent they overlap and in other ways they complement one another.

Wodak, de Cillia, Reisigl & Liebhart have presented their own theory on what constitutes the discourse on national identity, based on the above and their pilot analyses of national identity construction in Austria.²⁴ This theory, or rather "thematic areas", is later employed in their investigation on national identity discourse in Austria in *The Discursive Construction of National Identity*. What they present is a synthesis of Hall's and Kolakowski's works, as they see neither of these theories as sufficient. They do however believe that they overlap and that both make some valuable points.²⁵ Wodak et al. present their own five aspect scheme, their own adapted version of the theories presented by Hall and Kolakowski and the initial findings of their study.

The following is what Wodak et al. stipulate as the five major thematic areas of national identity construction:²⁶

- 1) The linguistic construction of the *homo nationalis*²⁷
- 2) The narration and confabulation of a common political past
- 3) The linguistic construction of a common culture
- 4) The linguistic construction of a common political present and future
- 5) The linguistic construction of a "national body"

²¹ Wodak, De Cillia, Reisigl & Liebhart, *The Discursive Construction of National Identity*, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 1999, p 24

²² Originally presented in in Michalski, Krzysztof (ed.), *Identität im Wandel: Castelgandolfo-Gespräche 1995*. Institut für die Wissenschaften vom Menschen. Stuttgart, pp 47-60. As I have not been able to find this work, I have used the version of Kolakowski's theory presented in Wodak, De Cillia, Reisigl & Liebhart, *The Discursive Construction of National Identity*, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 1999, pp 25-26 and it is this presentation of his theories I will be referring to.

²³ Wodak, de Cillia, Reisigl & Liebhart 1999, pp 25-26

²⁴ Ibid., p 30

²⁵ Ibid. pp 24-26

²⁶ Ibid., p 30

²⁷ Originally presented as "*homo Austriacus*", since their study exclusively concerns Austria. As my study concerns two countries, I shall refer to it as "*homo nationalis*".

As their data concerns Austria and their study differs from mine, I have decided not to simply use their theory as I find part of it to be irrelevant to my material. Furthermore I believe that, even though Wodak et al. have created their own theory of what national identity discourse is comprised of, some of these elements are highly unspecific and difficult to detect. That specifically concerns the third and the fifth elements on their list. Therefore, I have decided to return to both Hall and Kolakowski in order to create my own synthesis of the three theories presented so far, and formulate what, in my opinion, is a more complete theory of what constitutes national identity construction.

4.2. Theoretical framework

I will base my search for a construction of national identity in these speeches on the following five instruments.

- 1) National spirit (*Volksgeist*) and the construction of a *homo nationalis*
- 2) Historical memory
- 3) Foundational myth
- 4) Narration and confabulation of a common political past
- 5) The linguistic construction of a common political present and future

I consider these five to be instruments of a national identity construction. As such, they are all functioning methods for the construction of national identity and each of them could, individually, assist in the creation of such an identity. These five instruments are thus not components of a set universal package invaluable to the construction of national identity, since there are many ways to create, construct, shape and establish a national identity, as shown by the theories presented above. Nonetheless, I have chosen to examine these particular instruments since I believe them to be relevant to my primary material. In the following passages, I shall try to argue, more specifically, for why I have chosen them and to present them more exhaustively.

I have kept three of the instruments presented by Wodak et al: *homo nationalis* (here as a complement to Kolakowski's *Volksgeist*), narration and confabulation of a common political past and the linguistic construction of a common political present and future. Instead of Wodak et al. "linguistic construction of a common culture" and "national body", I shall examine Kolakowski's concept of historical memory and Hall's concept of foundational myths. This is because I believe that these two instruments are both more easily detected and more relevant to study. The way Wodak et al. describe the concept of a common culture, it may contain everything from language and religion to sports and eating habits.²⁸ This may sound concrete and specific, but these are things that, in my opinion, are cultural phenomena in a society. They are "facts", of sorts, in the sense that they exist and people participate in or perform them every day. The concept of a "national body", which concerns both landscapes and physical national artefacts, suffers from the same "problem", as it concerns physical

²⁸ Ibid., p 31

items.²⁹ Most importantly, I do not expect to find depictions of sports, eating habits and landscapes in the political speeches I am about to analyse. Wodak et al. have included interviews with Austrian individuals in their data, and in that context the inclusion of common culture and “national body” is reasonable, as these are things that many of us might have mentioned should we have been asked about what is specific for our culture or identity. However, they are not instruments one can expect to find in a political speech, and that is, as said, why I have excluded them from my study.

As for the construction of national identity, I believe that it is more relevant to look at what is actually *constructed*. Therefore, I have included “historical memory” and “foundational myth”, as both are examples of construction and require either a doctored version of truth or an inaccurate description of a certain event. Based on the assumption that identity is a construct, and from examining the theoretical literature, I consider the five instruments I have chosen to be the most adequate for my analysis.

The first instrument is, as said, constituted by both Kolakowski’s “*Volksgeist*” and Wodak et al. construction of a “*homo nationalis*”. The *Volksgeist* (national spirit) is something which according to Kolakowski expresses itself in certain cultural forms and certain manners of behaviour of a group of people, especially in times of crisis, which is why I would like to try it on my selected material. Wodak et al. concept of the construction of *homo nationalis* complements this in a rather efficient way. The *Volksgeist* is a metaphysical entity, present in the minds of people, whereas *homo nationalis* is something that is actively constructed. According to Wodak et al. speechmakers could appeal to emotional attachments to one’s *Vaterland*, a national mentality and conjecture certain national behavioural dispositions.³⁰ This first tool, the combination of these two concepts, is thus aiming at evoking a “national spirit, which is assumed to be present in the minds of a nation’s people as well as at actively constructing a “national human being”. Hence, a speaker using this tool is attributing particular characteristics to a people.

Jordan and Morocco are two countries with very heterogeneous populations. About half of Jordan’s population is Palestinian, and Morocco could be considered an ethnic melting pot.³¹ Bearing this in mind makes it, in reality, quite hard to describe the typical Jordanian or Moroccan, which is an added reason why the *Volksgeist/homo nationalis* instrument is of interest in this study.

The second instrument is Kolakowski’s concept of “historical memory”, which is the idea of remembering one or several events in a particular way, thus making it suit a certain agenda. It may involve excluding facts or placing a disproportionate importance on happenings, streamlining it in accordance to that agenda or ideology. Kolakowski stated that “some nationalities which have formed just recently invent an ad hoc artificial relation to the past

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid., p 25, pp 30-31

³¹ <http://www.refworld.org/docid/49749cfc.html> & <http://global.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/392604/Morocco/46574/People>

without the existence of real, verifiable connections”.³² This aspect too, is of significant interest in relation to Jordan and Morocco.

Even though the third instrument, Hall’s concept of “foundational myths”, may share similarities with the instrument of historical memory I would argue that they differ in certain ways. This third instrument, a foundational myth, evokes a beginning in a nation’s existence and does not simply write pseudo-history. A foundational myth locates the origin of a nation, but it does so in vague terms, referring to this beginning as if it took place in “mythic” times even when the actual birth of a nation is well-documented and well-known. “[Foundational myths] provide a narrative in terms of which an alternative history or counter-narrative, which pre-dates the ruptures of colonization, can be constructed.”³³ A foundational myth is thus an event to which someone refers as the beginning of a nation, without this necessarily having to be a true recitation of history. New nations are often founded on these myths, making this concept interesting in the cases of Jordan and Morocco.

The fourth instrument, “narration and confabulation of a common political past”, could also be considered as one and the same as the second (i.e. historical memory), but here too, I argue that there are some fundamental differences. The main difference is that the construction of a political past concerns past political successes, defeats and times of prosperity, rather than simply creating pseudo-history. If historical memory concerns mentioning certain events, the narration of a common political past tells us the story of how a nation together created those events. Here, I argue that the importance lies in a nation having shared something, with the actual happenings being of secondary significance. Wodak et al. gives the example of how Austrian politicians have emphasised how the Austrians were victims of National Socialism.³⁴ Despite this being an unpleasant memory, it is effective as it paints a picture of a shared political past. If this notion is present in my material, the kings will try to emphasise shared past events, regardless of them being positive or negative.

The fifth instrument is called the “linguistic construction of a political present and future.” Just like the fourth, it is taken from Wodak et al. It concerns citizenship, political achievements, current problems, dangers and future aspirations. Here, the speaker will attempt to create a common political present and future using linguistic means. According to the study carried out by Wodak et al., there are a number of strategies employed in order to create a national identity. The strategies used to create and establish a certain national identity are called “Constructive Strategies”³⁵, and Wodak et al. present a number of sub-strategies within this category. I shall try to present them briefly. The “Assimilation, Inclusion & Continuation Strategy” aims to emphasise intra-national sameness and positive political continuity, and a speaker performing this strategy will try, among other things, to unite his audience through the use of “we”, spatial reference and temporal references indicating continuity, such as “since” or “always”. The “Singularisation Strategy” establishes a nation’s identity by accentuating its uniqueness, and the “Autonomisation Strategy” focuses its emphasis on the

³² Originally in Kolakowski 1995, p 33. Quote in English taken from Wodak, de Cillia, Reisigl & Liebhart 1999, p 25

³³ Hall 1996, p 614

³⁴ Wodak et al. 1999, p 31

³⁵ Ibid., p 33

nation's independence and sovereignty. The "Unification & Cohesivation Strategy" emphasises shared common features and the will to co-operate and unify, through appeals for co-operation and "lexemes with semantic components creating unification".³⁶ The "Dissimilation/Exclusion & Discontinuation Strategy" tries to emphasise inter-national differences and difference between present and past, by excluding other groups through the use of "they" and "them". A "Strategy of Avoidance" aims to suppress/background intra-national differences and inter-national sameness, and the "Vitalisation Strategy" uses personifications and anthropomorphisms in order to vitalise features of a nation.³⁷ Being aware of these strategies will undoubtedly facilitate my search for linguistic construction of a common political present and future.

I believe that the five instruments presented above constitute a theory of how the creation of national identity is accomplished that is more relevant to my material than the theories presented by Hall, Kolakowski and Wodak et al. do separately.

5. Method

After careful analysis of the speeches, I shall present them one at a time in the analysis section of this thesis. Looking at speeches, there are many things of interest depending on with what purpose you examine a certain speech. In the presentation of the analysis, I have chosen, as a principle, not to include the parts of the speeches where actual political promises are made and reforms are presented. It is reasonable to assume that promises and reforms are made in every country regardless of the political situation. However, every leader presenting reforms does not have to emphasise a certain national identity, making what is said outside of the reforms the crucial part of these speeches, for the particular purposes of this study. The assumption made above, that the presentation of promises and reforms does not constitute an arena for the construction of national identity, proved to be correct, with one single exception. This exception will be mentioned, but, otherwise, the portions of the speeches introducing reforms will not be treated in my survey.

In the analysis I shall apply the theoretical framework presented, and examine whether or not the instruments outlined above are being used. Succeeding in this will require a bit of methodological assistance, i.e. defining what I am looking for in relation to each component of the theoretical framework.

As for *Volksgeist* and *homo nationalis*, I shall look for statements evoking a certain national mentality or behaviour. This means both examining whether or not the kings appeal to a certain spirit present in the minds of Jordanians or Moroccans and also an active construction of a national human being, including "national features". Kolakowski argued that the *Volksgeist* will show itself in moments of crisis, and if the kings perceive the situations which they have to tackle in these speeches as crises, they might try to appeal to that spirit.

When describing the concept of historical memory, Kolakowski stated that some nationalities

³⁶ Ibid., p 38

³⁷ Ibid., pp 37-39

invent an ad hoc artificial relation to the past without evidence to support it.³⁸ I shall thus examine whether or not the kings are doctoring or modifying history for national identity purposes.

Foundational myths locate the origin of a nation, and I shall therefore examine if the kings are using a certain event as their foundational myth, but also how it is described linguistically as these myths are often placed in “mythical” times and vaguely described with the aim of making them seem ancient.

As for the narration and confabulation of a common political past, I shall look for traces of the speakers mentioning times of unity in defeats and crises. The main focus here is that the speaker, in order to achieve a narration of a common political past, will have to point out that the people of a nation have shared political history together, regardless of that history being positive or negative for the nation as a whole. I expect to detect this by looking at simple linguistic means, such as the usage of “we” and “together” in relation to a historical event or period being mentioned.

When examining whether or not a linguistic construction of a common political present and future is being used, I shall examine whether or not the speakers are using linguistic means in order to emphasise present or future political unity. Here, the strategies presented under this category in “Theory” will be of service.

As I discussed while presenting my theoretical framework, national identity construction can take many shapes. Bearing this in mind, one realises that a speaker may emphasise and/or linguistically construct a national identity for his country without necessarily using all of the five instruments outlined in the theoretical framework. Should I find evidence of any of the instruments being used, I shall argue that the speaker, to some extent, is emphasising and/or linguistically constructing a national identity. After having analysed the speeches, I will hopefully be able to see if and how the speakers differ in their approach to the issue of national identity, and thus be able to answer my second research question.

The paragraphs will be presented in Arabic, followed by my own translation. The translations will focus on extracting the essence of the paragraphs rather than achieving a literal translation. If a non-literal, more contextual, translation is used, I shall argue for why I have chosen that specific translation. The analysis of each speech will be concluded by a summary of my findings and preliminary conclusions.

After having analysed both speeches, I will compare and discuss the general results of my analysis.

³⁸ Ibid., p 25

6. Analysis

6.1. King Abdullah II

6.1.1. Example 1

فالحرص على الإصلاح في الأردن ليس حكراً على أحد، ونحن أصحاب مسيرة طويلة مع الإصلاح، الذي كان على الدوام في مقدمة أولوياتنا. فقد دعوت إلى الإصلاح والتحديث، منذ أن تسلمت أمانة المسؤولية، وعملت بكل الوسائل، من أجل إحداث الإصلاح والتغيير

”In Jordan, no one holds monopoly over reforms. We are the champions of a long process of reform, which has always been at the top of our priorities. Ever since I assumed my powers, I have called for reform and modernization and worked through all means in order to bring about reform and change.”

At a first glance these sentences might not look like they evoke nationalist feelings. Nevertheless, this paragraph is predominantly concerned with the narration and confabulation of a common political past. Abdullah II is focusing on a shared past, a past of Jordanians leading the way to reform.

From this, Abdullah II builds a bridge to the present. He does this by constructing a common political present through the use of what Wodak et al. call the “Assimilation, Inclusion & Continuation Strategy”³⁹, which predominantly aims at creating a sense of unity and of continuation. The new reforms introduced in this speech are not something that the king made up simply because public pressure forced him to, but is rather a process that both he and his people have been working on for a long time, as established in his narration of a common political past.

و نحن أصحاب مسيرة طويلة مع الإصلاح (literally: we are the masters/champions of a long journey with reforms) is a good example of this strategy, indicating that the reforms presented on this day are merely a continuation. After having mentioned that no one holds monopoly over reforms (probably referring to himself) right before, he is now employing the 1st person plural “we” to evoke a sense of inclusion, and then moving forward to emphasise the sense of unity and continuation. This is succeeded by the following clause: الذي كان على الدوام في (ad-dawām) originally means “continuance” or “perpetuity”, but together with the preposition على (‘ala) it takes the meaning of “at all times” or simply “always”. Abdullah II is thus, once again, emphasising that this is merely a continuation of a job already started.

The use of the 1st person plural, spatial reference, and the emphasis on continuation through the use of linguistic means such as “always” or “since”, as exemplified in the king’s speech, are according to Wodak et al. and as presented in “Theory” means employed in the “Assimilation, Inclusion & Continuation Strategy”.⁴⁰

³⁹ Ibid., pp 37-38

⁴⁰ Ibid.

6.1.2. Example 2

إننا نستلهم اليوم إرث ثورة العرب الكبرى، ورسالتها في الحرية والعدالة والتسامح وكرامة الإنسان. وهذه المناسبة العزيزة علينا لا بد أن نذكرنا جميعاً بمبدأ المواطنة الذي نلتقي حوله، كما التقى الأردنيون من سائر مناباتهم وأصولهم على ثرى الوطن وأسسوا دولتهم، وصاروا كلهم بنعمة الله إخواناً.

”Today, we draw inspiration from the legacy of the Great Arab Revolt and its mission of liberty, justice, tolerance and human dignity. This event is dear to us, and it reminds us all of the principle of citizenship around which we unite, like the Jordanians, irrespective of backgrounds and origins, who met here on the earth of the motherland and founded their state and with God’s grace became brothers.”

The instruments that come to mind after reading this paragraph are the concepts of foundational myths and historical memory. Abdullah II makes a connection between modern day Jordan’s citizenship principles and the values that made Jordanians gather on the nation’s land and found the Jordanian state. This is a highly unspecific description of how Jordan was founded, and evokes the illusion that Jordan is a country with ancient roots. Abdullah II is thus using the foundational myth scheme. Since he is, simultaneously, describing certain historical events, the king is also evoking the concept of historical memory. According to Abdullah II’s narrative, Jordan was founded by Jordanians of different origins because they believed in certain values, and saw the land that is now Jordan as place for those values to flourish. In reality, the British gave the king’s great grandfather the Transjordanian territories in return for not attacking the French and the English forces during the Great Arab Revolt.⁴¹ Abdullah II is thus creating an ad hoc relationship to the past, making this a good example of the concept of historical memory. Moreover, the above example can also be classified as a narration and confabulation of a common political past. This as the king evidently points out the Jordanians’ shared political history by mentioning these events.

Furthermore, the king linguistically constructs a common political present:

وهذه المناسبة العزيزة علينا لا بد أن نذكرنا جميعاً بمبدأ المواطنة الذي نلتقي حوله (“This event is dear to us, and it reminds us all of the principle of citizenship around which we unite”).

Here, Abdullah II is connecting the Great Arab Revolt to the principles of citizenship that, according to him, unite Jordanians even today. By doing this, he is constructing a common political present. Here, he uses the “Unification & Cohesivation Strategy” presented by Wodak et al.,⁴² as he emphasises common unifying features of Jordanians. In this example, those common features are the principles of the Great Arab Revolt. In this sentence, he is using simple but efficient means of realisation while employing this strategy. For example, he uses the 1st person plural twice: تذكرنا جميعاً (tudhakkirana jamī’an) – “reminds us all, reminded us all” and نلتقي حوله (naltaqī ḥawlahu) – “we gather around, we meet about”, here: “we unite”, as Jordanians have united around those principles. Abdullah II is emphasising the stipulated fact that Jordanians have united before, and they are united today in their values,

⁴¹ Cleveland & Bunton 2009, p 167

⁴² Wodak et al. 1999, p 38

thus establishing that they can unite and come together once more.

Abdullah II is also, if not as clearly, using the “Assimilation, Inclusion & Continuation Strategy”, as he indicates that the Jordanian principles of citizenship are simply a continuation of the principles that the presumed ancient Jordanians united around. According to Wodak et al., a common linguistic device of this strategy is spatial reference through the usage of toponyms (place names), often in a rather vague manner.⁴³ The following is a good example of this:

كما التقى الأردنيون من سائر منابثهم وأصولهم على ثرى الوطن وأسسوا دولتهم

“Like the Jordanians, irrespective of backgrounds and origins, who met here on the earth of the motherland and founded their state.”

الوطن (al-waṭan) has the meaning of mother-/fatherland, thus holding a nationalistic meaning.

In its adjective form وطني (waṭanī), it holds a less pretentious meaning of “nation”, or “national” or “domestic”. Consequently, Abdullah II manages to vaguely refer to a geographic area, where the first Jordanians met, without having to specify the borders of this area (which are rather arbitrary and in fact non-existing at the time of the original Jordanians’ meeting) while at the same time being absolutely clear about what area he is referring to, as الوطن in this context can only mean one country – Jordan. Simultaneously, he is evoking nationalistic feelings through the use of الوطن, showing how much can be said in only one word.

6.1.3. Example 3

ولا بد من الاتفاق على أن الشعور والقناعة بالانتماء لهذا الوطن، هو الذي يحدد الهوية الوطنية للإنسان، ويحدد حقوق المواطنة وواجباتها، بغض النظر عن خصوصية المنابت والأصول، أو المعتقدات الدينية، أو التوجهات الفكرية والسياسية. وعلى ذلك، فنحن جميعاً على هذه الأرض الطاهرة، أسرة واحدة، مواطنون متساوون في الحقوق والواجبات، ولا فضل لأحد على الآخر إلا بما يعطي لهذا الوطن

”We can all agree that the feeling and the conviction of belonging to this nation is the determinant of the national identity, defining our civic rights and duties, regardless of background, origin, religious conviction or political and ideological orientation. Furthermore, we are all here on this pure land, one family, citizens and equals in our rights and duties, and no one is favoured over another except in his dedication to this nation.”

This paragraph is interesting in many ways, but mostly because Abdullah II actually mentions “national identity”. To some extent, the king defines what national identity in Jordan is. He is acceding to a subjectivist interpretation of the concept of identity,⁴⁴ as he is stating that it is the feeling of belonging to Jordan that is determinant for one’s Jordanian identity. Abdullah II also mentions the existence of various ethnic and religious groups in his country, emphasising that despite all the differences between the people in Jordan they are Jordanian.

Here, Abdullah II is constructing a common political present through his use of the “Unification & Cohesivation Strategy” and the “Assimilation, Inclusion & Continuation

⁴³ Ibid., pp 37-38

⁴⁴ Cuche 2010, p 100

Strategy”. The first one as he is virtually draining his arsenal of linguistic means aimed at creating unity: the use of the 1st person plural (فنحن جميعا – fanahnu jamī’an - “we are all”), highlighting the equality between citizens (مواطنون متساوون – muwāṭinūn mutasāwūn - “equal citizens”) and calling the nation’s people “one family” (أسرة واحدة – ‘usra wāḥida). The king is also appealing to the sense of commitment in people by stating that “no one is favoured over another except in his dedication to his country”. It should be noted that Abdullah II throughout the speech mostly uses the 1st person singular, differentiating between him on the one hand and him and the people on the other. Hence, when he does use the 1st person plural it is reasonable to assume this is done with the intention of unifying his people. Abdullah II’s use of this strategy almost intertwines with his use of the “Assimilation, Inclusion & Continuation Strategy”, with focus being primarily on inclusion. This is also done through the use of the 1st person plural (most notably with فنحن جميعا = we are all), and the use of “we are all here on this pure land”. The latter is an example of a “we are all in the same boat”-argument, which is common within this strategy. As this paragraph succeeds the one analysed in “Example 2”, where the king focuses heavily on the past, it is natural that he would want to connect this to present-day Jordan and emphasise unity within the nation in this paragraph.

6.1.4. Example 4

إنني أدعو جميع القوى السياسية والاجتماعية إلى اعتماد هذه المبادرة والبناء عليها، وترجمتها إلى خطوات فورية تجاه العمل الوطني المسؤول لتحقيق رؤيتنا لأردن المستقبل، الأردن الذي يليق بطموحات الأردنيين، وعزمهم في مواجهة التحديات

”I call on all political and societal forces to support this initiative, to build on it and to translate it into immediate steps of a responsible and national effort toward the realisation of our vision for Jordan’s future - a Jordan that suits the aspirations of Jordanians and their willpower to face challenges.”

A novelty in this paragraph is that this is the first and only time Abdullah II touches upon the idea of a *Volksgeist* or *homo nationalis*. He does this when talking about “the aspirations of Jordanians and their willpower to face challenges”. عزم (‘azm), here translated as willpower, holds an even stronger significance, meaning (among other things) “determination”, “firm will” or “resolution”. It is the *masdar* of the verb عزم (‘azama) – meaning “to decide” or “to resolve” which is used. The king is thus indicating that it is in Jordanian nature to be determined to face challenges, or to be determined while facing challenges.

Stating that this is a clear example of *Volksgeist* or *homo nationalis* would be to stretch the span of those concepts. Indeed, national behavioural dispositions or a national mentality are both characteristics of the *Volksgeist/homo nationalis* component, but in order for it to be a clear example of the use of this instrument there would need to be further emphasis on what makes a person typically Jordanian. Here, Abdullah II is merely stating that Jordanians are determined when facing challenges and he is not implying that this is specifically Jordanian. According to Wodak et al. and their concept of *homo nationalis*, someone’s national mentality

is often connected to that person's place of birth. Even though Abdullah II is indicating that the Jordanians' "willpower to face challenges" is ontologically Jordanian, he is not clearly stating that this quality is particular for his country. On the other hand, one could argue that the "challenges" Abdullah II is talking about is a crisis during which this determination present in Jordanian nature manifests itself, but it is, as already indicated, not clear that this is the case Abdullah II is making. Therefore, Kolakowski's concept is not completely applicable in this sentence. Neither does Abdullah II construct a *homo nationalis*, even though he approaches the concept by ascribing a certain quality to Jordanians. Despite having stated, in the previous example, that Jordan is a country of people of different origins who became Jordanians, the king does not "create" a typical Jordanian person in this paragraph.

As for the remainder of this paragraph, the following is worth further examination.

أدعو جميع القوى السياسية والمجتمعية إلى اعتماد هذه المبادرة ("I call on all political and societal forces to support this initiative")

Here, Abdullah II is once again constructing a common political present. The king is attempting to unify his people, as he is emphasising his desire for different political and societal forces to come together, to pull together and to co-operate by supporting the king's reforms. According to Wodak et al., this is a common linguistic means and a crucial part of the "Unification and Cohesivation Strategy".

6.1.5. Summary:

Abdullah II is using all of the instruments outlined in the theoretical framework except the first (*Volksgeist* and *homo nationalis*), which he is merely approaching. Of the ones used, there are evident examples.

In the first example, Abdullah II is both narrating a common political past and constructing a common political present. In the second, he is referring to a historical memory, evoking the imagery of a foundational myth, confabulating a common political past and constructing a common political present, continuing with the latter in the third example. In the fourth example, he touches upon the concept of a national human being or a national spirit, but does not, as stated, quite meet all the criteria. Moreover, he is continuing his construction of a common political present. The strategies he is using while constructing a common political present are the "Assimilation, Inclusion & Continuation Strategy" and the "Unification & Cohesivation Strategy". What is interesting is that even when creating a common political present, Abdullah II is rooted in history. While using the "Assimilation, Inclusion & Continuation Strategy", he is focusing heavily on continuation, which he sets himself up for through his historical references.

In addition to using most of the instruments outlined in the theoretical framework, Abdullah II is using a nationalistic vocabulary in general. In all examples except for example 3, he is using the word Jordan. In this third example, however, he uses the word الوطن (al-waṭan), "motherland", twice. The word "Jordanian" is used in example 2 and 4.

The 1st person plural (both the word "we" itself and the verb conjugation) is employed in all

examples except the fourth. Abdullah II refers to himself as “I” during the entire speech, which clearly indicates that his use of “we” is aimed at creating unity and a sense of inclusion.

6.2. King Mohammed VI

6.2.1. Example 1

وتفعيلا لما أعلننا عنه في خطاب 20 غشت 2010، بمناسبة ذكرى ثورة الملك والشعب، ندعو الجميع للانخراط في مواصلة إنضاج ما جاء في هذا التصور العام، في نطاق نقاش وطني واسع وبناء.

”Consistent with what I announced in my address on 20 August 2010, commemorating the Revolution of the King and the People, I call on everyone to engage in the continuing maturity of what has been outlined in the general plan through a national and constructive wide-ranging debate.”

“The Revolution of the King and the People” is an event in Moroccan history that could be mentioned as an attempt to create national identity and unity. However, it is the event that led to the creation of independent Morocco, which disqualifies it from functioning as a foundational myth. Here, it simply serves the role of a nationalistic name drop, and Mohammed VI is not using it as a narrative for the beginning of his nation. Rather, this paragraph is predominantly concerned with the linguistic construction of a common political present. The king is employing the “Unification & Cohesivation Strategy”, evident in how he is “inviting/calling on everyone” (ندعو الجميع - *nad‘ū al-jamī‘*) to follow the plan that has been outlined for Morocco’s future. Wodak et al. specify the appeals for co-operation as a characteristic trait of this strategy, since co-operation is crucial for the creation of unity and solidarity in a nation and gives a sense of the people working together towards a specific aim.

6.2.2. Example 2

ولنا في قدسية ثوابتنا، التي هي محط إجماع وطني، وهي الإسلام كدين للدولة، الضامنة لحرية ممارسة الشعائر الدينية، وإمارة المؤمنين، والنظام الملكي، والوحدة الوطنية والترايبية، والخيار الديمقراطي، الضمان القوي، والأساس المتين، لتوافق تاريخي، يشكل ميثاقا جديدا بين العرش والشعب.

“The sanctity of our values, which are a point of national consensus – Islam as the state religion, the guarantee of freedom of worship, the Commandership of the Faithful⁴⁵, the monarchical system, national unity and territorial integrity and commitment to democracy – provides a strong guarantee and a solid foundation for a historical agreement and the shaping of a new treaty between the throne and the people.”

What is most interesting with this paragraph is that Mohammed VI defines what the Moroccan values are, and that they (or rather, their sanctity) will provide a strong base for the reforms he intends to implement. As he is emphasising unifying common features within

⁴⁵ Translated from إمارة المؤمنين (Imārat al-Mu‘minīn). *إمارة المؤمنين* is the plural of مؤمن, meaning “believer”, an active participle from the root أمن (to have faith in). إمارة is a *masdar* stemming from the root أمر, meaning “to command”. Here, it is translated as “commandership”, but could also mean “emirate” as in “the United Arab Emirate”.

Moroccan society, he is thus constructing a common political present through the use of “Unification & Cohesivation Strategy”, even though these unifying factors are handpicked by the king. It is rather amusing that the king, while he is encouraging the people to unite in support of him rather than against him, is implying that “national unity” (الوحدة الوطنية – al-waḥda al-waṭanīya) is one of the aspects that actually bring national unity to Moroccan society. الوحدة is however a word of several senses, meaning everything from “unity” as in “national unity” to “integrity” and “unit” as in “military unit”. In this paragraph, it is used as both “unity” and “integrity”: الوحدة الوطنية والترايبية: al-waḥda al-waṭanīya wa at-turābīya =”national unity and territorial integrity”, with الوحدة being given two different senses by the two different adjectives (الوطنية – national, and الترايبية - territorial) paired with it. The focus on unifying factors indicates that the king is linguistically constructing a common political present.

6.2.3. Example 3

أولاً : التكريس الدستوري للطابع التعددي للهوية المغربية الموحدة، الغنية بتنوع روافدها، وفي صلبها الأمازيغية، كرسيد لجميع المغاربة⁴⁶

”First: a constitutional enshrinement⁴⁷ of the varied character of the unified Moroccan identity, rich in its diversity and variety, with the Amazigh component as a core element residing within all Moroccans.”

By, to some extent, defining Moroccan identity by ascribing to the Moroccans an element residing within all of them, Mohammed VI is approaching the concept of a *Volksgeist* or a *homo nationalis*. This is not a very clear example of either a *Volksgeist* or a *homo nationalis*, even though the king states that this is an element common to all Moroccans. The king does not develop this concept further, and the fact that this is actually one of the reforms announced suggests that this is not part of a construction of a national human being. The Amazigh (Berber) element is highly present in Moroccan society, as most Moroccans are of Arab-Berber descent. It could be considered as specifically Moroccan, but it is neither a national mentality nor a behavioural disposition connected to one’s motherland. Rather, it is a genetic fact and therefore I argue this is not part of either a *Volksgeist* or a *homo nationalis* construction. Furthermore, the king is mentioning “the unified Moroccan identity”. In doing so, he is emphasising a unifying common feature, hence using the “Unification and Cohesivation Strategy.”

⁴⁶ Taken from Mohammed VI’s list of reforms presented in his speech, hence the “first”.

⁴⁷ This is the translation of the word التكريس (at-takrīs) which is the *masdar* of the verb كرس (karrasa – stemform II), which means “to devote” and “to consecrate”, giving التكريس the meaning of “devotion” or “consecration”. Here, I have chosen the more contextual translation “enshrinement”. The king wants to protect the “varied character of the unified Moroccan identity”, so he is devoting a certain part of the constitution to this aim. However, since “enshrinement” means both “to cherish” (“protect”) and “to enclose as if in a shrine” (in this case, in the constitution), I consider “enshrinement” to be a more contextually accurate translation in this particular case.

6.2.4. Example 4

وفي هذا السياق، ندعو إلى التعبئة الجماعية، لإنجاح هذا الورش الدستوري الكبير، بثقة وإقدام، وإرادة والتزام ; وجعل المصالح العليا للوطن فوق كل اعتبار.

”In this context, I call on everyone to mobilise to ensure the success of this grand constitutional undertaking with certitude and resolution and with will and commitment, and to place the nation’s best interests above all other considerations.”

The king wants unanimous support for this reform initiative, and wants everyone to put the nation’s best interests first in order for this to succeed. He does this by calling for everyone to mobilise behind his initiative, motivating people to oblige by evoking the nationalist notion of placing one’s country ahead of one’s personal interests (وجعل المصالح العليا للوطن فوق كل)⁴⁸. As has been mentioned earlier, calling for mobilisation and co-operation is a characteristic of the “Unification & Cohesivation Strategy” presented by Wodak et al. Furthermore, Mohammed VI is setting a common and unifying future goal for his country by referring to his reform initiative, thus also in this way creating both a common political present in which Moroccans need to work together and a common political future in which Moroccans might be able to enjoy the harvest of their support for the king’s reforms.

6.2.5. Example 5

كما نعرب عن اعتزازنا بما يتحلى به شعبنا الوفي، بكل فئاته وجهاته، وأحزابه ونقاباته الجادة، وشبابه الطموح، من روح وطنية عالية ; متطلعين إلى أن يشمل النقاش الوطني الموسع، القضايا المصيرية للوطن والمواطنين.

“I would like to express my pride of the sincere patriotism shown by my loyal people all across the country, by political parties and trade unions and the ambitious youth. I hope the broad national debate will include issues of crucial importance for the nation and the citizens.”

It is important to note, here, that the king throughout his speech is using the 1st person plural to refer to himself, which is apparent in this paragraph. When the king says شعبنا, using the noun شعب (sha‘ab =”people”) together with نا (nā = the possessive pronoun for 1st person), he is not saying “our people”, but “my people”, using the majestic plural.

In this passage, the king paints a picture of Morocco as a country filled with patriotism in every corner where every fraction of society contributes to the patriotic cause:

بما يتحلى به شعبنا الوفي، بكل فئاته وجهاته، وأحزابه ونقاباته الجادة، وشبابه الطموح، من روح وطنية عالية - “...the sincere patriotism shown by my loyal people all across the country, by political parties and trade unions and the ambitious youth.”

One might wonder how the king defines patriotism, given that the king is announcing his

⁴⁸ <http://global.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/405644/nationalism>

reform initiative as a response to widespread protests in his country – in itself patriotism of sorts, but certainly not the kind that pleases the king. Nonetheless, he is creating a scenario in which the Moroccans are all patriotically fighting for the same cause, thus presenting a common political present, but without using any of the strategies presented by Wodak et al.

6.2.6. Summary:

Mohammed VI is, in the examples above, almost exclusively working on the construction of a common political present. This effort can be found in all examples, and the king is not focusing on the past at all. He mentions one historical event, the “Revolution of the King and the People”, but, as previously noted, this is not in order to invent a myth around the creation of Morocco. The creation of the sovereign state of Morocco was the result of an independence struggle, and this may be a reason why the king does not find it necessary to mystify the birth of his nation.

In constructing a common political present, the king is mainly using the “Assimilation, Inclusion & Continuation Strategy” and the “Unification & Cohesivation Strategy”. Within these strategies, the king focuses predominantly on co-operation and unity. When Mohammed VI uses the 1st person plural it is not a clear inclusion marker since he is constantly referring to himself in the 1st person plural. When translating these examples, defining whether the king is talking about himself or a “we” is a matter of contextual interpretation.

Furthermore, the word Morocco is not mentioned in any of the examples presented here, even though the adjective “Moroccan” is found twice in example 3. The word الوطن (al-waṭan), “motherland” is found both as a noun and in its adjectival form in all examples except the third.

7. Discussion

Both kings are, as showed in the examples presented, emphasising and linguistically constructing a national identity for their respective countries. However, there are distinguishable differences in how the kings are approaching the concept of national identity construction. Abdullah II is focusing on connecting what he is doing today to a greater cause, a cause for which Jordan and Jordanians have fought for decades. There is emphasis on foundational myths and historic events, and tying those to the present and thus evoking a sense of continuation in the fight for “Jordanian values”. Mohammed VI is exclusively focusing on the present, trying to include and unify through various linguistic means. The kings use the same strategies in their construction of a common political present. Nevertheless, there are differences in their respective emphasis within these. For example, when Abdullah II uses the “Assimilation, Inclusion & Continuation Strategy”, he is focusing more on continuation than Mohammed VI is, which is also proven by the fact that Abdullah II actually refers to a past from which something can continue. Since Mohammed VI does not really refer to the past, there is nothing to build upon as far as continuation strategies are concerned. As mentioned earlier, Morocco has a clearer common history of fighting for independence than Jordan, which may be a reason why Mohammed VI does not find it necessary to mention the past or to confabulate a past suitable for his agenda.

The kings are merely approaching the concept of *Volksgeist/homo nationalis*, and are not creating either a “typical Jordanian” or a “typical Moroccan”. Mohammed VI is however coming closer to a description of reality when approaching this concept, since he is mentioning the Amazigh element residing within all Moroccans, whereas Abdullah II arbitrarily attributes a certain quality to Jordanians. However, the concept of *Volksgeist/homo nationalis* is not necessarily entrenched in reality, so the fact that Mohammed VI is speaking of something which is true does not make his approach to the concept more potent than Abdullah II’s.

Both kings are also, to some extent, defining what either the national identity or the national values of their respective countries are. In that regard there is, however, one crucial difference. When Mohammed VI is talking about the national values of Morocco (“a point of national consensus”), he is vaguely establishing these as objective components of national identity. Abdullah II, on the other hand, assumes a far more subjectivistic approach, as the feeling of belonging to Jordan is what defines the Jordanian national identity.

The kings have different ways of expressing themselves. Abdullah II is more eager to use the 1st person plural and the name of his country than Mohammed VI is, and the latter’s frequent use of the 1st person plural (both in its original sense and of the majestic plural) does not create as clear of a shift between the “I” and the “we” as Abdullah II does.

Despite their differences, both speakers do emphasise and construct a national identity for their respective country. One can, however, argue that they do this to various extents.

Abdullah II is heavily rooted in the past, and he is succeeding in connecting this past to the present day and, to a certain degree, also to the future. This shows that Abdullah II is emphasising and constructing national identity to a wider extent than Mohammed VI is. As the theoretical literature used in this thesis has showed, connecting what is happening today to a greater cause is instrumental to the “narrative of the nation”, which according to Hall serves

the purpose of “connecting our everyday lives with a national destiny that pre-existed us and will outlive us.”⁴⁹ I argue that Abdullah II’s emphasis on past events and connecting his and his people’s contemporary efforts to history is a good example of Hall’s concept, and that this connection proves that Abdullah II is emphasising and constructing a national identity for his country to a larger extent than Mohammed VI is.

8. Conclusion

Both kings are emphasising and linguistically constructing a national identity for their respective countries in their speeches. However, there are several differences in how this is executed. As shown in this survey, Abdullah II is emphasising both the past and the present in his construction of national identity, with the latter being constructed on the base of the former. He also uses four of the five instruments outlined in the theoretical framework. Mohammed VI only uses one; he is exclusively accentuating the present and does not present a past to build the Moroccan identity upon. Briefly, the biggest difference between the two is that Abdullah II places the Jordanian national identity in a larger context than Mohammed VI does for the Moroccan identity.

One could find many probable answers to why that is, but that is not the purpose of this thesis. Future studies may help us understand just why these speeches took the shape they took, and just how instrumental the creation of national identity was to the continuance of both kings’ rule.

⁴⁹ Hall 1996, p 613

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