Shifting Religious Borders and Influence: The Case of Morocco

DPhil Submission

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Abstract

This research critically examines Morocco's strategies in shaping and projecting its national identity within the international sphere. At its core, Morocco's identity is found to be plural and dynamic, influenced by both domestic diversity and evolving aspirations in the face of global interaction. Through strategic memberships in international organisations like the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the International Organisation of the Francophonie (OIF), Morocco leverages religious and linguistic markers to express cultural values and political aspirations. These markers not only act as ties binding nations but are also potent instruments in global diplomacy. Furthermore, the study delves into Morocco's nation branding as a reflection of its strategic vision, combining cultural diversity with national unity under the "Morocco Brand." Central to this branding effort is Morocco's unique 'model of Islam,' which interweaves global perceptions with intrinsic values rooted in its identity, heritage, and culture. Through a focused lens on the *Al Qaraouiyine Mosque* and the city of Fes, this research underscores the symbolic significance these sites hold in Moroccan religious and cultural narratives. The interconnected relationships between the King, the Foundation, and the *'Ulema*, underpinned by principles like the *Bay'a* and notions of sacrality, further delineate Morocco's distinct approach to Islam. In totality, this study elucidates the intricate web of strategies and symbolic assets Morocco employs to strengthen its image, identity, and influence on the global stage.

Introduction

In 2014 in Morocco, a State-run religious institution named *The Mohammed VI Institute for the Training of Imams, Morchidines, and Morchidates* was created to provide religious training to Moroccan preachers.[1] In 2016, however, The Mohammed VI Institute extended its services to non-Moroccan preachers. The expansion emphasised the collective interest of its members and marked a shift in the institute's role from a local instrument of ideological mobilisation to a global one. Since then, the institute's training programme has been variously characterised as a global security need, a result of already established global religious institutional links, and a natural response to the lack of an 'adequate' and organised provision of religious guidance. Although all of these explanations receive varying degrees of support from academics and policy makers, it remains unclear how State-run religious institutions, such as The Mohammed VI Institute, fit within the structure of Morocco's foreign policy ideology. This is because much of the research on the subject has focused on policy outcomes rather than identifying the ideational factors behind Morocco's expansion of its religious sector. This leaves unexplained why, since 2013, Morocco's expenditures on religious projects in Western Europe and West Africa have substantially increased, and why the State created several religious institutions that offer similar services but cater for the needs of specific groups.

This thesis provides an opportunity to address this lacuna. It shows how religious beliefs and identities are not necessarily constrained to domestic affairs but could also shape global politics. The aims of this research are:

1. To clarify the broader implications involved in Morocco's State-led religious institutions;
2. To provide a conceptual theoretical framework for analysing Morocco's religiously informed foreign policy strategy; and
3. To identity mechanisms by which religion is used to shape political influence around the globe.

[1] معهد محمد السادس لتكوين الأئمة المرشدين والمرشدات.

The Tangible Implications of State Sanctioned Islam

In a recent study, Peter Mandaville and Shadi Hamid examine the deliberate promotion of specific interpretations of Islam by authoritarian regimes.[2] They argue that Morocco has been strategically positioning itself as a model of 'moderate Islam' and a regional leader by systematically co-opting its religious sector. Key to this strategy is the establishment of the *Rabita Mohammadia des Oulémas* and the *Mohammed VI Institute for the Training of Imams*. Anne Marie Wainscott labels this process as the "bureaucratization of Islam," a deliberate state strategy to direct religious narratives, identities, and practices.[3] This includes the formulation of religious curricula, promoting moderate discourse through media, and extending religious cooperation internationally.[4]

Tozy provides insight into this bureaucratization, suggesting that the evolution of Morocco's religious doctrine is integral to its political legitimacy, especially amidst the rise of 'globalized Islam'.[5]

El Houdaïgui furnishes an intricate narrative on Morocco's evolving religious strategy, emphasising the nation's nuanced approach.[6] In tandem, Hmimnat delineates Morocco's objectives for a broader religious influence in West Africa as "spiritual security-based integration."[7] Fernández-Molina[8] and Hernando de Larramendi[9] contribute to this discourse, elaborating on the diplomatic and political dimensions behind these ambitions.

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[2] Mandaville, Peter, and Shadi Hamid. *Islam as statecraft: How governments use religion in foreign policy*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 2018.

[3] Wainscott, Ann Marie. *Bureaucratizing Islam: Morocco and the war on terror*. Cambridge University Press, 2017.

[4] Mandaville, Peter, and Shadi Hamid. *Islam as statecraft: How governments use religion in foreign policy*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 2018.

[5] Elahmadi, Mohsine. "TOZY (Mohammed), Monarchie Et Islam Au Maroc." *Archives Des Sciences Sociales Des Religions*, no. 114, Éditions de l'EHESS, June 2001, p. 117.

[6] El Houdaïgui, Rachid. *La Politique Étrangère Sous Le Règne De Hassan II*. Editions L'Harmattan, 2003.

El Houdaïgui, Rachid. "La politique étrangère du Maroc: vers quel positionnement?" IFRI-OCP Policy Center Roundtables, 2014.

[7] Hmimnat, Salim. "'Spiritual security'as a (meta-) political strategy to compete over regional leadership: formation of Morocco's transnational religious policy towards Africa." *The Journal of North African Studies* 25.2, 2020, pp. 189-227.

[8] Fernandez-Molina, Irene. *Moroccan Foreign Policy Under Mohammed VI, 1999-2014*. Routledge, 2015.

[9] Hernando de Larramendi, Miguel. "El islamismo polìtico y el ejercicio del poder tras el Despertar Árabe. Los casos de Egipto, Túnez y Marruecos." Islamismos en (r)evolución : movilización social y cambio político 163, 2013. pp. 71 - 116.

While Morocco's global aspirations are evident, Baylocq and Hlaoua argue that the primary impetus for its state-run religious institutions is to counter domestic religious competition,[10] a perspective further enriched by studies from Willis & Messari[11] and Zisenwine et al.[12]

Although Morocco's religious machinations undeniably impact both domestically and internationally, literature struggles to pinpoint the precise motivations behind its religious diplomacy efforts, especially in West Africa. Wainscott identifies historical and cultural legitimacy, robust institutional links, and economic collaboration as key drivers.[13] However, the intricate nexus between "security interests" and the European Union remains relatively unexplored.

El-Katiri cotends that Morocco's religious reforms aim to mitigate radical doctrines while balancing domestic concerns and the security prerogatives of its European neighbours.[14] Brown's observations further emphasise Western governments' inclination towards MENA's state actors due to their potential role in curbing violent extremism.[15]

Cavatorta et al. potlight the European Union's approach of favoring stability and security in Morocco, a perspective necessitated by the rising global extremism.[16]

Drawing on the studies reviewed, Morocco's religious diplomacy in West Africa and Europe can be attributed to four factors: firstly, the notable branding of its religious efforts; secondly, the effective employment of religion as a foreign policy tool; thirdly, the efficient utilisation of established institutional connections; and finally, the incorporation of a security dimension.

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[10] Baylocq, Cédric, and Hlaoua, Aziz. "Diffuser Un « Islam Du Juste Milieu » ?" *Afrique Contemporaine*, n° 257, no. 1, 2017, pp. 113–128.

[11] Willis, Michael, and Nizar Messari. "Analyzing Moroccan Foreign Policy and Relations With Europe." *The Review of International Affairs*, vol. 3, no. 2, Taylor and Francis, Dec. 2003, pp. 152–72.

[12] Maddy-Weitzman, Bruce, and Daniel Zisenwine. *Contemporary Morocco: State, Politics and Society Under Mohammmed VI*. Routledge, 2013.

[13] Wainscott, Ann Marie. "Religious Regulation as Foreign Policy: Morocco's Islamic Diplomacy in West Africa." *Politics and Religion* 11.1, 2018, pp. 1-26.

[14] El-Katiri, Mohammed. "The institutionalisation of religious affairs: religious reform in Morocco." *The Journal of North African Studies* 18.1, 2013, pp. 53-69.

[15] Brown, Nathan J. *Official Islam in the Arab World, The Contest for Religious Authority*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2017, www.carnegieendowment.org/2017/05/11/official-islam-in-arab-world-contest-for-religious-authority-pub-69929.

[16] Cavatorta, F., Chari, R, S, Kritzinger, S., & Gomez Arana, A., EU external policymaking and the case of Morocco: 'Realistically' dealing with authoritarianism? *European Foreign Affairs Review*, 13.3, 2008, 357-376.

Yet, despite the mounting awareness of political religion, existing literature falls short of providing a robust theoretical framework. There is an urgent need for a nuanced analysis focusing on the role of religion in international relations, especially concerning the Middle East and North Africa.[17]

Religious discourse, co-opted or otherwise, serves as a bedrock of norms at both domestic and global scales, influencing legal systems. In Morocco Islam is portrayed as a fundamental element defining the state's identity, with the King holding the title of *'Commander of the Faithful'*—a religious recognition that carries significant legal implications, which will be further explored in this research.

Ultimately, this research aims to offer a holistic view of religion's role in Morocco's politics, both domestic and international. By examining the intricate relationships between religious institutions, political stakeholders, and security considerations, we aspire to unravel the complexities of Morocco's efforts to cast a moderate Islamic identity both regionally and globally.

Situating this Study

Religious identity holds substantial influence over the political, social, and legal institutions of Muslim-majority States, and constitutes a crucial aspect of their projected image. However, despite its prominent role in the Middle East and North Africa, the function of Islam as a tool in nation branding remains largely overlooked. This neglects the understanding of how a state's projected religious identity can be harnessed to achieve economic, political, and security outcomes. Examining Morocco's religious diplomacy offers an opportunity to address this gap, illustrating how religious beliefs and identities are not limited to domestic affairs but rather serve as a potent force in global politics. Consequently, this research explores the emerging role of State-sanctioned Islam within the context of Morocco's foreign policy. The objective is to identify the mechanisms through which domestic and international politics shape Morocco's religious diplomacy and ensure the preservation of a transnational religious influence. To achieve this, three main research questions are posed:

(i) Why does Morocco engage in branding strategies to promote its State-sanctioned-Islam?
(ii) How do these strategies involve the use of religious institutions as distribution channels?
(iii) How is market segmentation used to target specific groups?

[17] Sandal, Nukhet, and Fox, Jonathan. *Religion in International Relations Theory*. Routledge, 2013.

To address these questions, we consider Morocco's global image of a 'moderate and tolerant country' as an intangible capital that has been deployed as a soft power tool to maximise value and perceived benefits of the Muslim-majority Kingdom. This approach likens Morocco's promotion of its national image to promotional politics, which engages in nation branding. Through the conceptual lens of branding, this study demonstrates that state-led religious institutions, such as the *Mohammed VI Institute for the Training of Imams*, act as vehicles for the *Morocco Brand*. Our argument posits that Morocco adopts branding strategies to emphasize the competitive advantage of its State-sanctioned-Islam enabling the Kingdom to create differentiation value in the global religion market. By treating its 'model of Islam' as an intangible asset, the goal appears to be enhancing Morocco's market value and fostering a positive association between the Kingdom's religious identity and its projected image.

By exploring how Morocco's nation-brand structure allows the State to meticulously manage and disseminate its ideological model, this study makes an original contribution to the understanding of the field of international politics. In fact, this project presents a distinctive analytical case to challenge conventional understandings of the role of religion in world politics. Moreover, this is also the first study to use the conceptual lens of branding to analyse the role of State-sanctioned-Islam in achieving foreign policy objectives.

From Brand Theory to Nation Branding

The Brand Phenomenon

A considerable amount of literature has been published on branding as a marketing practice, and studies on brand management have initially focused exclusively on the consumer's value judgement.[18] However, the multidimensional and multifunctional aspects of brands have given rise to what is known as the *brand phenomenon*. The broad applicability of the brand phenomenon encompasses not only its tangible elements, such as name and logo, but also its anthropomorphised intangibles, like personality and identity.[19] Gardner and Levy, for instance, highlight the importance of a brand's image.[20] They argue that "a public image, a character or personality... may be more important for the overall status (and sales) of the brand than many

[18] Moore, Karl, and Susan Reid. "The Birth of Brand: 4000 Years of Branding." *Business History*, vol. 50, no. 4, 2008, pp. 419–432.

[19] Mercer, John. "A Mark of Distinction: Branding and Trademark Law in the UK from the 1860s." *Business History*, vol. 52, no. 1, 2010, pp. 17–42.

[20] Gardner, Burleigh, and Sidney Levy. "The Product and the Brand." *Harvard Business Review*, vol. 33, no. 2, 1955, p. 33.

technical facts about the product."[21] This perspective is supported by de Chernatony, who contends that "a brand is a cluster of functional and emotional values that enables a promise to be made about a unique and welcomed experience."[22]

Moreover, a brand's ability to convey elements of consumers' identity [23] allows it to serve as a vehicle for their sense of self.[24] Aggarwal and McGill argue that this capacity depends on a brand's ability to incorporate anthropomorphic traits, enabling individuals and groups to interact with the brand and, therefore, build interpersonal relationships.[25] This interaction permits a brand to communicate positive values through positive personality traits, such as cooperativeness and resourcefulness.[26] These positive values are generally considered desired functional and emotional values. As Kapferer points out, "products are mute: the brand gives them meaning and purpose, telling us how a product should be read."[27]

According to Firat and Venkatesh, consumers become loyal to the images and symbols they consume rather than the brand itself.[28] The significance of brand image is further emphasised by Meenaghan, who observes: "At a more emotional/symbolic level, a prime function of advertising is to achieve a particular personality or character for a brand in the perception of its market. This is accomplished by imbuing the brand with specific associations or values. A distinctive feature of all great brands is their association with specific values, both functional and symbolic."[29]

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[21] *Ibid.* p.35.

[22] De Chernatony, Leslie. *From Brand Vision to Brand Evaluation: The Strategic Process of Growing and Strengthening Brands.* 3rd ed., Butterworth-Heinemann, 2010, p.17.

[23] Schulz, Heather, and Patricia Stout. "Negotiating the Boundary Between the Self and the Other: Individuation and Association Through Socially-Visible Brand Use." *Advances in Consumer Research*, vol. 38, 2011.

[24] Aaker, Jennifer. "Dimensions of Brand Personality." *Journal of Marketing Research*, vol. 34, no. 3, 1997, pp. 347-356.

[25] Aggarwal, Pankaj, and Ann McGill. "Partners and Servants: Adopting Traits of Anthromorphized Brands." *Advances in Consumer Research*, vol. 38, 2011, p. 1.

[26] Swaminathan, Vanitha, et al. "When Brand Personality Matters: The Moderating Role of Attachment Styles." *Journal of Consumer Research*, vol. 35, no. 6,2009, pp. 985-1002.

[27] Kapferer, Jean-Noël. *The New Strategic Brand Management: Advanced Insight and Strategic Thinking.* 5th ed., Kogan Page, 2012, p.44.

[28] Firat, A. Fuat, and Alladi Venkatesh. "Liberatory Postmodernism and the Reenchantment of Consumption." *Journal of Consumer Research*, vol. 22, no. 3, 1995, pp. 239–267.

[29] Meenaghan, Tony. "The role of advertising in brand image development." *Journal of product & brand management*, 1995.

Having explored a few aspects of the *brand phenomenon*, it is evident that its multidimensionality allows for a wide application of branding concepts. In the words of Usunier and Lee, a brand is a sensitive asset of symbols.[30] In fact, more recently, political marketing has led to the development of political branding as a distinct area of research.[31] Scammel contends that branding as an analytical concept for politics provides crucial insights for understanding political image.[32] Similarly, to brands, a country possesses a name and communicates sets of tangible and intangible associations projected through its image, which, according to Ying Fan, demonstrates a nation's capacity to incorporate brands.[33]

National Brand, Nation Brand & Nation Branding

The concepts of *National Brand* and *Nation Brand* are often conflated. Ying Fan suggests that a national brand refers to a specific product or service provided by a country and made available to the nation it serves.[34] When recognised in the global market, a national brand may be perceived as a nation brand, as it becomes the "mental image of the country held by foreign people."[35] Nation Brand can thus be understood as the way a nation is perceived by international stakeholders through aspects such as culture, heritage, food, and movies. As Dinnie points out in his definition of nation brand: "[the nation brand] is [...] the unique, multi-dimensional blend of elements that provide the nation with culturally grounded differentiation and relevance for all of its target audiences."[36]

When communicated to an 'international audience', national identity transforms into a *national brand identity*, contributing to shaping international stakeholders' perceived image of the nation. Consequently, the *national brand identity* becomes a *brand identifier* - its nation brand.

[30] Usunier, Jean-Claude., and Julie Anne. Lee. Marketing across Cultures. 6th ed., Pearson, 2013.

[31] Harris, Phil, and Andrew Lock. "'Mind the Gap': The Rise of Political Marketing and a Perspective on Its Future Agenda." *European Journal of Marketing*, vol. 44, no. 3/4, 2010, pp. 297–307.

[32] Scammell, Margaret. "Politics and Image: The Conceptual Value of Branding." *Journal of Political Marketing*, vol. 14, no. 1-2, 2015, pp. 7–18.

[33] Fan, Ying. "Branding the Nation: Towards a Better Understanding." *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, vol. 6, no. 2, 2010, pp. 97-103.

[34] *Ibid.*

[35] *Ibid.* p.98.

[36] Dinnie, Keith. *Nation branding: concepts, Issues, Practice.* Butterworth-Heinemann, 2008.

De Chernatony provides a significant analysis and discussion on the subject.[37] In his examination of the role of branding, the author differentiates between branding as an *input* and branding as an *output*. The former refers to the internal process initiated by the brand producer, while the latter refers to the consumer's perception of the brand. Building upon de Chernatony's work, Dinnie emphasises the importance of images for nations, whose perceived image in the consumer's mind could take the form of entrenched national stereotypes.[38] Given the significance of consumers' perception, it can be inferred that building a nation brand necessitates understanding consumers' perception of a nation's image.

Although managing or controlling how a nation is perceived by international stakeholders can be challenging, countries possess the ability to differentiate themselves from others through the application of branding strategies.[39] This approach has given rise to the concept of *nation branding*, which relates to the strategic use of branding tools to enhance and promote a nation's image.[40] Ying Fan posits that a nation's brand can exist without being actively managed and does not depend on a conscious nation branding effort.[41] However, when a deliberate attempt to manage a nation's image is exercised, the author argues that National Identity and Nation Branding become connected, as the narrative surrounding a nation's identity is often reflected in its projected brand.[42] Thus, associating positive values with a nation's brand necessitates positive value associations with its national identity.[43]

Nation branding can be conceived as image promotion, as it relies on planned and coherent strategies intended to positively alter a nation's perceived image, which, according to Szondi, places such practice within the marketing discipline.[44] Gudjonsson further elaborates that "nation branding occurs when a government or a private company uses its power to persuade those who have the ability to change a nation's image. Nation branding employs the tools of

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[37] De Chernatony, L. *From Brand Vision to Brand Evaluation: The Strategic Process of Growing and Strengthening Brands.* 3rd ed., Butterworth-Heinemann, 2010.

[38] Dinnie, Keith. *Nation branding: concepts, Issues, Practice.* Butterworth-Heinemann, 2008.

[39] Fan, Ying. "Branding the Nation: Towards a Better Understanding." *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, vol. 6, no. 2, 2010, pp. 97–103.

[40] Fan, Ying. "Branding the Nation: What Is Being Branded?". *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, vol. 12, no. 1, 2006, pp. 5–14.

[41] Fan, Ying. "Branding the Nation: Towards a Better Understanding." *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, vol. 6, no. 2, 2010, pp. 97–103.

[42] *Ibid.*

[43] Anholt, Simon. *Places: Identity, Image and Reputation.* Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.

[44] Gyorgy Szondi. "From Image Management to Relationship Building: A Public Relations Approach to Nation Branding." Place Branding and Public Diplomacy, vol. 6, no. 4, 2010, pp. 333–343.

branding to alter or change the behaviour, attitudes, identity, or image of a nation in a positive way."[45] This definition emphasises the importance of a nation's tangible (*i.e.,* behaviour and attitudes) and intangible attributes (*i.e.,* identity and image) in the process of nation branding. In fact, the use of branding techniques to enhance and promote a nation's identity and image can be argued to be a form of self-expression meant to communicate a nation's projected *Self.*

Why Engage in Nation Branding?

We have previously considered nation branding as a strategic tool designed to promote a nation's image and its distinguishing attributes. Before examining how countries deploy nation branding strategies, it is crucial to discuss why countries would engage in nation branding in the first place.

Douglas, Craig, and Nijssen argue that the globalisation of markets has resulted in increased market competition, and they note that the geographic scope of comparison now extends beyond national boundaries.[46] Similarly, Dinnie contends that heightened market competition has led to the conscious deployment of key strategies for nations to differentiate themselves from others.[47] Given the global competitive environment, a country employs nation branding to attract attention and interest. Attention is, in fact, a valuable asset that can be capitalised on to gain influence and persuasive power.[48] According to Paul Jordan, nation branding can be regarded as a form of soft power.[49] By managing its projected image, a country's nation branding strategy can effectively attract various forms of investment and stimulate the country's economy.[50] Dinnie summarises a country's motivations for engaging in nation branding in three main points: "to attract tourists, to stimulate inward investment, and to boost exports."[51]

[45] Gudjonsson, Hlynur. "Nation Branding." Place Branding, vol. 1, no. 3, 2005, p. 285.

[46] Douglas, Susan P., C. Samuel Craig, and Edwin J. Nijssen. "Executive insights: Integrating branding strategy across markets: Building international brand architecture." *Journal of International Marketing* 9.2, 2001, pp. 97-114.

[47] Dinnie, Keith. *Nation branding: concepts, Issues, Practice.* Butterworth-Heinemann, 2008.

[48] *Ibid.*

[49] Jordan, Paul. "Nation Branding: A Tool for Nationalism?" *Journal of Baltic Studies*, vol. 45, no. 3, 2014, pp. 283–303.

[50] Aronczyk, Melissa. "Living the Brand: The Identity Strategies of Nation-Branding Consultants." *Branding the Nation*, Oxford University Press, 2013. Branding the Nation, Chapter 3.

[51] Dinnie, Keith. *Nation branding: concepts, Issues, Practice.* Butterworth-Heinemann, 2008. p.17.

Beyond its economic benefits, nation branding is also believed to influence how people from a certain country are perceived, as well as the attractiveness of the country's culture, heritage, and diplomatic relations. This idea is supported by Anholt, who notes that a nation's brand ultimately affects its international relations, given that branding touches upon political, social, and economic aspects of a nation.[52] Dinnie further argues that global competition has resulted in an increased sense of national identity.[53] Given that national identity is projected through nation branding, the question remains whether nation branding has the capacity to affect or shape national identity. Aronczyk offers important insight into this question and presents two inherent implications of nation branding, which, according to the author, create a parallel between nation branding and nationalism:[54]

First, employing the symbolic resources and resonance of nationalist discourse perpetuates the nation-state as a necessary frame of identity, allegiance, and affiliation, thus maintaining and extending the nation as a legitimate entity in the context of globalised modernity. However, this does not occur without effecting a distinct transformation. This forms the basis of the second proposition: the ideologies and practices by which nation branding operates alter the cultural context in which national identity is articulated and understood. Similarly, in his analysis of the Brand Estonia initiative, Paul Jordan argues that the deliberate framing and communication of national branding can be used as a tool for nationalism.[55] While the connection between Morocco's national identity and its nation branding will be addressed in this thesis, we may already consider the above-mentioned literature as a snapshot of a potential correlation between nationalism, national identity, and nation branding.[56]

[52] Anholt, Simon, "Three interlinking concepts: Intellectual Property, Nation Branding and Economic Development." *WIPO International Seminar on Intellectual Property and Development*, Geneva, May 2-3, 2005. www.wipo.int/edocs/mdocs/mdocs/en/isipd_05/isipd_05_www_103990.pdf.

[53] Dinnie, Keith. *Nation branding: concepts, Issues, Practice.* Butterworth-Heinemann, 2008.

[54] Aronczyk, Melissa. "Living the Brand: The Identity Strategies of Nation-Branding Consultants." *Branding the nation: The global business of national identity*. Oxford University Press, 2013.

[55] Jordan, Paul. "Nation Branding: A Tool for Nationalism?" *Journal of Baltic Studies*, vol. 45, no. 3, 2014, pp. 283–303.

[56] Nationalism could be defined as a behavioural entity with a shared sentiment of cohesion and who in its pursuit of purpose and meaning seek a sense belonging and loyalty to an entity perceived as the nation.

Brand Identity, Image, and Reputation

Brand identity can be conceptualised as the ideas projected and communicated to stakeholders.[57] By conveying a desired identity, Morocco shapes its brand value, which in turn creates an incentive for internal and external stakeholders to become ambassadors of the brand. Morocco's approach to building and sustaining its brand enables it to strengthen its brand relationship further, potentially increasing brand loyalty. The central ideas upon which the brand relies to convey its internal perspective[58] are believed to project the internal stakeholders' envisioned associations.[59] In the case of Morocco, this could be understood as the set of ideas and values expressed in its 'moderate and tolerant Islam'. By drawing on concepts such as tolerance, stability, and unity, the aim appears to be building a positive value association with its state-sanctioned Islam. Such positive associations could be referred to as *brand associations*, powerful drivers of influence and economic activity. Therefore, communicating 'positive characteristics' that align with the values and needs of the targeted group creates a connection with the potential to drive positive outcomes for both the 'marketer' and the 'target audience'. In summary, Morocco presents its national identity as a domestic and international strategic asset capable of enacting positive change.

A brand image represents the outward manifestation of a brand, while brand identity is its inward expression.[60] This idea is supported by Marquiles, who writes that "identity means the sum of all the ways a company chooses to identify itself to all its publics [...] Image, on the other hand, is the perception of the company by these publics."[61] As previously argued, Morocco's brand identity allows the *Morocco Brand* to articulate its message and position itself in targeted markets. By processing the brand's message, customers form a mental picture of Morocco's brand identity, constituting Morocco's brand image. Given that a brand's image

[57] De Chernatony, Leslie. *From Brand Vision to Brand Evaluation: The Strategic Process of Growing and Strengthening Brands.* 3rd ed., Butterworth-Heinemann, 2010.

[58] Srivastava, R. "Understanding Brand Identity Confusion." *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, vol. 29, no. 4, 2011, pp. 340–352.

[59] Bosch, Johan, et al. "The Impact of Brand Identity on the Perceived Brand Image of a Merged Higher Education Institution: Part One." *Management Dynamics*, vol. 15, no. 2, 2006, pp. 10–30.

[60] Kapferer, Jean-Noël. *The New Strategic Brand Management: Advanced Insight and Strategic Thinking.* 5th ed., Kogan Page, 2012.

[61] Margulies, Walter P. "Make the Most of Your Corporate Identity." *Harvard Business Review*, vol. 55, 1977, p. 66.

elicits associations capable of affecting the brand's perceived value,[62] Morocco's brand image can therefore impact the value perception of the Moroccan State.

Gardner and Levy note that a long-term investment in a brand image constitutes its brand reputation.[63] This suggests that a sustainable investment in Morocco's brand image has the potential to positively affect Morocco's reputation. Since misleading information may negatively impact consumers' trust and generate an unfavourable brand image, long-term investment in a brand's image should account for sustainable brand offerings. This argument is supported by Scammell, who defends the idea of image as reputation and argues that political image conceived as reputation relies on facts rather than "artifice and illusion."[64] The author adds that if a brand consistently fails to deliver on its promises, no amount of advertising can redeem its product.[65] When conceived in this manner, the correlation between Morocco's image and its reputation can only be possible if the information communicated by the *Morocco Brand* is perceived to be credible and accurate.

Moreover, nation-brand image is particularly relevant to the concept of nation branding, which we have defined as the strategic use of branding tools to enhance and promote a nation's image. In an attempt to shift attention from 'branding', Ying Fan suggests using the term 'nation image management' instead of *nation branding*.[66] He argues that the use of 'branding' implies negative connotations and carries misconceptions about the scope of branding strategies as it may suggest manipulation or oversimplification of a nation's complexities.[67] Similarly, Anholt, a pioneer in the field of nation branding, argues that the term 'branding' can appear patronising, as it might reduce a nation's culture, history, and values to mere marketing slogans and images. However, while Ying Fan focuses on image and, therefore, consumers' perception of the brand, Anholt is more concerned with the intrinsic attributes of the brand, namely identity.[68] In fact, Anholt, suggests using the term 'competitive identity' instead of

[62] Kotler, Philip, and David Gertner. "Country as brand, product, and beyond: A place marketing and brand management perspective." *Journal of brand management* 9, 2002, pp. 249-261.

[63] Gardner, Burleigh, and Sidney Levy. "The Product and the Brand." *Harvard Business Review*, vol. 33, no. 2, 1955, p. 39.

[64] Scammell, Margaret. "Politics and Image: The Conceptual Value of Branding." *Journal of Political Marketing*, vol. 14, no. 1-2, 2015, pp. 7–18.

[65] *Ibid*.

[66] Fan, Ying. "Branding the Nation: towards a Better Understanding. (Original Article)." *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, vol. 6, no. 2, 2010, pp. 97–103.

[67] *Ibid.*

[68] *Ibid.*

nation branding.[69] The author argues that, unlike *nation branding*, the concept of *competitive identity* captures key elements at the heart of the practice of nation branding, such as public diplomacy and brand management.[70] By employing the term 'competitive identity', Anholt emphasises the importance of a nation's authentic identity and its capacity to distinguish itself from others in a global market, highlighting the strategic use of its unique attributes rather than relying on superficial branding techniques.

The alternative definitions and conceptions of branding suggested by Ying Fan and Anholt exemplify the lack of consensus in the field of nation brand management. According to a study conducted by Govers et al., not only is the absence of agreement on terminology prevalent in the field, but there is also a lack of general agreement on what constitutes a successful branding strategy, as well as the tools used to achieve set goals.[71] While Govers et al. remain hopeful that research is currently addressing these gaps, the authors encourage further understanding and alignment between practitioners and academics.[72]

That being said, despite their lack of consensus, Ying Fan and Anholt's studies recognise the importance of image and identity in 'branding' and provide essential insights into the intricate role and scope of nation branding. These insights help shed light on the complex interplay between a nation's image, identity, and branding efforts, as well as the potential benefits and challenges associated with managing a nation's brand in the global marketplace. Ultimately, understanding the various perspectives on nation branding can help guide both academics and practitioners in developing more effective strategies for promoting and enhancing a nation's image and reputation on the world stage.

Research Design & Methods

Methodological considerations

Morocco's intricate sociocultural mosaic, shaped by Amazigh, Arab, African, and European currents, presents a compelling perspective on religious diplomacy. As we assess Morocco within the wider discourse of nation branding through religious modalities, pertinent questions emerge. Is Morocco's strategy typical, or does it display particular, even unconventional, traits?

[69] *Ibid.*

[70] *Ibid.*

[71] Govers, Robert, Florian Kaefer, and Natàlia Ferrer-Roca. "The state of academic place branding research according to practitioners." *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy* 13, 2017, pp. 1-3.

[72] *Ibid.*

The tapestry of Morocco's cultural and religious characteristics become even more thought-provoking when contrasted with other nations.

The distinct nature of Morocco justifies our methodological choice for a focused case study. Renowned works on case study design by scholars like George & Bennett[73] and Gerring[74] champion the merit of single-case studies, especially for uniquely positioned subjects such as Morocco's religious-political landscape. Yet, as highlighted by Seawright & Gerring[75] and Rohlfing,[76] this depth might sometimes reduce broad applicability. However, the depth of insights gained from Morocco potentially offsets any constraints in extensive generalisation.

Different nations in the Middle East and North Africa have carved their religious diplomacy frameworks, each reflecting its individual historical, cultural, and geopolitical contexts. For instance, Jordan follows its own trajectory as discussed by Browers[77] and Gutkowski.[78] Similarly, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates have tailored their religious branding, aligning with regional objectives and broader geopolitical stories, as detailed by Fahy[79] and Kourgiotis.[80]

Positioned at the nexus of Africa and Europe, Morocco operates within a particular geopolitical environment. Its version of Islam, emphasising moderation and tolerance, anchors its religious diplomacy. These foundational principles, in sync with worldwide aspirations for religious freedom and interfaith dialogue, enable Morocco to navigate and establish key alliances even within the complexities of the geopolitical arena.

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[73] George, Alexander L., and Andrew Bennett. *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. MIT Press, 2005.

[74] Gerring, John. "Is There a (Viable) Crucial-Case Method?" *Comparative Political Studies*, vol. 40, no. 3, SAGE Publishing, Mar. 2007, pp. 231–53.

[75] Seawright, Jason, and John Gerring. "Case Selection Techniques in Case Study Research." *Political Research Quarterly*, vol. 61, no. 2, SAGE Publishing, Feb. 2008, pp. 294–308.

[76] Rohlfing, Ingo. *Case studies and causal inference: An integrative framework*. Springer, 2012.

[77] Browers, Michaelle. "Official Islam and the Limits of Communicative Action: The Paradox of the Amman Message." *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 32, no. 5, Taylor and Francis, June 2011, pp. 943–58.

[78] Gutkowski, Stacey. "We Are the Very Model of a Moderate Muslim State: The Amman Messages and Jordan's Foreign Policy." *International Relations*, vol. 30, no. 2, SAGE Publishing, Aug. 2015, pp. 206–26.

[79] Fahy, John. "International Relations and Faith-based Diplomacy: The Case of Qatar." *Review of Faith & International Affairs*, vol. 16, no. 3, Taylor and Francis, July 2018, pp. 76–88.

[80] Kourgiotis, Panos. "'Moderate Islam' Made in the United Arab Emirates: Public Diplomacy and the Politics of Containment." *Religions*, vol. 11, no. 1, Multidisciplinary Digital Publishing Institute, Jan. 2020, p. 43.

Given the global implications of Morocco's interpretation of Islam, the decision to spotlight Morocco in this research is deliberate. This viewpoint not only anchors Morocco's religious diplomacy but also influences its overarching strategies in geopolitical, economic, and political sectors. Therefore, the investigation delves into Morocco's cultural heritage, religious diplomacy nuances, and the dynamics of its developmental and geopolitical pursuits.

The Abraham accords of December 2020 illuminate Morocco's capability to intertwine religious considerations with realpolitik. The diplomatic agreement between Israel and Morocco, complemented by the U.S. endorsement of Morocco's stance on Western Sahara, exemplifies the country's astute diplomatic moves.[81] The 2021 agreement between Israeli Defence Minister Benny Gantz and Morocco's Abdellatif Loudiyi underscores Morocco's efforts to balance religion, politics, and diplomacy. Given these multifaceted dynamics, the decision to focus this study on Morocco becomes particularly relevant.

The research therefore delves deep into Morocco's cultural values, religious diplomacy, and geopolitical goals. Though its scope may seem specific, it offers thorough insight into Morocco's narrative. It draws from disciplines like International Relations, history, and sociology to explore how Morocco's religious-political institutions align with global shifts in norms. Furthermore, the study seeks to critically appraise Morocco's portrayal as a nation advocating a 'moderate and tolerant' Islamic stance. Through a branding lens, it evaluates Morocco's diplomatic narratives and the impact of its official Islamic institutions on foreign policy, aiming to highlight the growing role of religious perspectives in international dialogues and possibly set a benchmark for Islam's global representation. Achieving this comprehensive view necessitates a mixed-method approach, encompassing interviews, archival research, and multilingual source analyses.

Initially, the research design encompassed extensive interviews and participant observation to deeply probe into Morocco's landscape. However, due to unforeseen access difficulties and the overarching constraints imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic, these plans had to be adjusted. Preliminary interviews, conducted prior to these challenges, did offer invaluable insights that informed the ensuing analysis. The subsequent chapters adopt text, content, and discourse analysis methods, reflecting a methodological pivot necessitated by the changed circumstances. It is pivotal to note that the research covers a specified time frame, ensuring contextual relevance and accuracy.

[81] "Virtual Presence Post for Western Sahara - U.S. Embassy &Amp; Consulates in Morocco." *U.S. Embassy & Consulates in Morocco*, 16 Feb. 2021, ma.usembassy.gov/embassy-consulate/vpp-western-sahara.

Initial findings indicate a potential influence of Morocco's state apparatus in moulding its global persona. The research examines whether Morocco uses branding techniques to underscore its distinction, with the aim to strengthen its global standing. This approach might also align its projected religious identity with international endeavours, leading to potential political and economic implications.

Relevance & Intellectual Merit

The notion of "Muslim world" has presented *Islam* as an idiosyncratic feature reflective of a set of values and norms confined to a defined physical territory. However, globalisation has affected our understanding of the physical unity of imagined communities and has brought forward new understandings of borders that transcend the physical manifestation of boundaries. This, in turn, highlights the ambiguous role *religious borders* occupy regionally and globally. As such, in this research, *religious diplomacy* is presented as a new form of cross-border movements - one that creates new pathways of network and cooperation beyond perceived *religious borders*. Therefore, by using the case of Morocco, this research seeks to examine the role of state-led institutions in pulling apart religious borders and boundaries. This is particularly salient given that the creation of state-led religious institutions that operate beyond Morocco's national borders has allowed the training of European imams, a development that coincided with increases in Morocco's expenditures on religious projects in Western Europe. This research argues that Morocco's "branded Islam" stands in contrast to the domestic religious rhetoric in which Islam is presented as a source of political legitimacy.

This research project presents a distinctive analytical case to question conventional understandings of religious borders and the role of religion in world politics. It shows how the branding of domestic religious institutions can help shift interest representation from domestic to global. In doing so, this research holds great promise to improve our understanding of religious identity structures in shaping religious foreign policy.

This is the first study to use the conceptual lens of branding to analyse the role of State-sanctioned Islam in achieving foreign policy objectives. By exploring how Morocco's nation-brand structure allows the State to carefully manage and distribute its ideological model, this study makes an original contribution to the field of international relations and management studies. This research, therefore, provides an important opportunity to advance the understanding of public religious diplomacy in cross-border cooperation and contributes key evidence that supports the idea of a global resurgence of religion in world affairs.

Overall, this research project provides an important opportunity to advance the understanding of public religious diplomacy in cross-border cooperation and contributes key evidence that suggests a global resurgence of religion in world affairs.

1. Islam and Nation-State Identity in Morocco

> The physical and social reality of North Africa at that time must be seen as, simultaneously, the object, the result, and the agent of a considerable process of *appropriation.* The word must be understood in both its senses, as taking possession and as adaptation. Energies are poured forth over a given area. They modify it, they are modified by it.
>
> - Jacques Berque, 1967[82]

The tendency to focus on *Islam* as the main variable that determines how states think and conduct politics in Muslim majority countries (particularly in the MENA region) has unfortunately been a major feature of the study of 'Middle East Politics'. Although many studies recognise that differences can be found across the region, this reductionist approach tends to 'expose' perceived idiosyncratic features such as *Islam*, and to remove important elements in order to fit a given study in a comparative framework. The same approach seems to be applied to the study of the politics of Morocco in which much attention appears to be given to the alleged 'Arabo-Islamic' feature of its proclaimed State identity. A major problem with this kind of framework lies in its reductionist approach and the nature of its orientalist discourse. Whether such focus relies on the necessity to limit the scope of research or whether it is the expression of popular prejudice depends on individual cases.[83] The fact remains that the prevalent attention given to Islam as a core feature of Morocco's politics is unsatisfactory as it generates an essentialised narrative on the subject. To help address this research gap, this chapter brings forward the heterogenous sources of 'norms' in Morocco's politics. Though this might seem like a digression from the core subject of the thesis, this is necessary if we want to clarify aspects of the history of Morocco's political institutions. In fact, while this thesis investigates Morocco's use of religion in its foreign policy, this chapter aims at providing a wider context to help explain the current institutional designs in the Kingdom. Understanding the history and evolution of such institutions require tracing back to certain processes that have

[82] Berque, Jacques. *French North Africa: The Maghrib between Two World Wars*. Frederick A. Praeger, 1967, p.36.

[83] Said, Edward W. *Orientalism*. Penguin Random House UK, 1978. p.149.

played a fundamental role in the evolution of the political field in Morocco. This is most crucial as the object of this chapter is to detract from embedding assumptions of Islam as an exclusive and deterministic feature of Morocco's politics.

The Crafting of Morocco's Nation-State Identity

This section aims at investigating the relationship between Morocco's State-identity and its foreign policy. While the focus will be on identity formation, we do not assume it to be a deterministic feature of state behaviour and interest. This is important as it will become clearer in this chapter that Morocco's projected State identity(ies) - as framed and understood at the international, regional, or domestic level – is contingent on various factors (including foreign involvement, external and internal events, and domestic and international interests).

Provided that States are unitary actors[84], State-identity can be defined as presented attributes in which the *Self* is placed in relation to the *Other*. In the international system, however, the main actor is the State. The dynamic aspect of said relations therefore entails *interaction* with other nations. Such interaction assumes a *performance* through which (and by which) a *role* is defined. *Performative actions* thus require a *role enactment* which involves a process of *communicative messages* that are both the cause and the consequence of *interaction.* Put simply, in the international system, the mutually constitutive aspect of *interaction*, and the performance that it entails, reflect a State's own conception of itself (internal dimension) and other's conception of it (external dimension).

Based on the abovementioned definition, it is safe to say that State-identity embodies a multitude of concepts and is therefore multidimensional. This begs the question of who gets to define it. In the case of Morocco, several markers characterising the Kingdom's 'idiosyncratic features' can be found in the literature. While we conceive of identity as an organic process shaped by gradual changes, the point remains that the way identity is framed (by the *Self* and/or the *Other*) can be an indicator of interests. This is important since identity - as conceived by a

[84] The idea of a state is often debated, but it is usually seen as a social construct defined by its sovereignty. As such, a State has a legal identity with rights and duties, as stated in the Montevideo Convention on Rights and Duties of States (1933). Although the necessary attributes for being a State are not fixed and have changed over time, a key requirement is the ability to engage in international relations, which means being accepted within the global community.

State and understood or ascribed by others - enables the creation of *shared norms*[85] which, in the international system, could reflect interests and inform foreign policy behaviour.[86]

Even up until relatively recently, much work on Morocco's politics has reduced Morocco's State-identity to its 'Islamic component'. Several reasons could explain such a focus. According to Mlil, two of these find roots in Colonial Science and Local Historiography.[87] Much of the data or knowledge that arise from these two 'fields' have shaped the intellectual landscape of the Maghreb and produced concepts and theoretical perspectives that are still framing our understanding of the region.[88] One of the key theorists of Colonial Science is Leroy Beaulieu (1874) who was an avid advocate for France's civilising mission and its imperial enterprise.[89] Scientific knowledge that emerged from France's colonies highlighted the importance of colonisation and the role of colonial administration. *La Mission Civilisatrice Française* (1890-1945) was the embodiment of France's imperialistic vision of the 19th century and the essence of its colonial policy. Within this framework, religion, culture, and traditions were used as *signs* indicating 'otherness', while the colonial vision and its political provisions provided the impetus for implementing colonial institutions and creating a machinery of government. Having been a major producer of scientific knowledge during colonial times, Colonial Science has long framed the narrative surrounding the history of its colonies. The asymmetric power-relations between the coloniser and the colonised were further emphasised through scientific research as a mobilising force for the colonial cause.[90] According to Patricia M. E. Lorcin and Paula Sanders "French historiography of North Africa during the colonial period emphasized the negative impact of Islam on the region by exaggerating the erasure of the culture of classical

[85] Here we rely on Jepperson et. al.'s Conception of norms considered to be "collective expectations about proper behaviour."

Jepperson, R. L., Wendt, A. & Katzenstein, P. J. (eds.). *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1996.

[86] The definition of identity provided above was specifically tailored for the case of Morocco and is not intended to encompass all forms of identity, such as national, international, State, or transnational. This note serves to highlight our acknowledged bias, as we are aware of the contested nature of concepts in international relations. Although our approach may have certain limitations, we hope that by being transparent about these constraints, readers will exercise caution when considering the applicability of our findings to other cases.

[87] Ben Mlih, Abdellah. *Structures Politiques du Maroc Colonial*. Editions L'Harmattan, 2007.

[88] Vermeren, Pierre. "Chapitre 4. Géographie De l'Enseignement De l'Histoire Du Maghreb En France." Éditions De La Sorbonne, 2012.

[89] Leroy-Beaulieu, Paul. *De La Colonisation Chez Les Peuples Modernes*. 6. éd., complètement remaniée et considérablement augm. ed., F. Alcan, 1908.

[90] Oualdi, M'hamed. "Pierre SINGARAVÉLOU, Professer l'Empire. Les « Sciences Coloniales » En France Sous La IIIe République." *Revue D'histoire Du XIXe Siècle*, no. 44, 2012, pp. 217–219.

antiquity that occurred after the Arab conquests of the seventh and eleventh centuries."[91] Emphasising the role of Islam as a unifying feature of North Africans further reinforced the power distinction between the coloniser and the colonised. While the nature of France's colonial rule in the Maghreb differs between Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco, one important element, that will be further discussed in this thesis, remains the extent to which pre-colonial political orders have been preserved in the Kingdom. Overall, these studies present important insights into the inherent and lasting rhetorical power of colonial scholarship and shed light on the imprints of colonialism in shaping present State-identity.

Conversely, colonisation, including its scientific production, could not alone explain the focus on Islam as a core feature of Morocco's State-identity. As previously mentioned, when considering the historiography of Morocco's pre-colonial political mobilisation, two strands are found: work inspired by Colonial Science and local historiography which appeared with the advent of Islam in the 7th c.[92] This distinction is based on the available written work perceived as structured with a fixed format as opposed to the much abundant oral literature - spoken or sang – which is still treated as an 'intangible heritage'. Like a double-stranded DNA, Colonial Science and Domestic Historiography twisted together to form the double helix of intellectual discourse. According to Ben Mlil, local historiography dismissed all elements that did not relate to Islam which was referred to as *Jahl* or *Jâhiliyya*[93] as it was considered outside of History.[94] Whether the disregard of 'non-Islamic' principles from local historic narrative was politically motivated is yet to be uncovered. Nonetheless, the point remains that local historiography of Morocco's political history(ies), including the one(s) pertaining to the 19th and 20th c., has heavily focused on Islam as a unifying feature.

As will be unpacked further down in this thesis, the paradigm presented by the *Commander of the faithful* marked a turning point in Morocco's history as it rests on a conceptualisation of power that renders the monarch's temporal authority to spiritual power.[95] It is worth noting that

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[91] Lorcin, Patricia M. E., and Sanders, Paula. "France and Islam: Introduction." *French Historical Studies* 30.3, 2007, pp. 343-35.

[92] Ben Mlih, Abdellah. *Structures Politiques du Maroc Colonial*. Editions L'Harmattan, 2007, p.21.

[93] The terms "*Jahl*" and "*Jâhiliyya*" originate from the wider Islamic notion of "J*ahiliyyah*" (الجاهلية), signifying the era of "ignorance" or "paganism" preceding the arrival of Islam. In the Arabic language, "*Jahl*" conveys the ideas of "ignorance" or an "absence of knowledge." In relation to Morocco's past, the concepts of "*Jahl*" and "*Jâhiliyya*" can be associated with the period before Islam, during which native Amazigh tribes followed a range of traditional faiths, such as polytheism, Judaism, and Christianity.

[94] *Ibid.*

[95] More on this further down.

prior to the blurring of the distinction between temporal and spiritual, the constitutive representation of this dichotomy has privileged particular conceptions of power, authority and legitimacy, in which religion (*i.e.*, Islam) was not always considered as the main determining feature of Morocco's politics. A case in point is two concepts that pre-date the French Protectorate (1912-1956): *Bled Siba* as opposed to *Bled el Makhzen*. The origin of this theorised dichotomy can be found in C. D. Foucauld's *Reconnaissance au Maroc (1883-1884).*[96] In his effort to create a topographic map of Morocco, De Foucauld conceived Morocco's ethnographic and political space as being divided into two parts:

> There is a portion of Morocco where you can travel without disguise, but it is small. The country is divided into two parts: one effectively submissive to the sultan (*blad el makhzen*), where Europeans circulate openly and in complete safety; the other, four or five times larger, populated by rebellious or independent tribes (*blad es sība*), where no one travels in safety and where Europeans can only enter in as transvestites.[97]

While the terms used to characterise the two abstract spaces are clear examples of lexical borrowing, the distinction between the two areas appears to be conceived based on two elements: Sultan's 'level of authority' (hence power) and 'level of accessibility' to Europeans. As an explorer and a geographer, De Foucauld visualised Morocco in a way that allowed him to frame and guide his exploration. It could therefore be argued that his conception of space served as a navigational guide. Dusserre argues that while De Foucauld conceived of two geographic spaces, his distinction was not systematic and was not presented as a deterministic feature of said space.[98] Rather, space is thought out based on "the place it occupies in a system centralised around the Shereefian State."[99] Although relevant, Dusserre's argument does not account for the level of 'accessibility to Europeans' presented as one of the two variables that form a positive correlation (the other variable being the level of authority the Sultan holds). In fact, the level of accessibility to Europeans highlights a Eurocentric focus of space in which the subject is 'Europeans' and the object is the 'space' where it can (or cannot) operate. In other words, the definition of the object of the analysis (the space) is contingent on the subject

[96] Foucauld, Charles de. Auteur du texte. *Reconnaissance Au Maroc, 1883-1884... / Vte Ch. De Foucauld*. Paris, 1888.

[97] Dusserre, Aurélia. "Pratique De l'Espace Et Invention Du Territoire." *Rives Méditerranéennes*, no. 34, 2009, pp. 57–88.

[98] *Ibid.*

[99] *Ibid.*

making it (De Foucauld). Therefore, instead of treating the two geographic spaces as a reflection of reality, one that divides the nation's identity into two separate entities, one ought to recognise that maps should be treated as theoretical constructs and not *truths*.[100] Drawing from Michel Foucault and Derida's ideas, Harley's work has been particularly influential in understanding maps as a form of power-knowledge practices and not mirrors of reality.[101] As such, the process of mapping is nothing more than a process of creation through which 'creators' (*i.e.*, cartographers) reveal their values and judgements as well as their assumptions.[102]

In keeping with the concept of mapmaking as a power-knowledge practice, Harley writes:

> The steps in making a map - selection, omission, simplification, classification, the creation of hierarchies, and 'symbolization' - are all inherently rhetorical. In their intentions as much as in their applications they signify subjective human purposes rather than reciprocating the workings of some "fundamental law of cartographic generalisation." Indeed, the freedom of rhetorical manoeuvre in cartography is considerable: the mapmaker merely omits those features of the world that lie outside the purpose of the immediate discourse.[103]

De Foucauld's training and background as a cavalry officer in the French Army, an explorer and a priest are therefore not to be marginalised as they present a broader perspective to the initial dual conception of *Bled Siba* and *Bled el Makhzen*. Furthermore, the mapping of spheres of influence, combined with the geographical conception of space have been a consistent feature of the colonial enterprise for which an understanding of the geographical and political regions was an imperative for colonial expansion. Whether intentional or not, De Foucauld's proposed territorial division into politico-spatial units is compatible with the approach used by colonial scholars which could explain why De Foucauld's work became closely associated with French colonisation. D. Rivet even argues that C. D. Foucauld's work has inspired colonial scholars and became the foundation of divisive policies which have characterised Morocco's

[100] Kitchin, Rob, and Dodge, Martin. "Rethinking Maps." *Progress in Human Geography*, vol. 31, no. 3, 2007, pp. 331–344.

[101] Harley, John Brian. "Deconstructing the map." *Cartographica: The international journal for geographic information and geovisualization* 26.2, 1989, pp. 1-20.

[102] *Ibid.* The same process of creation can be applied to the conceptualisation process of identities.

[103] *Ibid*. p.11.

colonial experience.[104] This further reinforces Michel Foucault's conception of cartographic 'facts' as an exercise of power.[105]

While more can be said (and has already been said) about the theoretical conceptions of *Bled Siba* and *Bled el-Makhzen*, the fact remains that this linguistic duality presents an important approach in understanding the way Moroccan political and spatial spaces have been conceived or even framed. This is all the more important if one wants to examine the dual conceptions/perceptions that constitute the narrative surrounding the Kingdom's colonial history and have shaped our understanding of Morocco's State-identity(ies). J. Waterbury, for example, identified two elements that define Morocco's governmental legacy: (1) the Makhzen and (2) the protectorate.[106] The first is a reflection of what he identifies as the embodiment of Morocco's governmental legacy pre-protectorate - one that "typified Morocco before the coming of the French."[107] The latter, the French protectorate, is said to bring more elaborate infrastructures that help bring 'modernity' to the Kingdom and hence shape present-day Morocco.[108] Taking up only two possible 'variables' to describe, or even define, Morocco's 'governmental legacy', however, tends to limit the scope of interpretation, rendition or depiction of this 'legacy'. In fact, the dichotomous approach expressed by Waterbury's example captures the most significant idea of power that appears to be conceived, defined, and measured through comparison or rather contrasts. While De Foucauld's conception of Morocco's political system(s) has been expressed through the division of space into *spatial-political units*, Waterbury's conception, on the other hand, relies on what we will call *temporal-political units* where Morocco's political system(s) is conceived through the realm of *time* using colonisation as an indicative measure. The argument here is that colonisation is not the scale through which Morocco should be 'measured'. In fact, what these two examples also show us is that Morocco (as the object of the analysis) was treated based on its interaction with 'Europeans' (through exploration) or the French (through colonisation). Here again, the subject (Europeans and Colonial France) gives the object (Morocco) its meaning, thus, making the

[104] Rivet, Daniel. *Le Maghreb à L'épreuve De La Colonisation*. Hachette, 2002.

[105] Foucault, Michel, and Colin Gordon. *Power/knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977*. Hemel Hempstead, 1980.

[106] Waterbury, John. *The Commander of the Faithful: the Moroccan Political Elite - a Study in Segmented Politics*. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1970.

[107] *Ibid.* p.15.

[108] *Ibid.*

latter an expression of the former. Strictly speaking, the object of the analysis (Morocco) appears to be only as important as it relates to the subject (Europeans).

The examples of De Foucauld and Waterbury indicate the importance of 'the gaze' as a *reflective tool* where the *inside* and *outside* interact through the prism of 'perception' which in itself is an exercise of power.[109] As Foucault said "[the exercise of power] is always a way of acting upon an acting subject or acting subjects by virtue of their acting or being capable of action."[110] In other words, the binary units used to define Morocco's political and spatial spaces are not only an expression of perceived power-relations but are in themselves an exercise of power.

While this dichotomous approach has found much support from scholars and historians alike, it has also substantially narrowed the discussion on the interpretation of various 'historical facts.' The epistemological framework expressed by De Foucauld and Waterbury's binary language reflects an assumed foundation of the symbolic dimension used to define (directly or indirectly) Morocco's 'typical features', as a State and a nation. Here, symbolism overtakes the discussion and presents a well-woven tapestry – a rendering of an envisioned 'truth'. The same approach is in fact used by the Moroccan State in defining its State-identity(ies). More on this further down.

Communicating Identity: Morocco's Own Notion of Self

The above section provided examples of ways by which Morocco's State-identity(ies) has been conceived in the literature, this section, however, will shift the attention to the Moroccan state post-independence. The aim is to shed light on the ways Morocco has shaped its image and framed its sets of beliefs, actions, values, and roles both domestically and internationally. We choose to rely on Morocco's constitutions to define the constitutive elements of said identity. The reason behind this is threefold: First, in Morocco, the authority of the constitution transcends any other legislative sources of norms and can therefore provide important insights into Morocco's projected identity, as a State and as a nation. Second, Morocco's constitutions reveal the Kingdom's political culture of the time. They play a major role in underscoring the State's ideological orientation and institutionalising it. Third, as the supreme judicial norm with both domestic and international political implications, Morocco's constitutions provide

[109] Foucault, Michel, and Colin Gordon. *Power/knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977*. 1980.

[110] Foucault, Michel. "The Subject and Power." *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*. 2nd edition. Ed. Hubert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1982.

theoretical insights crucial for understanding *soft power measures* expressed through ideas, values, and norms.[111]

Morocco's Constitution(s) and Markers of Identity

Since gaining independence in 1956, Morocco has adopted several constitutions (1962, 1970, 1972, 1992, 1996, 2011) through national referendums, with each one highlighting Islam as an integral part of the Kingdom's state identity.

The constitution serves as a fascinating literary text, offering valuable insights into how the Moroccan State has shaped its national identity over time. Repeated references to identity markers within the constitution are tied to fundamental principles, which originate from Islamic teachings and Moroccan cultural values. These principles are intended to underscore the importance of these identity markers and reinforce specific concepts. A word count analysis of Morocco's constitutions effectively illustrates this emphasis, as demonstrated in the following graph:

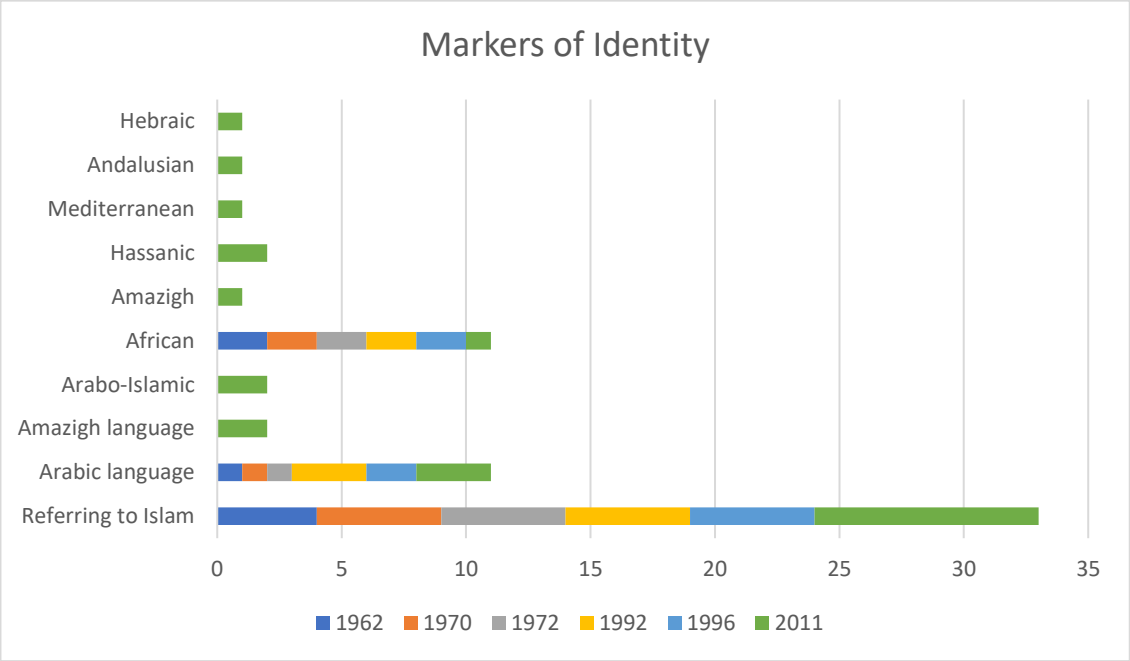


Figure 1.1 Markers of Identity in Morocco's Constitutions

Figure 1.1 displays the results from an initial analysis of Morocco's constitutions, highlighting the prominence of terms related to Islam as a consistent marker of Identity.[112] While the first

[111] Nye, Joseph S. *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*. 2004.

[112] While frequency of occurrence is not always a reliable indicator of importance, it does offer insight into term usage in constitutional texts. We are mindful that textual ambiguity in legal documents, such

three constitutions exhibit similar identity markers with comparable frequency, additional markers have been introduced over time.

Notably, there is an increase in terms related to the Arabic language, coinciding with the rise of Arab nationalism in the Middle East and North Africa. This could explain Morocco's emphasis on Arabic as a crucial aspect of its national identity. However, the 1996 constitution removed one such marker, reducing the total number of terms referencing the Arabic language to two. This suggests that three years before King Mohammed VI's ascension, Morocco's focus on the 'Arab' aspect of its national identity was reverted to its original state.

The inclusion and subsequent removal of an additional marker for the Arabic language indicate that regional and global dynamics influence Morocco's identity construction. The slight variation in the number of identity markers used in the constitutions suggests that Morocco adjusts its identity framework to align with regional and political goals.

A significant turning point in Morocco's identity-framing strategy occurred during the 2011 constitutional reforms. In response to the 2011 uprisings, the constitution incorporated ethnic communities as integral components of Morocco's national identity for the first time. Table 1.2 reveals that while the first five constitutions identify three main identity markers (*i.e.*, ideology, language, and territory), the 2011 constitution integrates ethnic communities into Morocco's national identity. By expanding its national identity's scope, the 2011 constitution implies that the Moroccan State is fine-tuning its identity framework to create a new configuration.

Table 1.2 also shows that the 2011 constitution includes nine references to ethnic identity markers, equalling the frequency of terms related to Islam. This parallel further emphasizes the metaphor of Morocco's identity framing as a finely tuned instrument. The following chapter will elaborate on how Morocco markets its identity, providing greater clarity on this analogy.

Diverse but United

A closer look at the 2011 constitution indicates the multi-layered aspect of Morocco's projected nation-state identity.

> [Morocco is] a sovereign Muslim State, attached to its national unity and to its territorial integrity, the Kingdom of Morocco intends to preserve, in its plenitude and its diversity, its one and indivisible national identity. Its unity, forged by the convergence of its Arab-Islamic, Berber [Amazighe] and Saharan-Hassanic [Saharo-Hassanie]

as Morocco's constitutions, allows for multiple interpretations. This may impact our data analysis. Given these factors, we view this lexical approach as a starting point, rather than a rigid assertion of facts.

> components, nourished and enriched by its African, Andalusian, Hebraic, and Mediterranean influences [affluents].[113]

The excerpt on Morocco's ethnic communities highlights the multifaceted nature of Morocco's projected nation-state identity. The "Arab-Islamic" component is not the sole focus, but rather a blending of diverse cultural experiences. We can identify two levels of identity upon which Morocco's "national unity" depends: **internal structures** (*Arab-Islamic*, *Amazighe*, and *Saharan-Hassanic*) and **external structures** (*African*, *Hebraic*, and *Mediterranean)*. The convergence of these internal and external identity structures underscores the State's decision to present "its plenitude and its diversity"[114] under the indivisible concept of "national unity." In the Preamble of the 2011 Constitution, the emphasis on the Muslim religion as the defining feature of this national identity highlights the State's promotion of Islam as a unifying force, cantering the State's and nation's identity around a cultural and political ideology rooted in State-sanctioned Islam.[115]

While all six of Moroccan constitutions identify Islam as the State religion in "Title One: General provisions,"[116] the first five place this provision under the "Fundamental principles" segment of Title One, which the 2011 omits. This change might stem from a need to establish a general ideological orientation while allowing room for diverse interpretative approaches, thus delegating ideology to political authority.

The provisions regarding *The Commander of the Faithful* also changed in 2011. In Article 19, Title II Of the Royalty, *The Commander of the Faithful* was considered the supreme representative of the State. However, in 2011, Title II pertains to "Fundamental Freedoms and Rights," moving the title concerning royalty to Title III. While the King's role in ensuring respect for Islam remains (art. 41 in 2011 and art. 19 in all the other constitutions), the 2011 Constitution alters his representation from "supreme representative of the nation" to "supreme representative of the State" (art.42) and adds a statement regarding the King's role as the "Supreme Arbiter between the institutions." This provision has significant implications for our study, as Morocco's State-run religious institutions have gained prominence over the last decade.[117]

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[113] 2011 Moroccan constitution. Retrieved from the official website of the General Secretariat of the Moroccan Government. www.sgg.gov.ma/Portals/0/constitution/constitution_2011_Fr.pdf.

[114] *Ibid.*

[115] *Ibid.*

[116] Art. 6 of the first five constitutions (1962-1970-1972-1992-1996) and art.3 of the 2011 constitution.

[117] More on this in the next chapters.

The political model introduced alongside Islam in Morocco is what Mlil refers to as "a political model centred around the idea of centre."[118] The concept of 'centrality' resonates with Althusser's notion of *interpellation*, described as the process of "hailing" through which ideology frames identity.[119] Here, interpellation, ideology, and identity mutually reinforce each other and function as a connecting bridge between power structures and individuals.[120] The additional identity markers incorporated into the 2011 Constitution can be seen as a process of "hailing identity" to the hegemonic power structures centred around Islam.[121] By emphasising the importance of religion as a "unifier," the 2011 Constitution renders the intricate (and simultaneous) relationship between domination and subjugation of individuals to the State (as an ideological apparatus).[122]

This argument might explain why the concept of the "Arab-Islamic Umma" was introduced for the first time in the 2011 Constitution. Additionally, expanding the religion-based group identity beyond Morocco's national borders enables a broader range of foreign policy strategies involving the "Umma."

Morocco's regional identity is also evident in its constitutions. The 1992 and 1996 constitutions stated that Morocco "forms part of the Greater Arab-Maghreb," while the 2011 Constitution claims that Morocco "belongs to the Greater Maghreb." Notably, the "Arab" component was removed, likely to accommodate the various ethnic groups within Morocco's conceptualisation of the Greater Maghreb as a regional identity. The phrase "form part of" and "belong to" also convey subtle differences in Morocco's positioning. While the first phrase implies that Morocco is a fraction of a whole, the second suggests that Morocco is an integral part of the Greater Maghreb. In this sense, belonging entails more than merely being an element of the Greater Maghreb; it implies shared acceptance, attention, and support among group members. This is evident in the provision concerning the "construction of the Maghreb Union," in which the notion of "Maghreb Union" appears for the first time in a Moroccan constitution.

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[118] Ben Mlih, Abdellah. *Structures Politiques du Maroc Colonial*. *Editions L'Harmattan*, 2007, p.21. p.30

[119] Althusser, Louis. *Essays on Ideology*. London: Verso, 1984.

[120] Althusser argues that interpellation is manifested in Ideological State Apparatuses (ISAs) and Repressive State Apparatuses (RSAs), which in turn shape individuals' identities. In the following chapters, we will explore this idea further by examining how Morocco's social and political institutions embody the identities of their subjects.

[121] As indicated in its constitution.

[122] The notion of state as an ideological apparatus is one that we will get to further explore in Chapter 3 of this thesis (*i.e.*, *Effects of Morocco's National Attributes on its Foreign Policy*).

While initial observations focused on the domestic implications of ethnic identity markers, it seems that Morocco's redefinition of its projected identity extends beyond domestic markers and also encompasses regional identification. Both dimensions (domestic and international) contribute to refining Morocco's projected identity. The King's role as the "Supreme Arbiter between the institutions" further emphasises the importance of institutions as communication channels for conveying and reinforcing Morocco's projected identity.[123]

Identity Patterns

As previously argued, the Preamble of the 2011 Constitution asserts that the Muslim religion occupies a central and significant position within Morocco's national reference.[124] To substantiate this claim, we propose to employ a content analysis method on the 2011 constitutional text, followed by a thematic analysis to identify patterns related to Morocco's projected identity. This qualitative approach is deemed most suitable for our study, as it offers a systematic method for data analysis and ensures that interpretations align with the data.

In our analysis of Morocco's constitutions, we have focused on the language used in the documents, as it plays a crucial role in shaping the identity and values conveyed by the text. It is important to note that the constitutions were originally drafted in French, which introduces an element of complexity when conducting a word cloud analysis.

For our study, we have relied on our own English translations of the constitutions, which may be subject to slight variations from the official translations. This choice necessitates a discussion of potential discrepancies arising from subtle differences between the languages and their impact on our results.

Language is inherently tied to culture and identity, and the nuances between languages can lead to differences in meaning and interpretation. In translating the constitutions, we have aimed to maintain the essence of the original text while acknowledging that certain concepts may not have direct equivalents in English. As such, our word cloud analysis should be considered with the understanding that some discrepancies may arise due to the translation process.

Moreover, the choice of French as the drafting language of Morocco's constitutions highlights the historical and cultural influences that have shaped the nation's identity. It is

[123] 2011 Moroccan constitution. Retrieved from the official website of the General Secretariat of the Moroccan Government. www.sgg.gov.ma/Portals/0/constitution/constitution_2011_Fr.pdf.

[124] *Ibid.*

essential to recognise these influences and their potential impact on the framing of Morocco's nation-state identity within the constitutions.

Methodology

In this section, we performed text coding on the 2011 constitutional text using a qualitative data analysis software called NVivo (1.6.1). A visual display of referenced themes (codes) found in our data was then employed to facilitate the discussion. However, one major limitation of NVivo's visual display is its tendency to remove words from their context. To mitigate this risk, we confined our query to identity-related articles only. The first stage of our data analysis involved eliminating constitutional articles unrelated to the overarching theme of identity. To achieve this, the retrieval condition was set to encompass the following themes: "national characteristics", "solidarity", "values", "culture" and "common interests". Consequently, the constitution's preamble and 11 articles were retrieved and imported into the software.

In the second round, we indexed the content of the text and generated several NVivo codes. Inductive coding enables us to identify explicit and implicit ideas within the text and assign a meaning unit to each idea. Codes were then attached to these data units, revealing overlapping codes. This round was crucial for the conceptual development of our idea, as the overlap indicated the intricate relationship between the data units.

In the third round of the data analysis, an initial display of primary sources unveiled patterns, which were subsequently organised by themes and subthemes. A visual representation of the results was presented before proceeding to the fourth and final round of our analysis, which involved developing interpretations of the results.

Dataset

Upon encoding the imported data, we discovered that 73% of codes pertained to the Nation State, 21% to the Nation, and 4% to the Muslim religion (Figure 1.2)

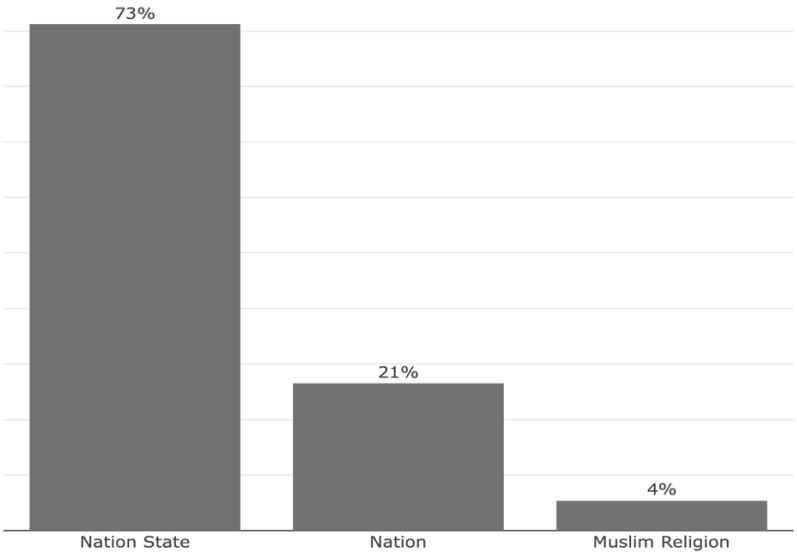


Figure 1.2 Distribution of Codes Related to Nation State, Nation, and Muslim Religion in the 2011 Constitution

To fixate our code structure, we conducted a second round of coding and organised our code system based on their relevance to the study. The coding for 'Nation State' was aggregated from child codes 'State', 'Kingdom' and 'political values.' Among the three, 'Kingdom' was the most prominent, averaging 56%, compared to 22% for 'State' and 13% for 'political values' (Figure 1.3).

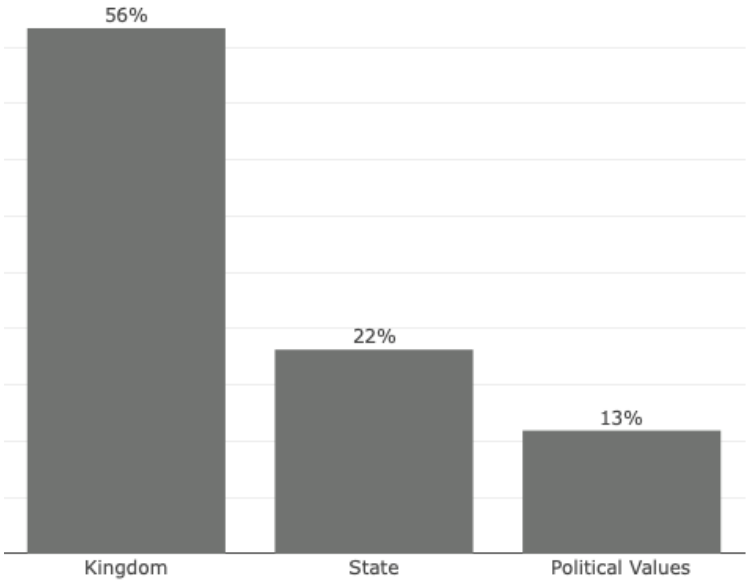


Figure 1.3 Comparison of 'Kingdom', 'State', and 'Political Values' Code Frequencies within the 'Nation State' Theme

These results indicate that references related to ‘Nation State’ were predominantly associated with ‘Kingdom’ rather than ‘State’. While ‘State’ denotes a sovereign polity, ‘Kingdom’ refers to a defined political unit with the king as the supreme ruler of the nation. A more efficient code hierarchy, therefore, positions ‘Kingdom’ as the top-level code and ‘State’ and ‘political values’ as child codes. Although child codes are nested under their parent code, NVivo treats each code separately. Consequently, aggregation was enabled to include child codes within the parent code. Coding references for ‘State’ an ‘Political values’ were thus added to ‘Kingdom’.

The three overarching themes emerging from our data analysis were subsequently established as ‘Kingdom’, ‘Nation’, and ‘Muslim Religion’. Intriguingly, these themes are reflected in the Kingdom’s motto: “God, The Homeland, The King” (الله، الوطن، الملك).

Results and discussion

After completing the first three rounds of data analysis, we ran a Word Frequency query on the three codes (‘Kingdom’, ‘Nation’, and ‘Muslim Religion’). We set the minimum length to 3, groupings to exact match only, and display to 50. A Word Cloud was then created to display the results (see Figure 1.4).



Figure 1.4 All Three Codes (Case 1)

Figure 1.4 offers crucial textual-data points, where words appear in varying sizes. The larger and bolder a word is, the more frequently it is mentioned in the text (within our query scope). At first glance, two cluster of words can be identified. The first is the core of the Word Cloud (G1), where the most frequent occurring words are: STATE, KINGDOM, and NATIONAL.

The second most visible group of words (G2) includes: MOROCCAN, MUSLIM, RELIGION, RESPECT, UNITY, KING, RIGHTS, COUNTRIES, PRINCIPLES, CITIZENS, CULTURAL, DEMOCRATIC, IDENTITY, DEVELOPMENT, INTERNATIONAL, SOLIDARITY, and WORLD. The third cluster consists of the remaining words in the cloud.

Interestingly, general themes with clustered layout emerge from G2, which can be utilised to guide our understanding of the text. Table 1.1 illustrates the results.

Table 1.1 Representation Conceptual Themes Emerging from Word Cloud Analysis

Dimension	**Theme**	**Words**
National	National unit	RELIGION, KING, CITIZENS
	National identity	MOROCCAN, MUSLIM, CULTURAL, IDENTITY
	Resilience	RESPECT, UNITY, SOLIDARITY
	Civility	RIGHTS, PRINCIPLES, DEMOCRATIC
	Growth	DEVELOPMENT
Global	Global unit	COUNTRIES, INTERNATIONAL, WORLD
National & Global	Growth	DEVELOPMENT

As highlighted in Table 1.1, six conceptual themes emerge from the cloud: “national unit”, “national identity”, “global unit”, “resilience”, “civility”, and “growth”. These themes could be employed to identify narrative elements that could help fuel the discussion on religion as a frame of reference in Morocco’s Nation-state identity.

Indeed, while “national identity”, “resilience”, “civility” and “growth” represent standard characteristics of a nation, we find that the national and global units that emerge from our classification may point to the importance given to Morocco’s standing in the international system. This is particularly relevant concerning its projected identity (as expressed in the 2011 constitution).

Moreover, our clusters of themes uncovered three dimensions to our textual-data points: (1) national, (2) global, and (3) national and global. These dimensions further emphasise the two conceptual themes that emerged from our analysis: “national unit” and “global unit”.
To understand the significance of both themes, we opted to classify the existing coding references of the text using “National Unit” and “Global Unit” as our classification criteria. The results are displayed below.

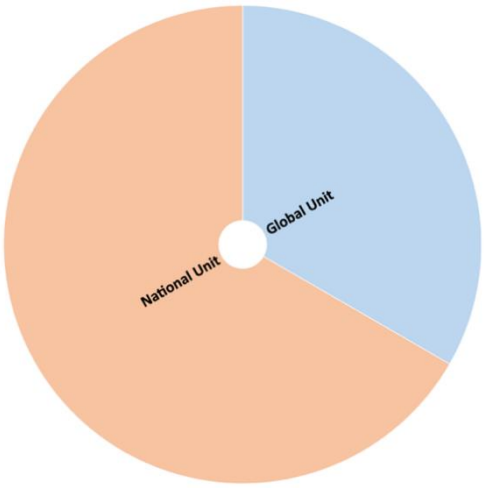


Figure 1.5 Sunburst of Selected Items Coded Under “NATIONAL UNIT” and “GLOBAL UNIT”

The significance of the global dimension indicates the importance placed on Morocco’s international standing. This is particularly intriguing given that the content of our text was limited to articles related to the overarching theme of identity. Generally, it appears that a substantial portion of our coded text reflects the global scope of Morocco’s nation-state identity. This produces intriguing findings that account for the prevalence of the “Global Unit” coded theme compared to the “National Unit”. To identify their points of convergence, however, further exploration of the data was required. For this, we queried a word frequency for the coded theme of “National Unit” and another query for the coded theme of “Global Unit”. The display was set to 50 words, and stemmed words were excluded. The results are presented in Figure 1.6 and 1.7.

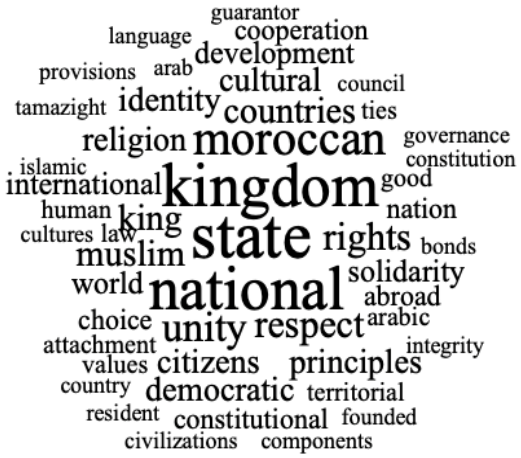


Figure 1.6 NATIONAL UNIT Cloud



Figure 1.7 GLOBAL UNIT Cloud

Figures 1.6 and 1.7 illustrate that, for each query, the dimension of the coded theme is prominently displayed in the centre of the cloud. Upon examining the summary of our query, we find that among the twenty highest-weighted percentage words, merely five words are shared: COUNTRIES, ABROAD, MOROCCO, MOROCCAN, and DEVELOPMENT. This observation suggests that the primary convergence between both units pertains to Moroccans residing abroad and the countries they inhabit.

Analysis

Despite its purported significance, references to the Muslim religion were not as prevalent as anticipated. As illustrated in Figure 1.2, references to Islam or the Islamic identity were neither featured in the epicentre of the Word Cloud nor reflected in our conceptual themes (Table 1.2).

Furthermore, no common word relating to the overarching theme of religion was found when examining the convergence between the national and global units.

Nevertheless, references to the Muslim religion do appear to be most prevalent in the 'national unity' and 'national identity' groups of G2. Evidence suggests that references to religion primarily pertain to the national dimension of Morocco's nation-state identity. In light of these findings, we conducted a similar word frequency query, this time focusing on the 'Muslim Religion' and 'Nation' Codes. The results are presented below:

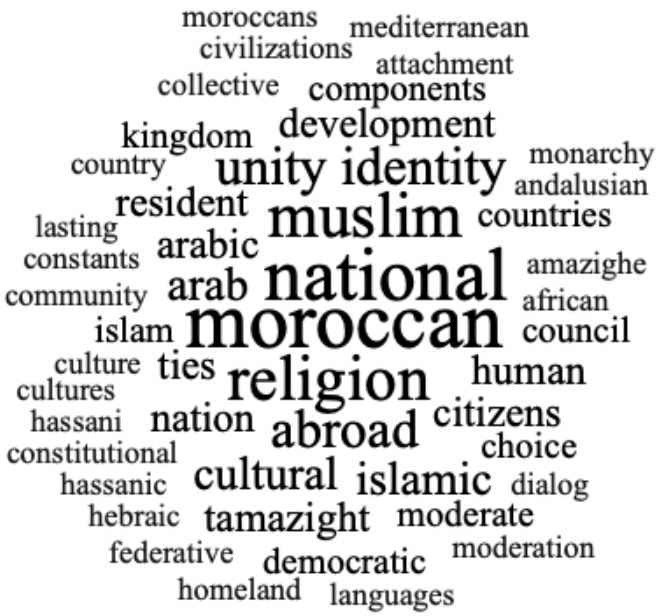


Figure 1.8 "MUSLIM RELIGION" & "NATION" Codes (Case 2)

As demonstrated in Figure 1.8, the words MOROCCAN, NATIONAL, RELIGION, and MUSLIM were frequently used within the context of our codes. Although smaller in size, the weighted percentage of our group reveals that MUSLIM and RELIGION closely followed NATIONAL and MOROCCAN.

To further comprehend the word frequency implications of our codes, we narrowed our query to the 'Muslim religion' and 'Kingdom' codes. Given the religious significance of the King as *Commander of the Faithful*, we expected to find some indication of the importance placed on the Muslim religion at the heart of the cloud.



Figure 1.9 "MUSLIM RELIGION" & "KINGDOM" Aggregated Set

The results of our query met our expectations, with the words MUSLIM and RELIGION appearing prevalent in the cloud. As indicated in Figure 1.9, however, the most frequently occurring words are STATE and KINGDOM, as opposed to Figure 1.8, where MOROCCAN and NATIONAL were most common.

Given the aforementioned observations, we decided to conduct another word frequency analysis for the 'Nation' and 'Kingdom' codes. The results, displayed in Figure 1.10, show that the words MUSLIM and RELIGION from our previous query were replaced by NATIONAL.

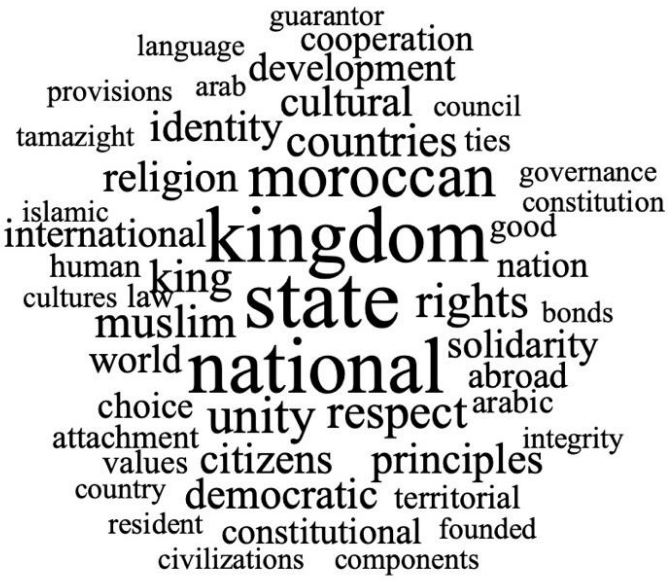


Figure 1.10 "NATION" & "KINGDOM" Aggregated Sets (Case 4)

Changes in popular themes are captured by identifying the frequency of selected words compared to others, both within and across query results.

Three observations are made based on our word clouds:

1- The group UNITY is most prevalent when the "Nation" code is involved.

2- RESPECT, RIGHT and COUNTRIES appear when "Kingdom" is included in the query.

3- IDENTITY, CULTURAL and ABROAD only appear when the frequency criterion is set to "Muslim Religion" and "Nation".

To better understand the implications of the groups involved in the Word Clouds, the first 10 most prominent words from each query were selected. Similar words were grouped under one label, and their weighted percentages were aggregated. The following table illustrates our results for the RELIGION, NATION, KINGDOM, and STATE groups.

Table 1.2 Aggregated Weighted Percentages of Prominent Words in RELIGION, NATION, KINGDOM, and STATE Groups

	Case 1	**Case 2**	**Case 3**	**Case 4**
	All three codes	"Muslim Religion" & "Nation" codes	"Muslim Religion" & "Kingdom" codes	"Nation" & "Kingdom" codes
RELIGION	3%	7.45%	3.17%	1.08%
NATION	3.62%	7.45%	1.38%	3.8%
KINGDOM	3.32%	0%	4.14%	3.25%
STATE	2.49%	0%	3.31%	2.39%

From the table, we can observe that in both Case 1 and Case 4, the sequence of the words NATION, KINGDOM, and RELIGION align with their weighted percentage, from high to low. For both cases, the weighted percentage for the RELIGION group is the lowest of the three groups (RELIGION, NATION, KINGDOM).

The prominence of the national reference over the religious one in Case 1 and 4, however, calls into question the preamble of the constitution, which states "the pre-eminence accorded to the Muslim religion in the national reference."[125] This perspective suggests that contrary to popular belief, the Islamic component of Morocco's projected identity (as conceived in the 2011 constitution) may not necessarily be the most prominent feature of the Kingdom's nation-state identity, but rather, an instrument for fostering national sentiment.

We define "national sentiment" as the common characteristics that bind people together within and between nations. According to the constitution's preamble, the place of religion in Morocco's national reference aligns with the Moroccan people's commitment to "values of openness, moderation, tolerance, and dialogue for mutual understanding among all cultures and civilisations worldwide."[126] This implies that the dialogue between the nation and the world is grounded in shared values, which are consistent with the Islamic values that form an

[125] 2011 Moroccan constitution. Retrieved from the official website of the General Secretariat of the Moroccan Government. www.sgg.gov.ma/Portals/0/constitution/constitution_2011_Fr.pdf.

[126] *Ibid.*

integral part of Morocco's national reference. In other words, the bonding principle between the Moroccan people and the world is based on universal values rooted in Islam.

Indeed, our Word Frequency results for "Muslim Religion" and "Nation" codes (Case 2) revealed that the RELIGION and NATION groups share similar weighted percentage points (7.45%). No reference was made to KINGDOM and STATE, which may further support the idea that the binding principle in Morocco's national reference is Islam.

However, when the frequency criterion is set to "Muslim Religion" and "Kingdom" codes (Case 3), the results show the KINGDOM group to be more frequent than RELIGION and NATION. This raises an important question: does the pre-eminence of religion only concern the nation and not the Kingdom?

Interestingly, when the weighted percentage of STATE is added to KINGDOM, the query results for Case 1, 3, and 4 would change, making KINGDOM the predominant group. This process would not affect our word frequency results for "Muslim Religion" and "Nation" codes, where the groups KINGDOM and STATE are absent, further supporting our hypothesis regarding the role of religion in maintaining national sentiment.

Conclusion

In conclusion, a State's projected identity is crucial for communicating its values and interests within the international system. This framing of identity is an essential process that gives rise to social and political networks of power. Gaining a deeper understanding of identity formation allows us to better discern how a state seeks to establish its position in the international arena.

Our examination of Morocco's constitutions reveals that various markers of identity have been integrated into the text since 1962. This observation supports our argument that Morocco's nation-state identities are plural and dynamic, reflecting not just the existing diversity within Moroccan society, but also the state's evolving aspirations.

Moreover, being part of the international space necessitates interaction, leading to the creation of shared norms. It is important to acknowledge that conceptualising Morocco primarily in religious terms – whether by the Moroccan state itself or by others – could be an expression of strategic interest rather than an accurate representation of the nation's identity.

Our use of word clouds as discussion tools has helped to elucidate this hypothesis, highlighting the complexities of Morocco's projected image. In our subsequent chapter, we will further explore this hypothesis by examining the mechanisms through which

Morocco promotes its nation-state identity in the international sphere. By reinforcing the connections between these key ideas, we provide a clearer understanding of the significance of identity formation in the context of international relations and the factors that shape Morocco's nation-state identity.

2. Morocco's Identity Elements in World Politics

The Role of International Governmental Organisations and Membership in Projecting Values and Norms

In our previous chapter, we highlighted the significance of identity-framing. Our analysis demonstrated that the Moroccan State utilises key markers of identity as a means of governance. This is evident in the 2011 constitution, which includes references to ethnic communities, thereby imparting a political character to Morocco's ethnic-based identities. These identities, deeply rooted in ethnic and cultural diversity, converge under the umbrella of "tolerance and moderation."

Additionally, the State champions Islam as a unifying religious fabric essential for the nation's balance. By weaving State-endorsed Islam into its governance framework, the Moroccan administration aims to fortify the nation's cultural cohesion and foster a collective national identity. In this context, religion evolves into a pivotal anchor for Moroccan unity.

The regional affiliations echoed in the 2011 constitution aspire to present Morocco as a potent global player, primed for global integration.[127] Through its diplomatic endeavours, Morocco underscores its stature as a regional trailblazer and beacon of stability, enhancing its national identity, mitigating the challenges of globalisation, and advocating for global harmony.

In 2013, the King delivered two pivotal addresses regarding Morocco's diplomatic posture. The first in March, [128] coinciding with the National Day of Moroccan Diplomacy - a tradition since 1956, reflects Morocco's commitment to refining its global image.[129] This day

[127] Zoubir, Yahia H. "Morocco's Pivotal Role in the Maghreb and Beyond." *The Journal of the Middle East and Africa,* vol. 3, no. 3-4, 2012, pp. 266-286.

[128] Maroc.ma. "Discours Royaux". *Message Royal aux participants au colloque organisé à Rabat à l'occasion de la célébration de la Journée Nationale de la Diplomatie Marocaine*, 26 March 2013. www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/message-royal-aux-participants-au-colloque-organis%C3%A9-%C3%A0-rabat-%C3%A0-loccasion-de-la.

[129] The Kingdom's celebrations of the National Day of Moroccan Diplomacy have been taking place every 26th of April. The date constitutes the anniversary of the promulgation of *Dahir* n°1-56-097 of Ramadan 14, 1375 (April 26, 1956) which created the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The celebrations took place every year since then by the initiative of the Moroccan Diplomatic Club, in partnership with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccans Residing Abroad.

symbolises an effort "to actualise the Royal strategic vision of Moroccan foreign policy." [130] Yet, the alignment between the Kingdom's identity markers and this overarching vision remains a topic of contemplation.

This speech accentuated the profound role of national identity in bolstering Morocco's international standing, signifying a paradigm shift. The 2013 address highlighted Moroccan diplomacy's aspiration to fortify its regional leadership while leveraging the benefits of globalisation and revitalising its foreign relations.

The context of these speeches, especially during the National Day of Moroccan Diplomacy, offers profound insights into Morocco's global positioning strategy. While the King has sporadically delivered addresses on this day, his 2013 proclamation particularly emphasised the preservation of Morocco's identity markers in the face of globalisation. The Foreign Affairs Minister highlighted that the occasion is a testament "to concretise the Royal strategic vision of Moroccan foreign policy and bolster Morocco's international clout." [131]

Later, in August, the King's address during the inaugural conference of ambassadors underscored the importance of identity in Morocco's foreign policy.[132] He articulated a vision of a harmonised and well-defined diplomatic strategy that recognises the country's civilisational identity, leveraging its strategic position and adapting to a dynamic international landscape.

The selection of 2013 as a focal point is essential given the transformative events that preceded it. Post the 2011 constitutional reforms, Morocco's amplified participation in global events bore witness to its evolving international stature. The King's 2013 address during the ambassadors' conference reaffirmed Morocco's steadfast commitment to its strategic foreign policy direction. Hence, the 2012 speeches serve as a lens to understand the evolution of Morocco's diplomatic strategies during this transformative period.

The three specific 2012 royal speeches, positioned between the 2011 constitutional shifts and the 2013 ambassadorial discourse, elucidate the subtleties of Morocco's evolving diplomatic strategy amidst global flux.

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[130] "Journée Nationale De La Diplomatie Marocaine : Reconnaissance De L'engagement Du Roi Mohammed VI Pour Défendre La Souveraineté Du Maroc – LPJM." *Le Petit Journal Marocain*, 26 April 2022. www.lepetitjournalmarocain.com/2022/04/26/journee-nationale-de-la-diplomatie-maroc.

[131] *Ibid.*

[132] Maroc.ma. "Discours Royaux". *Message du souverain à la 1ère conférence des ambassadeurs de SM le Roi*, 30 August 2013. www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/le-souverain-adresse-un-message-la-1ere-conference-des-ambassadeurs-de-sm-le-roi

This chapter endeavours to explore how Morocco's distinctive identity becomes a key player in its diplomatic and economic pursuits. Through these pivotal addresses, we unveil the strategies Morocco employs in asserting its identity, propelling the Kingdom to the forefront of the global diplomatic stage.

Seeking Stability in Time of Crisis

Morocco's Unfavourable Domestic Environment in 2012

To give domestic context to the 2012 speeches, Morocco was facing social tensions related to corruption and social inequalities. The country was ranked 80 out of 180 countries in the 2011 Corruption Perceptions Index by Transparency International, indicating that corruption was perceived as a significant issue.[133] Additionally, protests against social and economic inequalities were taking place in various parts of the country.[134] In February 2011, the "February 20th" movement, inspired by the Arab Spring, emerged in Morocco, demanding social justice, economic opportunities, and political reforms.[135] These protests continued throughout the year, and while they were mostly peaceful, they sometimes resulted in clashes with security forces.[136] The government responded to these protests by introducing a series of social and economic reforms, including subsidies for staple goods, healthcare, and education.[137] However, the situation remained tense, with many Moroccans feeling frustrated by the slow pace of change and the persistence of social and economic inequalities.[138] This crisis has been said to have played a role in inciting the 2011 protests in Morocco, which prompted significant reforms, including the adoption of a new constitution and the election of a new government led by the country's largest Islamist party.[139] The formation of this government involved the complex process of putting together a coalition. During this politically charged period, Morocco also

[133] Transparency International. "2011 - Corruption Perception Index." *Transparency.org*. www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2011.

[134] El Moussaoui, Naima. "The 'February 20th' movement in Morocco." *Open Democracy,* 09 March 2011.

[135] *Ibid.*

[136] Schwedler, Jillian. "Morocco: The February 20 Movement and the Future of Reform." *Middle East Law and Governance,* vol. 5, no. 1, 2013, pp. 44-57.

[137] Burkhalter, Zachary. "Morocco: Protests and Reform in a Monarchical System." *Journal of North African Studies*, vol. 17, no. 4, 2012, pp. 761-779.

[138] Taha, Rachid. "Morocco: Political and Social Changes." *The Arab Spring: The End of Postcolonialism*, edited by Tahar Chikhaoui and Rachid Taha, Springer, 2012.

[139] "Discours de Sa Majesté le Roi Mohammed VI du 9 mars." *Regionalisationavancee.ma,* 09 March 2011. www.regionalisationavancee.ma/PDF/DiscoursRoyal/Fr/DiscoursRoyal9mars11.pdf.

faced other challenges, such as a drought that had a significant impact on its important agriculture sector.[140] Unemployment was also a major concern, with average rates hovering around 9% between 2012 and 2013, according to the World Bank.[141] This context of political and social unrest is important to consider when analysing the 2012 speeches, as it highlights the challenges that Morocco was facing both domestically and internationally.

2012 and the Global Environment

The overview of the internal events highlights the unfavourable and precarious domestic environment in which the 2013 speech on Morocco's diplomacy was given. In addition to the internal challenges, Morocco also faced a challenging external environment during the global economic crisis. This is evident in three key speeches given in 2012, which all centred around the theme of 'stability'. These speeches were delivered at intervals of a few weeks, and each emphasised the significance of stability in a different context.

The first speech was a royal address given at the 4th Extraordinary Summit of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). In this speech, the King of Morocco emphasised the importance of "preserving the unity, stability, and regional security of Syria."[142] He also expressed Morocco's support for the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and highlighted the importance of national unity and territorial integrity for Muslim African countries such as Mali, Somalia, and Sudan.

Furthermore, the speech indicated that **religion, stability,** and **economic growth** are interconnected by referencing the current situation facing the 'Islamic World' and the need to mobilise resources and address challenges. It mentions the need to build strong relationships between Islamic states, mutualise interests, and promote intra-Islamic commerce, which would help lay the foundation for a common Islamic market. An emphasis is also placed on the importance of fostering entrepreneurship to spur scientific and economic cooperation and maximise the use of natural and human resources. By exploring these subjects, the speech draws attention to the intimate correlation between religion, stability, and economic growth, as

[140] "Agriculture in Morocco", USDA Foreign Agricultural Service Global Agriculture Information Network Report, 2012.

[141] World Bank. "Morocco Economic Monitor: Job Creation for a Stronger Inclusive Growth." *World Bank*, 2013.

[142] Maroc.ma. "Discours Royaux". *SM le Roi adresse un discours au 4ème sommet extraordinaire de l'OCI*, 14 August 2012. www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/sm-le-roi-adresse-un-discours-au-4%C3%A8me-sommet-extraordinaire-de-loci

the prosperity of such endeavours would confer several advantages upon the Islamic community.

In the second speech to the General Assembly of the United Nations in September, the King of Morocco emphasised the connection between **security, stability, and development** and the importance of achieving all three. According to the text, the realisation of international peace and security is essential to the mission of the United Nations. Morocco's peacekeeping operations and its deployment of peacekeepers was used to illustrate the Kingdom's commitment to contributing to the UN's efforts in maintaining peace and security. According to the speech, peace and security are integral to the development of a peaceful and stable international environment, which is necessary for sustainable development. Within this context, Morocco's commitment to economic stability and development in Africa[143] was highlighted and the Kingdom's plans to "pursue cooperation and solidarity programs" with African nations was presented as an effective method for South-South cooperation that would benefit African citizens. The King also expressed support for democratic changes in Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Yemen, Syria, and Jordan thus highlighting the importance placed on political stability in the 'Arab World'. These statements highlight the King's recognition of the interdependence between security, stability, and development and the importance of working towards achieving all three.

The final speech that we would like to draw attention to is a message from the King which was delivered two weeks after the General Assembly of the United Nations, at the 14th Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Francophonie in Kinshasa.[144] The Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF) organised the summit with a specific focus on the environmental and economic challenges confronting global governance.[145] As the OIF revolves around the concept of a common language (French), the speech implied that language assumes a pivotal role in advancing stability and economic growth. The speech argued that a shared language brings people together and facilitates understanding across different cultures, resulting in a more secure and harmonious society. Furthermore, the King highlighted the

[143] Maroc.ma. "Discours Royaux". *Texte intégral du Discours adressé par SM le Roi à la 67-ème session de l'Assemblée générale de l'ONU*, 28 Septembre 2012. www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/texte-int%C3%A9gral-du-discours-adress%C3%A9-par-sm-le-roi-%C3%A0-la-67-%C3%A8me-session-de-lassembl%C3%A9e

[144] Maroc.ma. "Discours Royaux". *Texte intégral du Message de SM le Roi au 14ème Sommet des Chefs d'Etat et de gouvernement de la francophonie13*, 13 October 2012. www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/texte-int%C3%A9gral-du-message-de-sm-le-roi-au-14%C3%A8me-sommet-des-chefs-detat-et-de

[145] *Ibid.*

benefits of a shared language in fostering stronger business connections and facilitating communication and transactions, which ultimately contributes to economic development. It was also asserted that the economy stands to gain from multilingualism, as it broadens the scope of potential markets and boosts tourism, ultimately creating fresh avenues for trade and investment. In conclusion, the speech highlighted the crucial role that **language** plays in promoting both **stability** and **economic growth**.

The speeches given by the King of Morocco at Morocco at the OIC, UN, and OIF events highlight different facets of stability, all of which emphasise the interconnectedness of political, social, and economic factors that contribute to development. For instance, the speech at the OIC emphasises political unity, regional security, and economic growth within the Islamic community, while the speech at the UN stresses the importance of stability in achieving international peace and security, promoting democratic changes, and economic development in Africa. The speech at the OIF highlights the role of language in facilitating a harmonious society and economic development through stronger business connections and communication.

These speeches underscore the complexity and interdependence of various factors that contribute to overall stability and development. Morocco views stability as a transnational phenomenon that holds great significance for a robust global economy. The interconnectivity of stability implies that conflicts can spread beyond national borders, as demonstrated by the global economic crisis. Therefore, transnational levers of stability are critical in resolving conflicts, and mobilising ethnic and religious groups across borders is necessary.

Cultural-Institutional Structures

In the realm of foreign policy, nations dispatch delegates to implement their strategies. In the 2012 gathering of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference, Morocco's Minister of Foreign Affairs delivered the country's "Royal Message." However, during the 2012 United Nations and OIC events, it was the King's brother, Moulay Rachid, who delivered the "Royal Speech." The presence of a royal representative to deliver the King's speech underscores the significance of royal representation in these events.

Moreover, the topics discussed in the King's speeches underscore the value of signalling through representation. As previously contended, the King's address to the UN General Assembly emphasises the linkages between security, stability, and development, while his speech at the 4th OIC summit underscores the relationship between religion, stability, and economic growth. When comparing these themes, it becomes clear that security and religion are two distinct areas of concern. Hence, the fact that the King's brother delivered the speeches

at these two events implies that matters related to security and religious affairs fall under the King's purview. Conversely, the Minister of Foreign Affairs concentrates on other facets of cultural identity and international collaboration. In addition, considering that the King bears the titles of Commander of the Faithful and Head of the Army, one could contend that Morocco's domestic governance structures are mirrored in its global affairs. In essence, appointing distinct envoys to these events enables the Kingdom to project its internal power dynamics onto the international arena.

Table 2.1 Representation and its Implications

Name	Focus of the organisation	Speaker	Represents	Themes extracted from the speech
OIC	Religion (*i.e.,* Islam)	Prince Moulay Rachid	The King	Religion Stability Economic growth
UN	Peace and security	Prince Moulay Rachid	The King	Security Stability Development
OIF	Language (*i.e.,* French)	The Minister of Foreign Affairs	The Nation	Language Stability Economic growth.

Stability on the Grounds of Identity Based Action

Morocco's Holistic Approach to Stability

Morocco defines stability as a transnational phenomenon that requires a holistic approach, considering the interdependence of political, social, and economic factors. Stability, for Morocco, entails maintaining domestic tranquillity, ensuring regional and global peace, and promoting democratic values and economic development. It also involves fostering inclusive societies by mobilising ethnic and religious groups across borders to resolve conflicts and ensure stability.[146]

[146] Kingdom of Morocco. "Speech of King Mohammed VI at the 73rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly." Official Website of the Kingdom of Morocco, 25 September 2018. www.maroc.ma/en/content/speech-his-majesty-king-mohammed-vi-73rd-session-united-nations-general-assembly.

It is worth noting that this definition is based on an analysis of the speeches made by the King of Morocco at various international events.[147] While this definition accurately reflects Morocco's emphasis on stability as a multifaceted and interconnected concept, it is important to keep in mind that there may be other ways in which Morocco and its leaders define stability in different contexts or situations.

Morocco's involvement in the OIF, UN, and OIC events emphasised its identity as a Muslim, African, Francophone, and Arab nation that shares global security and economic interests.[148] This portrayal underscores Morocco's markers of identity as a vital component of its economic and security affairs, as well as a crucial factor for stability.

Collective Identity and Strategic Culture: The Role of International Organizations

The construction of identity is a complex and multifaceted process that is shaped by multiple factors, which include ethnicity, religion, language, culture, and regional affiliation. This process of identity-framing is a powerful tool for the projection of national interests, both domestically and internationally. Morocco's engagement in various international organisations highlights the importance of these markers of identity in the formulation and communication of the Kingdom's national narrative.

Religion, language, and security play pivotal roles in shaping the collective identity and strategic culture of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), the United Nations (UN), and the International Organisation of La Francophonie (OIF). Language is a critical component of the collective identity and strategic culture of all three organisations. The OIC emphasises the importance of the Arabic language, and the OIF promotes French language and Francophone culture. Religion is also a significant theme for the OIC, which champions Islamic values, while the UN emphasises human rights, dignity, and respect for diversity, and the OIF promotes intercultural dialogue and respect for diversity. Finally, security is a critical concern for all three organisations, with each addressing security challenges through collaboration, cooperation, and crisis management.

Morocco and the Fabric of Regional Communities

Regional communities are defined by shared culture and common regional affiliation, which create tangible and intangible networks. Membership in international organisations like the

[147] *Ibid.*

[148] Kingdom of Morocco. "Speech of King Mohammed VI at the 30th African Union Summit." Official Website of the Kingdom of Morocco, 28 January 2018. www.maroc.ma/en/content/speech-his-majesty-king-mohammed-vi-30th-african-union-summit.

Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF) allows Morocco to actively participate in these networks and utilise key markers of its projected identity. The 2011 reformed constitution provided an opportunity for Morocco to emphasise the value of these markers, allowing internally acquired or generated intangibles to become global assets.

Out of the 20 countries that were members of both the OIC and the OIF in 2012, 18 were African nations, including Morocco. These African nations are also members of the African Union. In addition, all 22 members of the Arab League are part of the OIC, but only seven of them are part of the OIF. These seven members, which include Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Lebanon, Mauritania, Morocco, and Tunisia, were also members of the African Union at the time, with the exception of Lebanon and Morocco.

It is worth noting that Morocco's re-joining of the African Union in 2017 was a significant step in the country's "strategic vision" in Africa.[149] However, it could be argued that this vision had already been taking shape in 2012, when the speeches given at the OIC and OIF highlighted the importance of Morocco's regional affiliations and identity markers.

How Morocco Uses Group-identity to Promote Regional Cooperation

Morocco's membership of the OIC and the OIF illustrates the practical implications of Morocco's cultural expressions at the international level. Within the context of each speech discussed above, we found that the unifying principle of these organisations does not exclude the presence of differences within the group itself. A closer look at the texts indicates that certain markers of identity are more prevalent than others. This prevalence appears to be subject to the context of the speech. In the OIC speech, for example, references to "fellow Arab people", "fellow Arab countries", and "Arab and Muslim brothers", were associated with countries in the Levant (Palestine, Syria, and Jordan).[150] Despite being members of the Arab League and having Arabic as an official language, Somalia, and Sudan, however, were used as examples for "other brother Muslim countries."[151] This differentiation between "Arab countries" and "Muslim countries" hints at the fact that the basis on which these categories are

[149] "Journée Nationale De La Diplomatie Marocaine : Reconnaissance De L'engagement Du Roi Mohammed VI Pour Défendre La Souveraineté Du Maroc – LPJM." *Le Petit Journal Marocain*, 26 April 2022. www.lepetitjournalmarocain.com/2022/04/26/journee-nationale-de-la-diplomatie-maroc.

[150] Maroc.ma. "Discours Royaux". *SM le Roi adresse un discours au 4ème sommet extraordinaire de l'OCI,* 14 August 2012. www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/sm-le-roi-adresse-un-discours-au-4%C3%A8me-sommet-extraordinaire-de-loci.

[151] *Ibid.*

built transcends language and membership of the Arab League. It reveals subgroup categories within the broad structure of the main group which we will refer to as 'Muslim group.' The first subcategory (which includes Palestine, Syria, and Jordan) will be referred to in this text as 'Arabo-Muslim', while the second subgroup (which includes Sudan and Somalia) will be referred to as 'Afro-Muslim'. This dichotomy helps bring attention to Morocco's three facets as a Muslim, Arab and African thus raising its profile as a bridge between 'two distinct regions'.

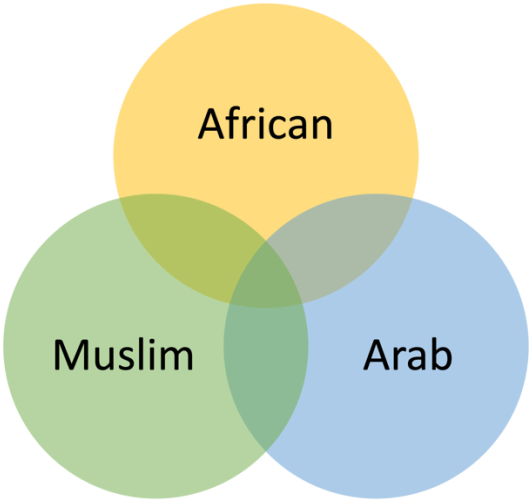


Figure 2.1 Morocco's Key Markers of Identity

Given that both subgroups are Muslim, the additional marker of identity (*i.e.*, Arab, African) helps reinforce Morocco's diplomatic networks by generating a sense of belonging, and thus affirming its regional position. A common religion and/or a shared language becomes the channels through which Morocco can create, strengthen, or promote active regional cooperation. It could even be argued that such a 'vision' pushes for the legitimising of specific regional power structures that are favourable to Morocco's interests. In fact, "Morocco's position as a regional vanguard" stated in the 2013 speech on Morocco's diplomacy indicates that regionalisation paves Morocco's strategic direction of its diplomacy.[152] This is further indicated in his message to the ambassadors of the King in which he stated that:

> the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation has worked, in application of Our High Directives, to make our country known and to highlight its important achievements in the areas of belonging,

[152] Maroc.ma. "Discours Royaux". *Message Royal aux participants au colloque organisé à Rabat à l'occasion de la célébration de la Journée Nationale de la Diplomatie Marocaine*, 26 March 2013. www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/message-royal-aux-participants-au-colloque-organis%C3%A9-%C3%A0-rabat-%C3%A0-loccasion-de-la.

> neighbourhood and partnership, both at bilateral as well as regional and multilateral.[153]

Morocco's diplomatic strategy appears to also consider the role of various international groups whose influence capacity and involvement in decision making processes make them important actors in global geopolitics. As such, the distinction mentioned above may reflect Morocco's geoscheme which divides the countries it deals with into two regional groups (Muslim and African) and two subregional groups (Arab and francophone). Such classification reflects a utilitarian function of regional identity where regional groups (and subgroups) are bounded together to defend or promote a shared regional interest. It could therefore be argued that the 'Arabo-Muslim' and 'Afro-Muslim' subgroups are defined based on political or economic expectations. In fact, both Somalia and Sudan are east African states, both are members of the African Union (AU), and both are members of the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD), an interregional organisation that focuses on free trade which Morocco joined in 2001. The AU and the CEN-SAD bring together countries from major economic organisations in Africa. The African institutional network may therefore be the reason behind the subgroup differentiation.

The Strengthening of Morocco's Positioning in the Global Institutional Landscape

Organisational Networks: Creating Networks of Support and Collaboration

Morocco's involvement in the OIC, UN, and OIF is driven by its interests and desire to play a role in global and regional affairs. The speeches given by Moroccan representatives at these events highlight the Kingdom's commitment to promoting stability and unity in the African region, as well as its desire to join the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).[154] While the OIC event did not mention any specific international organisations, the 2012 speeches given during the OIF and UN events referenced other international

[153] Maroc.ma. "Discours Royaux". *Message du souverain à la 1ère conférence des ambassadeurs de SM le Roi*, 30 August 2013. www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/le-souverain-adresse-un-message-la-1ere-conference-des-ambassadeurs-de-sm-le-roi.

[154] On February 24, 2017, the Moroccan Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation made an application to join the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). This decision was said to be "surprising", but our analysis below shows that Morocco's interest in ECOWAS were clear since 2012.

Abourabi, Yousra. "Maroc – Cedeao : OÙ En Est La Demande D'adhésion ?" *Middle East Eye Édition Française*, Middle East Eye, 8 May 2018. www.middleeasteye.net/fr/decryptages/maroc-cedeao-ou-en-est-la-demande-dadhesion.

organisations and highlighted Morocco's role as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council and its involvement in the Arab League. The diagram presented below provides a summary of our research and illustrates the interconnections for Morocco between the OIF, OIC, ECOWAS, UN Security Council, and the Arab League. The connections depicted in the diagram are established based on the organisations mentioned in each event, either through direct involvement or indirect collaboration, and aim to reflect the networks of collaboration and support that help shape Morocco's "strategic vision."[155]

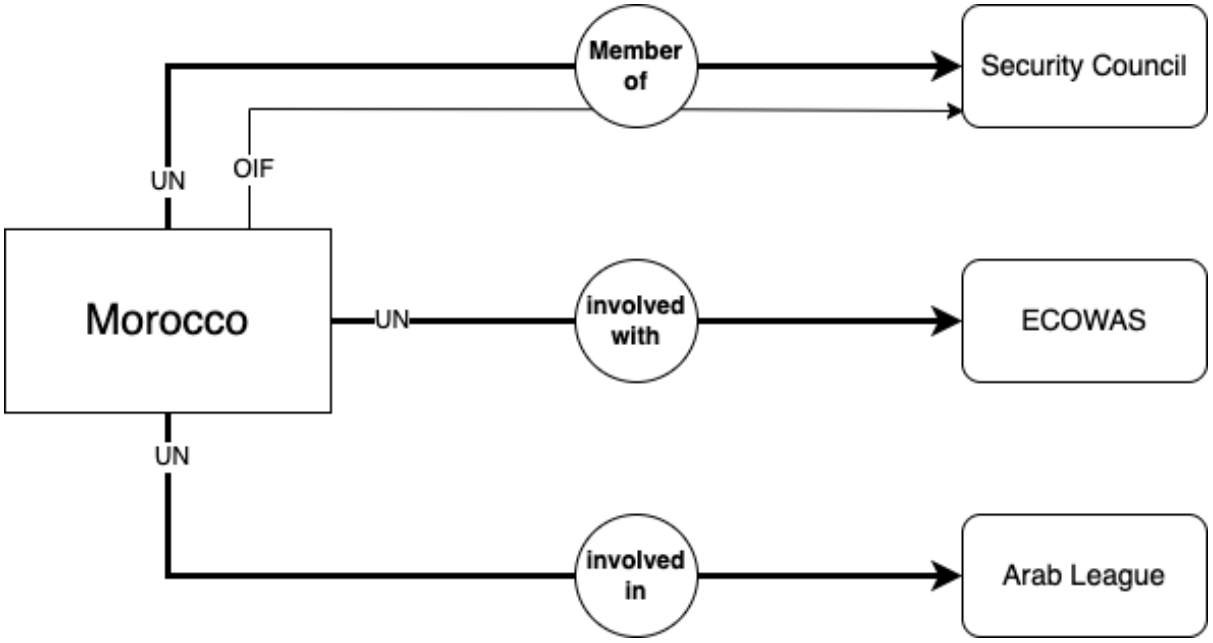


Figure 2.2 Morocco's Institutional Network Based on Speeches Given in 2012 During the OIC, OIF & UN Event

Morocco's speech to the UN highlights Morocco's connections to major regional organisations: the Security Council, ECOWAS, and the Arab League. The nature of each of these organisations also covers three major policy areas, namely: security, economy, and politics.

We previously argued that stability and security are presented as by-products of Morocco's national identity. As stated in the speech, the Kingdom's diplomacy aims at consolidating "Morocco's position as a regional vanguard and a factor of stability and peace in its Maghreb,

[155] "Journée Nationale De La Diplomatie Marocaine : Reconnaissance De L'engagement Du Roi Mohammed VI Pour Défendre La Souveraineté Du Maroc – LPJM." *Le Petit Journal Marocain*, 26 April 2022. www.lepetitjournalmarocain.com/2022/04/26/journee-nationale-de-la-diplomatie-maroc.

Arab, Islamic, Euro-Mediterranean, African and American environment […]."[156] Based on the abovementioned it may be argued that the signalling of (transnational) stability and the mention of OIC, ECOWAS, OIF, Arab League and the Security Council reflect Morocco's positioning in the international system. The Kingdom's role as a "regional vanguard and a factor of stability and peace"[157] is thus reinforced through its membership and engagement with regional organisations such as the OIC, OIF, and ECOWAS, which legitimise Morocco's involvement in the international arena. In turn, Morocco's membership in international governmental organisations plays a significant role in forming a global network dedicated to unity, stability, peace, and development.

Identity and Development: Finding the Missing Link

The Kingdom's policy orientation corresponds to a clear change in Morocco's economic standing. In fact, despite the global economic crisis and the unfavourable domestic and regional environments, 2013 was relatively a benign year for Morocco. Noticeable improvements in Morocco's economic performance were observed, as the GDP **growth rate of the Moroccan economy** witnessed an **increase** as it reached 4.54% in 2013 against 3.01% in 2012.[158] A 16.8 percentage points (p.p.) **decline** in **poverty rate** was registered from 2006 to 2013.[159] The **fiscal deficit** also **declined** from 7.3% of GDP in 2012 to 5.5% in 2013.[160] Finally, **electricity from renewables** reached 14.65% in 2013, which marked a 6.02 p.p. **increase** from 2012.[161]

A clear increase in international orientation can also be observed with Morocco's **foreign direct investment** which saw a **18.3% increase** from 2012 to 2013.[162] This is reflected in Morocco's increased presence and engagement in international summits and conferences,[163] such as the 3rd Arab Summit for the Economic and Social Development held on the 21st of

[156] Maroc.ma. "Discours Royaux". *Message Royal aux participants au colloque organisé à Rabat à l'occasion de la célébration de la Journée Nationale de la Diplomatie Marocaine*, 26 March 2013. www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/message-royal-aux-participants-au-colloque-organis%C3%A9-%C3%A0-rabat-%C3%A0-loccasion-de-la.

[157] *Ibid.*

[158] World Bank Group. data.worldbank.org/indicator

[159] *Ibid.*

[160] *Ibid.*

[161] *Ibid.*

[162] *Ibid.*

[163] We calculated 6 international conferences and summits in 2012 against 14 in 2013.

January 2013,[164] the 12th Session of the Islamic Summit Conference organised on the 6th of February 2013,[165] and the 42nd Ordinary Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), organised two weeks after the Islamic Summit on the 27th of February 2013.[166] These examples reflect the economic dimension of the identity-based organisations which further indicates the active role of markers of identity in Morocco's foreign policy affairs. In fact, it was a month after the ECOWAS summit that the speech on the national day of Moroccan diplomacy was given on the 26 March 2013, during which an emphasis was placed on Morocco's international image. During the speech, the King also stressed the importance of economic cooperation stating that:

> [Moroccan diplomacy] must also work actively and seriously to explore new areas of **economic cooperation**, to deepen the **strategic dimension of Morocco** to make it a **model partner for all countries**, […] to integrate into the **global economy**, while mitigating their negative impact on our **development** and to give a new breath to our **external relations**.[167]

The importance placed on Morocco's international image indicates that the Kingdom's plan to integrate the global economy rests on its global image. The latter, however, relies on the implementation of promotional strategies which entail enhancing the Kingdom's presence and visibility on the international scene. In other words, Morocco's international standing requires a careful tailoring of the Kingdom's projected image. The latter acts as a communication tool that allows actors to project their values and connect with others based on shared principles. Being recognised as a legitimate international actor therefore presupposes an international recognition of the Kingdom's image. This argument is supported by a statement made by the

[164] Maroc.ma. "Discours Royaux". *Texte intégral du message de SM le Roi au 3ème Sommet arabe de développement économique et social*, 21 January 2013. www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/texte-int%C3%A9gral-du-message-de-sm-le-roi-au-3%C3%A8me-sommet-arabe-de-d%C3%A9veloppement.

[165] Maroc.ma. "Discours Royaux". *SM le Roi adresse un discours à la 12ème session de la Conférence islamique au Sommet*, 06 February 2013. www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/sm-le-roi-adresse-un-discours-%C3%A0-la-12%C3%A8me-session-de-la-conf%C3%A9rence-islamique-au.

[166] Maroc.ma. "Discours Royaux". *SM le Roi adresse un message au 42ème sommet ordinaire de la CEDEAO*, 27 February 2013. www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/sm-le-roi-adresse-un-message-au-42%C3%A8me-sommet-ordinaire-de-la-cedeao-0#.

[167] Maroc.ma. "Discours Royaux". *Message Royal aux participants au colloque organisé à Rabat à l'occasion de la célébration de la Journée Nationale de la Diplomatie Marocaine*, 26 March 2013. https://maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/message-royal-aux-participants-au-colloque-organis%C3%A9-%C3%A0-rabat-%C3%A0-loccasion-de-la.

King during his speech in which he testifies that Morocco's (positive) "new image" has been "accredited by international public opinion."[168]

Given that the speech was delivered during the celebration of the National Day of Moroccan Diplomacy, it could thus be argued that Morocco's image entails providing official credentials through diplomatic representation. Morocco's diplomatic engagements with the organisations mentioned above therefore indicate the interplay between Morocco's markers of identity, its projected image, and its economic policy.

Regional Categorisation and the Mapping of Trade Networks

The Islamic Market

As a predominantly Muslim country, Morocco has a strong connection to countries with substantial and majority Muslim populations. Morocco has used this connection to advance its interests in the Islamic market, particularly in terms of trade and investment.[169] Additionally, Morocco has sought to enhance its economic ties with OIC member states through the establishment of the Morocco-OIC Investment Fund in 2012, which aims to promote investment and development in member countries.[170] In 2013, Morocco signed a cooperation agreement with the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) to establish a joint venture fund to finance development projects in Africa and the Middle East.[171] Moreover, Morocco hosted the 41st session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers in 2014, where the country played an active role in promoting economic cooperation and investment among member states.[172] These examples illustrate how Morocco has leveraged its religious affiliations to promote economic cooperation and investment within the Islamic world.

In 2012, Morocco demonstrated its commitment to providing humanitarian and development aid to specific Arab countries, such as Syria and Palestine, in speeches given at

[168] *Ibid.*

[169] Abdou, H. A. "The Evolving Role of Morocco in African Affairs." *Journal of African Affairs*, vol. 46, no. 184, 2019, pp. 388-408.

[170] "Morocco to Launch $500 Million Morocco-OIC Investment Fund." *Morocco World News*, 07 May 2012. www.moroccoworldnews.com/2012/05/36611/morocco-to-launch-500-million-morocco-oic-investment-fund/.

[171] "Morocco, Islamic Development Bank Establish $2 Billion Fund to Finance Africa, Middle East Development Projects." *Morocco World News*, 10 April 2013. www.moroccoworldnews.com/2013/04/84943/morocco-islamic-development-bank-establish-2-billion-fund-to-finance-africa-middle-east-development-projects/.

[172] "Morocco Hosts OIC Council of Foreign Ministers in Marrakech." *Morocco World News*, 22 December 2014. www.moroccoworldnews.com/2014/12/147717/morocco-hosts-oic-council-of-foreign-ministers-in-marrakech/.

both the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the United Nations (UN). Morocco's support for the Palestinian people is further emphasised through the King's position as the President of the Al-Quds Committee, which is one of the four standing committees of the OIC. The Al-Quds Committee is dedicated to supporting the Palestinian cause, particularly with regards to the status of Jerusalem.[173] During the UN General Assembly, the King called for international support for the Palestinian National Authority to obtain the status of non-member State.[174] Morocco's efforts to support Arab countries, particularly Palestine, aim at highlighting its commitment to regional stability and its role as a leader in the Muslim world. From Morocco's perspective, stability is achieved by supporting the rights of the Palestinian people, addressing the root causes of conflict, and promoting peace through diplomatic negotiations and dialogue. This view contrasts with the perspectives of the US and Israel, who may argue that supporting the Palestinians actually increases regional instability. Scholars such as Geoffrey Kemp and Jeremy Pressman have highlighted the tensions between Israel and the United States on the one hand, and Arab countries, including Morocco, on the other, regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.[175] Morocco's support for the Palestinian cause is seen by some as exacerbating regional instability, particularly as it relates to the tensions between Israel and its Arab neighbours.[176] Additionally, Dennis Ross, an American diplomat and author, has discussed the complexities of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the varying viewpoints on stability in the region, including those of Morocco and other Arab nations.[177]

In essence, Morocco's view of stability is centred on the principle of justice, self-determination, and the promotion of peaceful resolutions to conflicts. By advocating for the rights of the Palestinian people, Morocco seeks to address the underlying sources of tension that contribute to regional instability.[178] Morocco's perspective on stability, thus, emphasises

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[173] Profile of the Department of Palestine and Al-Quds Affairs (DPQ). Organisation of Islamic Cooperation. www.oic-oci.org/dept/?d_id=17&d_ref=3&lan=en.

[174] Maroc.ma. "Discours Royaux". *Texte intégral du Discours adressé par SM le Roi à la 67-ème session de l'Assemblée générale de l'ONU*, 28 Septembre 2012. www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/texte-int%C3%A9gral-du-discours-adress%C3%A9-par-sm-le-roi-%C3%A0-la-67-%C3%A8me-session-de-lassembl%C3%A9e

[175] Kemp, Geoffrey, and Jeremy Pressman. "Point of No Return: The Deadly U.S.-Israeli Rift Over Iran." The National Interest, 01 September 2010. www.nationalinterest.org/article/point-of-no-return-the-deadly-us-israeli-rift-over-iran-3918.

[176] *Ibid.*

[177] Ross, Dennis. "The U.S. Needs a New Approach to Solve the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict." *Time*, 04 June 2018. time.com/5302871/us-new-approach-israeli-palestinian-conflict/.

[178] Kingdom of Morocco. "Speech of King Mohammed VI at the 67th Session of the United Nations General Assembly." Official Website of the Kingdom of Morocco, 27 September 2012,

the importance of acknowledging and addressing historical grievances and working towards a more equitable and harmonious regional order.[179]

In addition to its diplomatic efforts, the geographical positioning of Palestine, Syria, and Jordan provides access for Morocco to connect Africa and Eurasia, but it may not necessarily lead to access to lucrative markets. Palestine is currently sealed off by the Israelis, Syria is experiencing a civil war, and Jordan has a relatively small economy. Therefore, it may not be an effective argument to use this as a reason for Morocco's engagement with these countries. Instead, other factors such as historical, cultural, and political ties could be emphasised as the drivers of Morocco's engagement with these countries.

However, the transport systems of Somalia and Sudan are crucial players in connecting the Mediterranean Sea trade routes to the north Indian Ocean routes and are viewed as gateways to Africa. The 2012 OIC event, held in Saudi Arabia, which is Morocco's largest trading partner in the Middle East, provided a platform for member countries to engage in intra-Islamic trade and economic cooperation. The King's call for "the construction of an economic partnership based on the promotion of intra-Islamic trade"[180] underscores the importance of economic ties within the OIC. In this context, Somalia, and Sudan, referred to as "other brother Muslim countries"[181] in the speech, are viewed as potential partners for Morocco in expanding its trade and economic relations in Africa. Overall, Morocco's diplomatic and economic ties to the Islamic world, including Palestine, Syria, and Jordan, offer valuable opportunities for the country to enhance its position in the global marketplace.

The African Market

Morocco's foreign policy towards Africa is largely influenced by its historical and cultural ties to the continent, which are further reinforced by the shared Islamic religion.[182] These factors allow Morocco to present itself as a responsible and reliable partner on the global stage,

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www.maroc.ma/en/content/speech-his-majesty-king-mohammed-vi-67th-session-united-nations-general-assembly.

[179] Maghraoui, Driss. "Moroccan Monarchical Exceptionalism: The King's Speech and the February 20th Movement." Middle East Law and Governance, vol. 4, no. 1, 2012, pp. 86-102.

Zoubir, Yahia H. "Morocco's Strategic Geopolitics: At the Crossroads of Europe, Africa, and the Middle East." *Insight Turkey*, vol. 21, no. 4, 2019, pp. 71-94.

[180] Maroc.ma. "Discours Royaux". *SM le Roi adresse un discours au 4ème sommet extraordinaire de l'OCI*, 14 August 2012. www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/sm-le-roi-adresse-un-discours-au-4%C3%A8me-sommet-extraordinaire-de-loci

[181] *Ibid.*

[182] Abdou, H. A. "The Evolving Role of Morocco in African Affairs." *Journal of African Affairs*, vol. 46, no. 184, 2019, pp. 388-408.

leveraging its strengths to promote its interests. The country's widespread use of French, particularly in the fields of business and diplomacy, has also played a significant role in shaping its foreign policy, especially in its interactions with other Francophone nations and the European Union.[183] French serves as a language of communication and diplomacy, helping to facilitate Morocco's efforts to promote its interests in the African market.[184] In this way, Morocco's unique cultural and linguistic connections contribute to its ability to present itself as a responsible and reliable partner, and to pursue its interests through diplomatic and economic engagement with other nations.

In addition to the economic side, Morocco also aims at maintaining a relatively stable political environment.[185] The importance placed on stability at the international level allows the country to play a mediating role in conflicts and crises around the world. Furthermore, Morocco's involvement with the United Nations (UN) and the International Organisation of the Francophonie (OIF) reveal Morocco's close attention to the Sahel region.[186] It is in fact also based on the principle that Morocco aims at strengthening its linkages within the African continent. In 2013, Morocco joined the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) as an observer, becoming the only African country with membership in both the Arab League and ECOWAS.[187] In fact, in 2014 and 2015, the King carried out a "religious visit" to Mali, Gabon, Senegal and Guinea Bissau, all of which are members of both the OIC and the OIF, thus further indicating a link between Morocco's markers of ethno-national identity (*i.e.*, religion and language) and its organisational memberships.[188]

Morocco's economic engagements in the Sahel region provide a clear example of this approach.[189] In 2013, Morocco joined ECOWAS, as an observer, which was a significant move

[183] Hudson, Peter. "Franco-African Misalliance: Morocco's Strategic Partnership with France." *Journal of North African Studies*, vol. 20, no. 3, 2015, pp. 355-368.

[184] Lahlou, Mehdi. "Morocco's African Policy: An Evaluation." *Mediterranean Quarterly*, vol. 31, no. 4, 2020, pp. 118-133.

[185] Cook, Malcolm A. *North Africa's Political Economy and the Arab Spring: The Burden of the Past*. Routledge, 2017.

[186] Mehmood, Muhammad. "Morocco's African Foreign Policy: A Reorientation towards the Sahel." *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, vol. 37, no. 4, 2019, pp. 551-568.

[187] "Morocco Becomes Observer Member of West African Regional Bloc ECOWAS." *Morocco World News*, 7 June 2017. www.moroccoworldnews.com/2017/06/220981/morocco-becomes-observer-member-of-west-african-regional-bloc-ecowas/.

[188] Camara, Amadou Boubacar. "Morocco's Religious Diplomacy in Africa." *Africa Policy Journal*, vol. 15, 2019, pp. 1-23.

[189] Abdou, H. A. "The evolving role of Morocco in African affairs." *Journal of African Affairs*, vol. 46, no. 184, 2019, pp. 388-408.

towards deepening economic ties with the region.[190] In addition, Morocco has signed a number of economic agreements with Sahelian countries, including the creation of the Morocco-Niger Joint Commission in 2017, aimed at strengthening economic cooperation and trade.[191]

Unity and Stability for Human Development and Sustainability

A shared identity and organisational unity are important for a group's well-being and capacity building. A shared identity and organisational unity are important for a group's well-being and capacity building. These factors are intrinsically linked to the human development approach, as they foster social cohesion, promote inclusive participation, and create a supportive environment for individuals to reach their full potential.[192] The human development approach aims to provide equal opportunities and improve lives by focusing on enhancing human capabilities, expanding choices, and ensuring equitable access to resources and opportunities.[193]

Shared identity and organisational unity contribute to the human development approach by facilitating social integration and cooperation, which in turn enable the efficient allocation of resources and the implementation of policies that address the diverse needs of the population.[194] Furthermore, a cohesive group with a strong sense of shared identity is more likely to exhibit collective responsibility and work together to address common challenges, thus fostering an environment conducive to human development.[195]

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[190] "Morocco becomes observer member of West African regional bloc ECOWAS." *Morocco World News*, 14 June 2017. www.moroccoworldnews.com/2017/06/220981/morocco-becomes-observer-member-of-west-african-regional-bloc-ecowas/.

[191] Ministry of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation, and Moroccan Expatriates. "The Morocco-Niger joint commission set up in Niamey." *Diplomatie*, 08 February 2017. www.diplomatie.ma/en/the-morocco-niger-joint-commission-set-niamey.

[192] Nussbaum, Martha C. "Creating Capabilities: The Human Development Approach." *The Journal of Human Development and Capabilities*, vol. 12, no. 1, 2011, pp. 121-135.

Sen, Amartya. "Development as Capability Expansion." *Journal of Development Planning*, vol. 19, 1989, pp. 41-58.

[193] United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). "Human Development Reports." *UNDP*, hdr.undp.org/en/humandev.

[194] Nussbaum, Martha C. "Creating Capabilities: The Human Development Approach." *The Journal of Human Development and Capabilities*, vol. 12, no. 1, 2011, pp. 121-135.

Sen, Amartya. "Development as Capability Expansion." *Journal of Development Planning*, vol. 19, 1989, pp. 41-58.

[195] *Ibid.*

During the 4th extraordinary summit of OIC, the King of Morocco spoke about the convergence of stability, human development, and shared identity.[196] As stated in the speech:

> Morocco has spared no effort to put all its potentialities at the service of **Islamic cohesion**, by taking the path of rational and constructive dialogue, by showing its solidarity with its brothers on all crucial issues and by the choice of **peace, stability, and sustainable human development**. […] to serve the **common interest of our Ummah** and ensure its **security, its stability and greatness**.[197]

The above quote indicates that Morocco's commitment to Islamic cohesion has four practical dimensions:

1) *Collective principle* by virtue of an "Islamic cohesion": This means that Morocco aims to bring together people with shared religious principles and identity to work towards a common objective. This common objective is to promote "peace, stability, and sustainable human development" within the Islamic community and the broader region, while also strengthening the bonds of solidarity and unity among Islamic nations.[198] It recognises that the group's shared characteristics are both unique and important in uniting people, fostering cooperation, and enhancing their collective well-being.

2) *Common drive* of "peace, stability, and sustainable human development": Morocco recognises that these three factors are closely related and essential for the group's success. To achieve peace, stability, and sustainable human development, the country works towards constructive dialogue, solidarity, and other strategies that support its common objective.

3) *Shared interest* of the Ummah: Morocco recognises that the group's interest is larger than the interests of individual members. It works towards the common interest of the Ummah, or the community of Muslims around the world. This shared interest unites the group and helps to achieve the common objective.

4) *Joint objective* of "security, stability, and greatness": Morocco recognises that achieving security and stability is essential for the group's success. It also recognises that working towards a common objective will help to achieve greatness for the group as a whole.

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[196] Maroc.ma. "Discours Royaux". *SM le Roi adresse un discours au 4ème sommet extraordinaire de l'OCI*, 14 August 2012. www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/sm-le-roi-adresse-un-discours-au-4%C3%A8me-sommet-extraordinaire-de-loci.

[197] *Ibid.*

[198] *Ibid.*

By working towards this joint objective, Morocco believes it can improve the well-being of the group's members and ensure their success.

When it comes to development, Morocco appears to capitalise on its organisational membership for specific development strategies. In fact, whilst in the OIC summit the speech makes mention of Human Development as a catalyst for change, in the speeches given to the general assembly of the UN and the summit of "Chefs d'Etat et de gouvernement de la francophonie," the focus appears to be more on sustainable development. This is indicated in the following excerpts from both speeches:

> "These include the challenges of **sustainable development**, environmental protection, respect for human rights, the rise of international terrorism and organised crime in all its forms"[199] (UN)

> "On our Continent, where the Organisation is involved in many projects aimed at consolidating peace and promoting solidarity, the expectations of the populations in terms of **social, economic** and **sustainable development** are considerable."[200] (OIF)

Sustainable development and human development are crucial to Morocco's progress and future success. Sustainable development policies and projects help meet human development goals while also preserving resources and ensuring that future generations can thrive. By way of explanation, this means that: "the SDGs provide a development destination. Human development allows one to design the route to get there."[201]

In fact, Morocco's commitment to both sustainable and human development has increased over time, with a focus on inclusive economic growth that benefits all parties involved.[202] The interconnection between human development and sustainable development is particularly evident in Morocco's approach. Morocco's 2012 human development strategy emphasises language and common interests as key drivers of inclusive economic growth. This approach

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[199] Maroc.ma. "Discours Royaux". *Texte intégral du Discours adressé par SM le Roi à la 67-ème session de l'Assemblée générale de l'ONU*, 28 Septembre 2012. www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/texte-int%C3%A9gral-du-discours-adress%C3%A9-par-sm-le-roi-%C3%A0-la-67-%C3%A8me-session-de-lassembl%C3%A9e.

[200] Maroc.ma. "Discours Royaux". *Texte intégral du Message de SM le Roi au 14ème Sommet des Chefs d'Etat et de gouvernement de la francophonie13*, 13 October 2012. www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/texte-int%C3%A9gral-du-message-de-sm-le-roi-au-14%C3%A8me-sommet-des-chefs-detat-et-de.

[201] United Nations. *Human Development and the SDGs | Human Development Reports*. hdr.undp.org/content/human-development-and-sdgs.

[202] "Morocco." *World Bank*. www.worldbank.org/en/country/morocco.

reflects the country's priorities and shows its commitment to meeting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which provide a globally recognised framework for assessing development progress.[203]

The SDGs, adopted by all United Nations member states in 2015, are a set of 17 interrelated goals aiming to address global challenges such as poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, and peace and justice by 2030.[204] By aligning its human development strategy with the SDGs, Morocco demonstrates its dedication to fostering social, economic, and environmental sustainability, as well as promoting a more equitable society. This commitment is evident in the country's focus on using language and common interests to drive inclusive economic growth, which contributes to the achievement of multiple SDGs, including Quality Education (Goal 4), Decent Work and Economic Growth (Goal 8), and Reduced Inequalities (Goal 10).[205]

Morocco's interest in sustainable development has grown over time, with a clear emphasis on the importance of this process for achieving human development goals. This focus is closely connected to the country's commitment to the SDGs, as previously discussed. In 2012, for example, Morocco hosted a conference titled "Energy Challenges in the Euro-Mediterranean Area," where the King spoke about the country's "ambitious energy strategy" and its commitment to sustainable development, adding that "Morocco is resolutely committed to the process of sustainable development, which is inseparable from human development."[206] As Morocco continues to pursue sustainable and human development, it will likely remain a leader in promoting global integration, stability, and prosperity, further demonstrating the connection between the country's development priorities and the global SDG framework.

The timeframe of the speech is particularly interesting, as it falls between two major international summits where the themes of human and sustainable development were prominent. At the OIC summit, which took place just prior to the speech, the importance of

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[203] "Human development report 2012: Sustainability and equity: A better future for all". *United Nations Development Programme,* 2012. www.hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/reports/14/hdr2012_en_complete.pdf.

[204] United Nations. "Sustainable Development Goals." *United Nations,* www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/.

[205] *Ibid.*

[206] Maroc.ma. "Discours Royaux". *SM le Roi adresse un message aux participants à la conférence sur « les défis énergétiques dans l'espace euro-méditerranéen »,* 14 September 2012. www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/sm-le-roi-adresse-un-message-aux-participants-%C3%A0-la-conf%C3%A9rence-sur-les-d%C3%A9fis.

human development was emphasised. The King's speech at the summit reflects this emphasis, as he stated that "economic integration constitutes the modern and solid foundation required for any international regional grouping." [207] This quote suggests that Morocco's membership in international organisations is closely tied to its economic development and its ability to integrate into regional networks. This idea is further reinforced by the focus on sustainable development at the subsequent UN General Assembly and the summit organised by the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie. Taken together, these themes of economic integration, human development, and sustainable development highlight the interconnectivity between Morocco's various identity markers and its role in the international community.

Shaping Group Identity and Development in Africa

The speech on Moroccan diplomacy was delivered just days after the King completed his royal tour of Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire, and Gabon.[208] This tour aimed to strengthen ties between Morocco and the three African states.[209] The importance of the tour was further emphasised by the release of a book titled "La tournée Royale dans trois pays Africains" (The Royal Tour in Three African Countries), published by the *Palais Royal* and produced by the Kingdom's historiographer and spokesperson for the Royal Palace, Abdelhak Lamrini.[210] Remarkably, the book was published in May 2013, less than two months after the tour concluded. Only two months after the book's publication, the Transatlantic Leadership Forum was held in Marrakech. This marked the first time that the forum, organised by the American States Legislators Foundation, took place in an "African and Arab country." [211] The King mentioned this fact during his message to the forum's participants and emphasised Morocco's "unique identity."[212] In this context, the economic dimension of the forum was highlighted, and

[207] Maroc.ma. "Discours Royaux". *SM le Roi adresse un discours au 4ème sommet extraordinaire de l'OCI*, 14 August 2012. www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/sm-le-roi-adresse-un-discours-au-4%C3%A8me-sommet-extraordinaire-de-loci.

[208] Haimoud, Atika. "Tournée Royale : Le Maroc Affiche Ses Ambitions Africaines." *Aujourd'hui Le Maroc*, 23 February 2016. www.aujourdhui.ma/special/tournee-royale-le-maroc-affiche-ses-ambitions-africaines-104274.

[209] *Ibid.*

[210] Maroc.ma. "Actualités". MAP. *La tournée Royale dans trois pays africains, nouvel ouvrage de l'historiographe du Royaume*, 17 May 2013. www.maroc.ma/fr/actualites/la-tourn%C3%A9e-royale-dans-trois-pays-africains-nouvel-ouvrage-de-lhistoriographe-du-royaume.

[211] Maroc.ma. "Discours Royaux". *SM le Roi adresse un message aux participants au Forum transatlantique du leadership 2013*, 01 July 2013. www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/sm-le-roi-adresse-un-message-aux-participants-au-forum-transatlantique-du-leadership.

[212] *Ibid.*

Morocco's 'uniqueness' in Africa was demonstrated by the 2006 Free Trade Agreement between Morocco and the US – the "only treaty of its kind binding the United States of America to an African country."[213]

The release of the book and its timing lead us to question whether it was intentional. Considering the economic focus of the forum, it is plausible that the book served as a tangible indicator of Morocco's connectivity in West Africa. This is particularly relevant since the book contains reports and programs related to the tour, correspondence exchanged between the King of Morocco and the presidents of the three African countries, and the joint declarations issued at the conclusion of these visits.[214] By demonstrating its strong connections in Africa, Morocco sought to reinforce its strategic importance to the United States, showcasing its potential as a reliable partner for economic and political collaboration in the region.

Key similarities between the three African countries may explain the strategic choice behind the King's tour in Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire, and Gabon.

A shared colonial heritage

The three countries share several similarities, the first being their shared colonial heritage. As former French colonies, they all use French as a common language.[215] Additionally, all three countries are part of the CFA franc system, which stands for the Franc of the Financial Community of Africa (formerly known as the Franc of the French Colonies of Africa). This system was established in December 1945 to support the French franc after the Bretton Woods monetary management system was adopted by North American countries, Western European countries, Australia, and Japan.[216] Faced with the possibility of a significant devaluation of its currency under this new system, France introduced the CFA franc as an "act of generosity" to its African colonies.[217] However, the system has faced criticism for creating imbalanced currency movement between the French treasury and the countries and territories under the

[213] *Ibid.*

[214] *Ibid.*

[215] Forson, Viviane. "Monnaie - Franc CFA : 70 Ans D'histoire Contrastée." *Le Point*, 28 December 2015. www.lepoint.fr/economie/afrique-franc-cfa-70-ans-d-histoire-contrariee-28-12-2015-2005729_28.php.

[216] Le Monde. "Discours De M. Pleven." *Le Monde.fr*, 28 December 1945. www.lemonde.fr/archives/article/1945/12/28/discours-de-m-pleven_1857292_1819218.html.

[217] *Ibid.*

CFA franc. This imbalance has led to a lack of sovereignty over their monetary policies, consequently impacting development prospects in Africa negatively.[218]

Given the criticism of the CFA franc and French involvement in Africa's economy, some argue that the King's tour in the three African states may be a way to create new networks that could potentially reduce dependency on France while creating a stronger and more unified economic system within Africa, with Morocco being at the centre of it.

However, the tour's timing aligned with François Hollande's presidency (May 2012 to 2017), a period when France prioritised expanding its market through Francophonie. In fact, in 2013, Jacques Attali had been instructed by the president of the French Republic to release a report on the subject of "positive economy."[219] The aim was to address France's economic needs whilst placing a greater importance on long term strategies.[220] The following year, Attali published another report in which he explained how the commercial ties between French-speaking and Francophile countries in Africa are of great benefit to French companies. The report in question was addressed to the French President Francois Hollande under the title "La Francophonie et la Francophilie, moteurs de croissance durable."[221] According to the report, French market shares are closely correlated to the number of French companies exporting to each country. As indicated by Figure 2.3, the number of French exporting companies is significantly higher in French-speaking countries. Senegal, Ivory Coast and Gabon constitute the highest-ranking countries of the list making them the three. Figure 2.3 also points to the connection between the monetary zone and the French language.

[218] Stasavage, David. "The CFA Franc: French Monetary Imperialism in Africa." *Review of International Political Economy*, vol. 10, no. 2, 2003, pp. 180-196.

[219] Présidence de la République, & Attali, J. *Pour une économie positive - Groupe de réflexion présidé par Jacques Attali*. https://www.vie-publique.fr/rapport/33490-pour-une-economie-positive-groupe-de-reflexion-preside-jacques-attali

[220] Riq, Jo. "Pour Une Économie Positive." *Jacques Attali*, 21 February 2017. www.attali.com/rapports/pour-une-economie-positive.

[221] "La Francophonie Et La Francophilie, Moteurs De Croissance Durable: Rapport À François Hollande, Président De La République Française." *Vie Publique*, directed by Jacques Attali, August 2014. www.vie-publique.fr/sites/default/files/rapport/pdf/144000511.pdf.

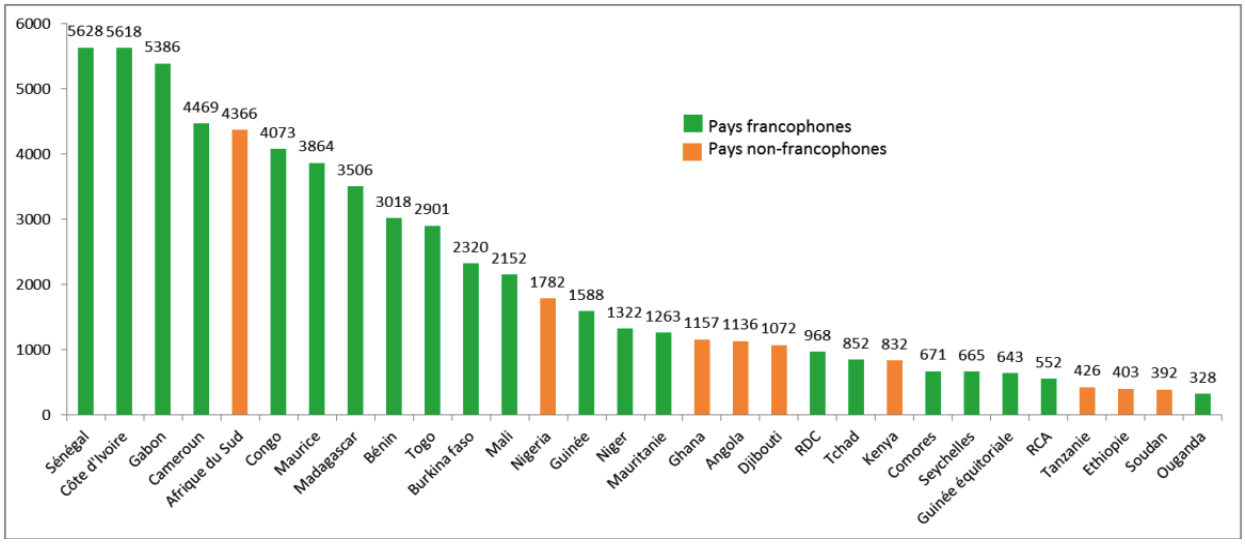


Figure 2.3 Number of Exporting French Companies in Sub-Saharan Africa (2012)

Source: Attali, Jacques. *La Francophonie et la Francophilie, Moteurs de Croissance Durable*, Report to François Hollande, President of the French Republic, August 2014, p.36.

Based on the abovementioned, the King's tour in Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire and Gabon may therefore be seen as complementary (or even competitive) to France's economic strategy of the time. According to the report, "The growth of the Maghreb countries could benefit in the medium term from the co-location of activities by French companies."[222] Notably, the report's examples of successful Francophone co-locations were taken from an investigation conducted by the Economic Department of the French Embassy in Morocco in June 2011,[223] which further suggests a connection between Morocco's economic policy in Africa and France's commercial relations with the continent.

The African institutional landscape

Another important point of similarities between the three African countries is the diplomatic channels that are facilitated by key international organisations in Africa. In fact, the two West African states (Senegal and Ivory Coast) are members of ECOWAS, whilst Gabon is a member of ECCAS. Both organisations aim at building a regional economic and monetary zone which includes uniformed legislation aimed at facilitating domestic and foreign investment in the

[222] *Ibid.*

[223] Survey by the Economic Department of the French Embassy in Morocco (June 2011); « Développer les colocalisations, la coopération au service de la compétitivité », Dominique Bocquet, General Economic and Financial Controller, 2013. From "La Francophonie Et La Francophilie, Moteurs De Croissance Durable: Rapport À François Hollande, Président De La République Française." *Vie Publique*, directed by Jacques Attali, August 2014, p.11.
www.vie-publique.fr/sites/default/files/rapport/pdf/144000511.pdf.

region. The organisation's regional scope and function in the economic and monetary integration zones play a major role in addressing Morocco's connectivity level in these areas.

The geographical position of Senegal, Ivory Coast, and Gabon makes them key entrance points to major regional markets. This is reflected in the size and importance of their ports, including the port of Dakar in Senegal (SNDKR), port of Abidjan in Ivory Coast (CIABJ), and the port of Libreville in Gabon (GALBV). In addition, Morocco's port of Tangier (MAPTM) is also a major shipping port in Africa. According to the World Bank, these ports are among the top 50 container ports in Africa, and they play a crucial role in boosting competitiveness and facilitating trade and investment in the region.[224]

Highlighting the importance of these ports and their role in facilitating trade and economic development on the continent which may indicate Morocco's strategy to increase its connectivity in the African continent whilst also supporting Africa's connectivity in global shipping and maritime networks.[225] Figure 2.4 illustrates this by showing the Liner Shipping Connectivity Index (LSCI) of Morocco, Senegal, Ivory Coast and Gabon between 2006 and 2022. The World bank defines LSCI as "Liner Shipping Connectivity Index score indicates how well countries are connected to global shipping networks based on the status of their maritime transport sector."[226]

[224] *Maritime trade and Africa*. UNCTAD. 03 October 2018. www.unctad.org/press-material/maritime-trade-and-africa.

[225] *Ibid.*

[226] *Glossary | DataBank*. www.databank.worldbank.org/metadataglossary/world-development-indicators/series/IS.SHP.GCNW.XQ.

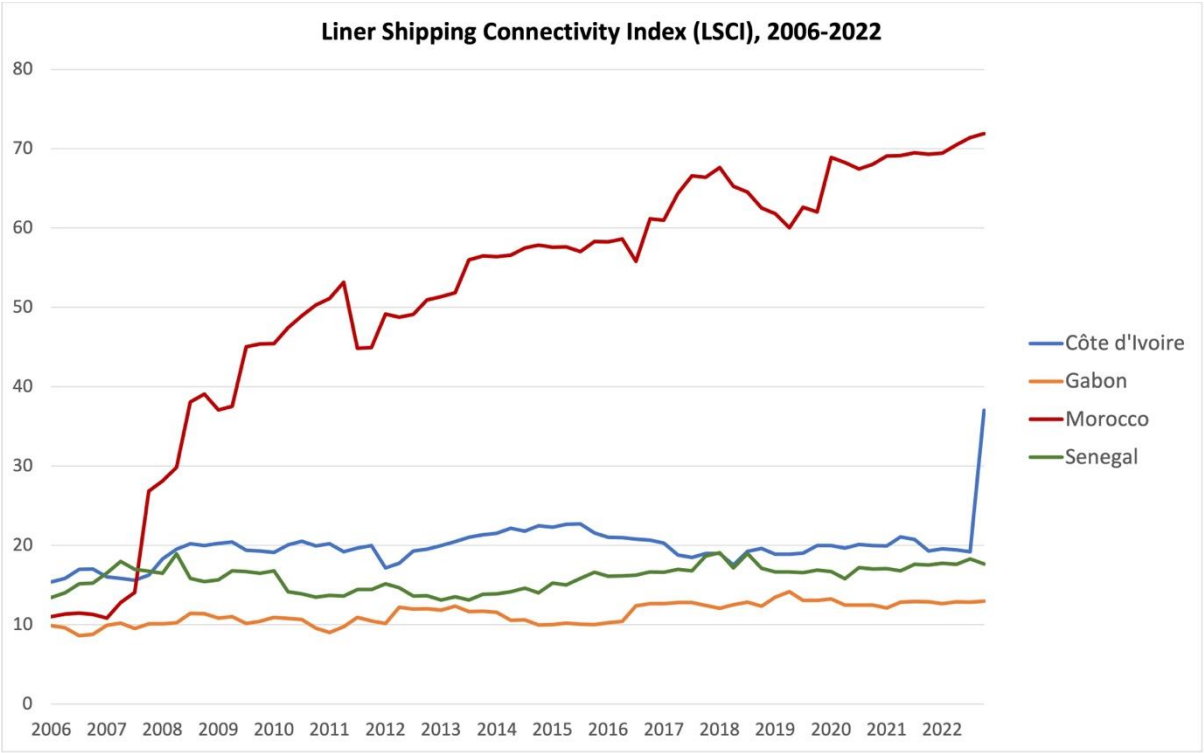


Figure 2.4 Liner Shipping Connectivity Index (LSCI)

Source: UNCTAD liner shipping connectivity index database.[227]

Tijāniyyah for diplomatic gain

It thus appears that the geostrategic position and their shared colonial heritage help shape all four countries tangible and intangible networks. In order to strengthen the link and commonality between the countries, however, shared values and principles are needed. In fact, it is no coincidence that the largest number of members of the *Tijānī* community outside of Morocco are based in Senegal, Ivory Coast and Gabon. *Tijāniyyah* is a *Sufi tariqa*, born in Morocco in the 18th century, a fact which positions Morocco as the cradle of spirituality and authenticity for the *Tijānī* community. More importantly, networks of communication and movements take shape through the *Sufi* order (or 'Path') that originated in North Africa where linkages are formed on the basis of a common heritage and shared values. A great indication of the importance of *tijanism* to Morocco's affairs can be found in a royal message addressed to the participants of the general meeting of the *Tariqa Tijāniyyah* in Fes in 2007 during which the King stated that:

> […] the Kings of the Alaouite Cherifian Dynasty […] have always shown themselves benevolent towards the Sheikhs of the Tariqa

[227] *Maritime trade and Africa*. UNCTAD. 03 October 2018. www.unctad.org/press-material/maritime-trade-and-africa.

> *Tijānīyyah*, […] especially in the countries of the Sahel and deep Africa. In these regions, the followers of the Tariqa *Tijānīyyah* have remained faithful to the close ties forged with the Kings of Morocco, in particular by the recognition of the status of Commandery of Believers embodied by the King of Morocco.
> They also endeavoured to consolidate the bonds of African brotherhood and solidarity uniting Morocco and its brother African countries.[228]

In addition to the historical and spiritual links that connect these countries together is the sheer number of people who are part of this community. It is difficult to provide an exact number of *Tijānī* followers worldwide as there is no central organisation or authority that keeps track of membership.[229] That being said, *Tijānīyyah* is most prominent in West Africa, particularly in Senegal, Nigeria, and Mauritania. According to a 2015 report by the Pew Research Center, about 27% of Muslims in Senegal identify as *Tijānī*, while in Nigeria, *Tijānī* followers make up about 6% of the Muslim population.[230] These numbers may not be completely accurate and may have changed since the report's publication, but they provide an insight to the extent of which *Tijānīyyah* is present in the region.

Based on the abovementioned, it appears therefore that the King's tour aimed at utilising its historical and spiritual ties in order to strengthen the intangible networks that exist between Morocco, Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire and Gabon. These channels also contribute to Morocco's position as a legitimate and highly connected State actor in Africa. In fact, the main *zawiya* of the *Tijānī* named *the Zawiya Tijāniyyah Al Koubra* (also called *Zawiya of Sidi Ahmed al-Tijani*) is located in Fes. Fes is also where, the *Al Qaraouine University* is based and where, in 2016, the *Mohammed VI Foundation of African 'Ulema* would be based.[231] Interestingly, it is also in

[228] Portail National des Collectivité Territoriales. *Message royal adressé à la Réunion Générale de la Tariqa Tijania à Fès*. 27 June 2007. www.pnct.ma/fr/discours-et-messages-royaux/message-royal-adresse-la-reunion-generale-de-la-tariqa-tijania-fes.

[229] It is important to note that the Tijānī order, like many Sufi orders, places a greater emphasis on spiritual devotion and personal relationships with God rather than formal membership or organisation. As a result, it can be difficult to accurately estimate the number of followers.

[230] *Religious Composition by Country, 2010-2050*. Pew Research Center's Religion & Public Life Project. 26 April 2022. www.pewresearch.org/religion/2015/04/02/religious-projection-table/.

[231] More on this in Chapter Four.

Fes that meetings of the followers of the *Tariqa Tijāniyyah* have been taking place. These meeting started in 2012 and have continued to take place every year since then.[232]

Conclusion

Morocco's approach to establishing its global identity centres around leveraging existing international networks. The strategic selection of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the International Organisation of the Francophonie (OIF) is purposeful, as both organisations enable Morocco to showcase its religious and linguistic identities. These serve as a medium for expressing cultural values and political aspirations.

The OIC, for example, is characterised by a shared Islamic faith, offering a foundation for shared values and a unified vision among the Muslim community. This religious identity not only fosters a sense of group belonging but also bears political significance. As the OIC functions as an international organisation, its influence extends beyond state borders, emphasising the cultural and political relevance of Islam in global affairs.

Similarly, language is crucial in shaping identity and connecting societies. As an expression of culture, language facilitates understanding between different groups. Morocco's membership in the OIF, therefore, signifies not just a shared language but also commonalities that transcend linguistic ties.

Thus, Morocco's strategy for establishing its global identity relies on harnessing its religious and linguistic markers, which serve as potent expressions of cultural values and political demands. The deliberate choice of the OIC and OIF allows Morocco to promote these identities and cultivate connections with other nations.

Morocco's active engagement in international organisations such as the OIC and the OIF highlights the significance of language and religion as ethnonational markers of identity. These markers, when effectively utilised, can become powerful tools of persuasion that influence individual and collective experiences and understandings of the world.

Our analysis reveals that Morocco employs its religious identity and historical connections to mediate conflicts and crises in the African and Islamic worlds, positioning itself as a reliable and responsible partner in regional and global affairs. Morocco's mediation efforts between the African and Islamic markets are characterised by diplomacy, trade, and interfaith dialogue, all

[232] Maroc.ma. "Discours Royaux". *Message Royal aux participants aux troisièmes assises des adeptes de la Tarika Tijania à Fès*, 14 May 2014. www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/message-royal-aux-participants-aux-troisiemes-assises-des-adeptes-de-la-tarika.

of which capitalise on the nation's strategic location, historical and cultural ties, religious connections, and international organization memberships.

In summary, Morocco's mediating role between the African and Islamic markets is grounded in its strategic location, historical and cultural links, religious affiliations, and participation in international organisations. These factors enable the country to foster trade, peace, stability, and interfaith dialogue, while also positively influencing regional and global affairs.

Morocco's active engagement with the UN further emphasises its commitment to multilateralism and international cooperation. As a member of the UN, Morocco contributes to the development of international policies, peacekeeping missions, and humanitarian efforts, which aligns with its broader diplomatic objectives. This engagement serves to strengthen Morocco's image as a responsible global actor and enhances its credibility in mediating roles between the African and Islamic markets.

As we transition into the next chapter, we will explore the concept of nation branding and how Morocco employs this strategy to further enhance its image, identity, and diplomatic influence. We will delve into the various elements that contribute to Morocco's brand, such as its cultural heritage, unique attributes, and soft power capabilities, and examine how these components interact to create a cohesive and compelling narrative that strengthens the nation's presence on the global stage.

3. Marketing Identity: Exploring Morocco's Nation Brand

The Moroccan constitution of 2011 places significant emphasis on ethnic communities in the articulation of the nation's identity, a choice that inevitably excludes other aspects of national identity. Such choices of identity markers represent an exercise of power, with the institutional practices and discourses used to communicate this identity holding significant implications for the behaviour of the state, particularly in the international arena. Membership in organisations like the OIC and the OIF reflects the importance Morocco places on shared cultural and regional affiliations in the formation of its identity, providing a platform for the projection of its interests and identity on the global stage.

Morocco's identity as a Muslim, African, and Arab State helps align the kingdom's positioning with its projected image, allowing it to form a cohesive image and identity despite its plurality. This sense of harmony serves as a source of bonding and belonging with both the Moroccan people and other countries or international actors that share similar cultural, religious, or regional affiliations. This shared sense of identity and common values not only strengthens Morocco's positioning and credibility within the international system but also contributes to its stability. The presence of stability, in turn, reinforces the sense of harmony and unity among its diverse constituents and with its international partners, thus creating a mutually reinforcing relationship between identity, stability, and international credibility.

In his 2013 address to the ambassadors of Morocco, the King emphasised the importance of diplomacy in promoting the "Morocco Brand," which "draws its strength and richness from the profound reforms that the kingdom has initiated."[233] According to the King, this promotion of the Morocco Brand is "not a mere slogan," but rather a "strategic objective whose achievement will enable the country to materialise all possible cooperation opportunities in all areas."[234]

Morocco's efforts to project a distinctive and recognisable identity suggest a strategic approach to attach positive value to its nation-state identity. It could even be argued that

[233] Maroc.ma. "Discours Royaux." *Message du souverain à la 1ère conférence des ambassadeurs de SM le Roi*, 30 August 2013. www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/le-souverain-adresse-un-message-la-1ere-conference-des-ambassadeurs-de-sm-le-roi.

[234] *Ibid.*

Morocco's promotion of its "new image" is comparable to *promotional politics*, which engages in nation branding.[235] Political branding, which applies branding theories and strategies in the promotional practice of politics, has been studied by several researchers.[236] However, this research will focus on Morocco's identity branding instead, examining ways in which Morocco aims to differentiate itself on the world stage, with a particular focus on its identity-framing in global affairs. The study thus investigates how Morocco strategically frames and uses its nation-state identity, using the conceptual lens of branding. The project also contributes to the growing area of research by exploring the emerging role of political branding in the context of Morocco's spiritual diplomacy.

Understanding Nation-Brand Identity & Nation-Brand Image

Political Image Using the Brand Lens

Communication is critical in politics, and Scammel argues that political images can be analysed through the brand lens.[237] This idea is supported by Dinnie, who defines 'image' as a "mental representation that people may have," which could be applied to both countries and companies.[238] The complexity of an image to a nation is captured by O'Shaughnessy and Jackson, who argue that the multiple levels through which a nation's image could be expressed from one end and interpreted from the other offer various communication paths.[239] This could be exemplified through the King's person as an integral part of Morocco's image structure.

O'Shaughnessy and Jackson discuss the difficulty of understanding identity framing due to the various factors that shape interpretation, especially given that identity signals may occur at different times.[240] The complexity of national images is amplified by the time it takes for nations to establish and manage their image. As Lebedenko notes, changing a country's image

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[235] Scammell, Margaret. "Politics and Image: The Conceptual Value of Branding." *Journal of Political Marketing*, vol. 14, no. 1-2, 2015, pp. 7–18.

[236] Pich, Christopher, and Dianne Dean. "Political Branding: Sense of Identity or Identity Crisis? An Investigation of the Transfer Potential of the Brand Identity Prism to the UK Conservative Party." *Journal of Marketing Management*, vol. 31, no. 11-12, 2015, pp. 1353–1378.

Ahmed, Mirza Ashfaq, et al. "Political Brand Equity Model: The Integration of Political Brands in Voter Choice." *Journal of Political Marketing*, vol. 16, no. 2, 2017, pp. 147–179.

[237] Scammell, Margaret. "Politics and Image: The Conceptual Value of Branding." *Journal of Political Marketing*, vol. 14, no. 1-2, 2015, pp. 7–18.

[238] Dinnie, Keith. *Nation branding: concepts, Issues, Practice.* Butterworth-Heinemann, 2008, p.47.

[239] O'shaughnessy, John, and O'shaughnessy, Nicholas Jackson. "Treating the Nation as a Brand: Some Neglected Issues." *Journal of Macromarketing*, vol. 20, no. 1, 2000, pp. 56–64.

[240] *Ibid.*

is a long-term effort that requires a systemic approach.[241] In the case of Morocco, it is essential to identify the state's overall strategy for shaping and managing its image.

Dinnie's conceptual model of nation-brand identity and image highlights the importance of *identity-communicators* such as culture and brand ambassadors.[242] These communicators allow a nation's identity to manifest through its image. For instance, in Morocco, cultural symbols such as traditional clothing, food, and music are identity-communicators that showcase the country's unique identity. In addition, brand ambassadors, such as famous Moroccan actors or athletes, can enhance Morocco's image as a vibrant and diverse nation.

To increase their chances of success in branding, Dinnie suggests that nations focus their efforts on specific communication routes.[243] For example, Morocco has a strong focus on tourism, and its efforts to promote the country's natural beauty and historical landmarks have been successful in attracting millions of tourists annually. Dinnie further emphasises the need for segmenting target audiences to effectively target the perceived image held by different types of consumers.[244] For instance, Morocco has identified luxury travellers as a specific target audience and has developed high-end tourism options such as luxury hotels and spas to attract this group.

Morocco's Nation Branding

Introducing "Marque Maroc" or the "Morocco Brand"

In May 2016, Amadeus[245] and Maroc Export[246] collaborated to organise a conference in Casablanca titled "Country Marketing: Modelling the Morocco Brand."[247] This conference was the first of its kind in Morocco and aimed at introducing the concept of the *Morocco Brand* and explore the various aspects of Morocco's attributes across four themes. These themes included:

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[241] Lebedenko, Vladimir. "On national identity and the building of Russia's image" in Dinnie, Keith. *Nation Branding: Concepts, Issues, Practice*. Butterworth-Heinemann, Oxford, 2008, p.111.

[242] Kogan Page, 2012.

[242] Dinnie, Keith. *Nation branding: concepts, Issues, Practice.* Butterworth-Heinemann, 2008, p.50.

[243] *Ibid.*

[244] *Ibid.*

[245] Amadeus, a Moroccan Think Tank, was established in 2018 by Brahim Fassi-Fihri, the son of Taieb Fassi-Fihri, an adviser to King Mohammed VI and former Minister of Foreign Affairs.

[246] Maroc Export is part of the Ministry in charge of Foreign Trade as a non-profit public organisation working on trade promotion and export development.

[247] Institut Amadeus, "Report of the Morocco Brand Conference", 31 May 2016. www.amadeusonline.org/actualites/actualites-de-linstitut-amadeus/compte-rendu-de-la-conference-marque-maroc/.

(1) building the "made in Morocco" label and its potential benefits for the African continent; (2) utilising soft power strategically to expand Morocco's intellectual capital; (3) examining the potential benefits of *Marque Maroc* to Africa's branding, and (4) identifying opportunities and settings that Morocco's nation brand could benefit from.[248]

The conference's overarching theme revolved around the *Morocco Brand* as a soft power tool in the African continent. This raises crucial questions such as: What is the *Morocco Brand*? How does it operate? and What is its purpose? One potential answer lies in a speech given by Mohammed Tawfik Mouline, General Director of the Royal Institute for Strategic Studies, during the conference.[249] Mouline defined Nation Branding as an "essential element of a nation's intangible capital" and a "strategic lever to preserve national economic security and enhance the geopolitical positioning of a country."[250] He also emphasised the importance of identity and image to Morocco's nation branding strategy, stating that these elements constitute the Kingdom's "intangible capital."[251] Interestingly, his speech also revealed three major elements of branding theory: identity, image, and positioning, which fit within the parameters of Morocco's projected religious and spiritual identity.

Mouline's speech highlights the necessity of analysing Morocco's strategic framing and use of its nation-state identity through the conceptual lens of branding. Our preliminary analysis of Morocco's branding strategy is illustrated below.

[248] *Ibid.*

[249] Mouline, Mohammed Tawfik. "What Levers for Building a Morocco Brand Strategy?". Speech given during the 2016 Conference on the Morocco brand. Amadeus/Maroc Export, May 27, 2016. www.ires.ma/images/pdfs/Forums/Activites_externes/ELEMENTS-DINTERVENTION-DG_CONFERENCE-AMADEUS_27-MAI-2016.pdf.

[250] *Ibid.*

[251] See Chapter One.

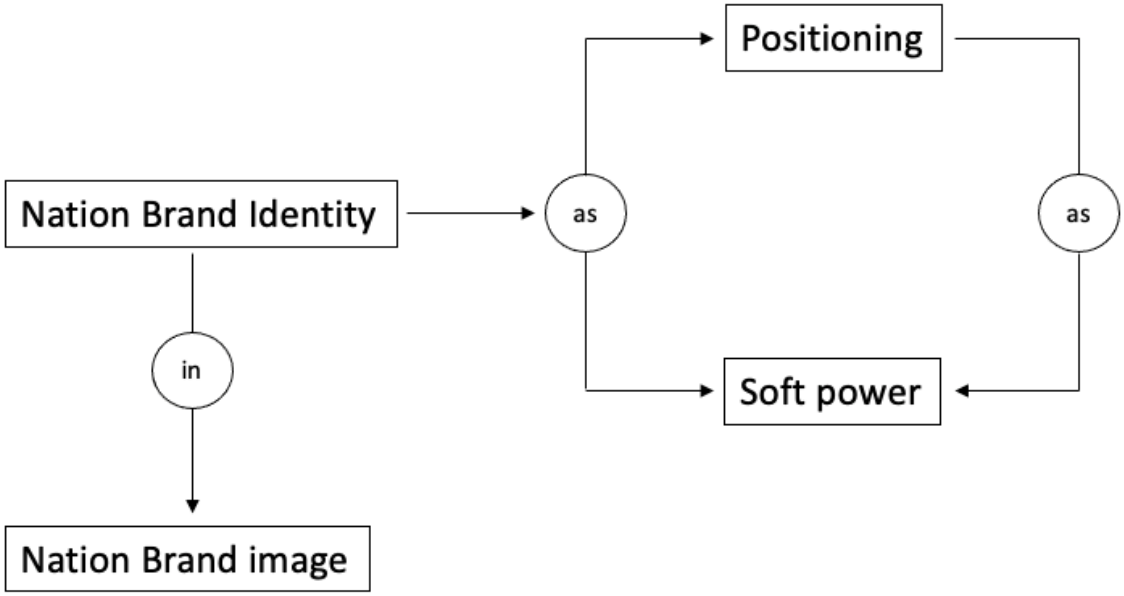


Figure 3.1 Morocco's Nation Branding According to M. T. Mouline

Figure 3.1 is a functional flow block diagram which presents an overview of Mouline's conception of nation branding. The figure illustrates the importance of a unified national identity with a shared vision known as **Nation Brand Identity**. This identity requires a coherent and consistent projected nation image, known as **Nation Brand Image**. Mouline also cites examples of countries such as South Africa, Brasil, Colombia, India, China, and Turkey, which use their intangible assets, including soft power, for development and positioning. Since identity is considered an "intangible capital" and a key element of nation branding, Mouline's statement highlights identity as a soft power tool and a vital factor for positioning.[252]

Mouline's speech highlights two main elements of Morocco's **positioning**: its geopolitical positioning and its soft power. Positioning refers to the characteristics that distinguish a state's offerings and make them more attractive to its audience. In other words, Mouline suggests that Morocco's geopolitical positioning and its soft power are the unique features of the *Morocco Brand*.[253] Soft power, in this context, refers to the intangible assets that contribute to a nation's perceived value and intangible power.

Morocco's diplomatic functions illustrate the importance of intangible assets to its public policy. The country emphasises its intrinsic values to demonstrate the factors that support its

[252] *Ibid.*

[253] As will become clearer in this chapter, both elements encompass a set of intangible assets presented as constitutive elements of Morocco's *essence*.

claim as an international mediator.[254] As Nye explains, intangible power resources such as culture, ideology, and institutions can affect what other countries want.[255] Pamment adds that the combination of a nation's overall intangible assets and their ability to be used for policy goals constitutes soft power. [256] This further indicates the relevance of the branding lens in understanding aspects of Morocco's projected religious and spiritual identity.

Morocco's Nation Brand Identity Through Kapferer's Brand Identity Prism

According to Kapferer's theory, a brand's external appearance reflects its internal identity.[257] Essentially, a brand's image communicates its meaning and values through associations projected to the audience. This means that a brand's image is shaped by how the projected signals are received, analysed, and interpreted. To get a better understanding of Morocco's brand image, we will apply Kapferer's brand identity prism (1996). Although the prism was initially designed for business contexts, it has been used by researchers to analyse political branding, such as the UK Conservative Party brand under David Cameron's leadership.[258] The researchers operationalised Kapferer's prism into a "political brand identity network" which they argued generates a deeper understanding of their case study.[259]

Kapferer views brands as a form of communication that requires a dynamic exchange between a sender and receiver. As the author puts it: "brands can only exist if they communicate."[260] To analyse a brand, Kapferer suggests using the constructivist school of communication theory, which is the study of how humans understand and communicate with each other.[261] Communication is a bidirectional process that requires both a sender and

[254] More on this further down.

[255] Nye, Js. "Soft Power." *Foreign Policy*, no. 80, 1990, pp. 166–167.

[256] Pamment, James. "Articulating Influence: Toward a Research Agenda for Interpreting the Evaluation of Soft Power, Public Diplomacy and Nation Brands." *Public Relations Review*, vol. 40, no. 1, 2014, p. 52.

[257] Kapferer, Jean-Noël. The New Strategic Brand Management: Advanced Insight and Strategic Thinking. 5th ed., Kogan Page, 2012.

[258] Pich, Christopher, and Dianne Dean. "Political Branding: Sense of Identity or Identity Crisis? An Investigation of the Transfer Potential of the Brand Identity Prism to the UK Conservative Party." *Journal of Marketing Management*, vol. 31, no. 11-12, 2015, pp. 1353–1378.

[259] *Ibid.*

[260] *Ibid.* p. 163.

[261] Gudykunst, William B. Theorizing about Intercultural Communication. Sage, 2005.

receiver.[262] Since brands are a form of communication, they can be analysed from the sender's perspective. Therefore, analysing a brand's identity and personality can provide insights into how it communicates with its audience. Konecnik and Go support this argument, stating that a brand's projected identity and image are shaped by the producer's perspective.[263] The recipient's interpretation of the brand then shapes their understanding of it.[264] Figure 3.2 shows how various perspectives shape a brand's projected image using Kapferer's Brand Identity Prism.

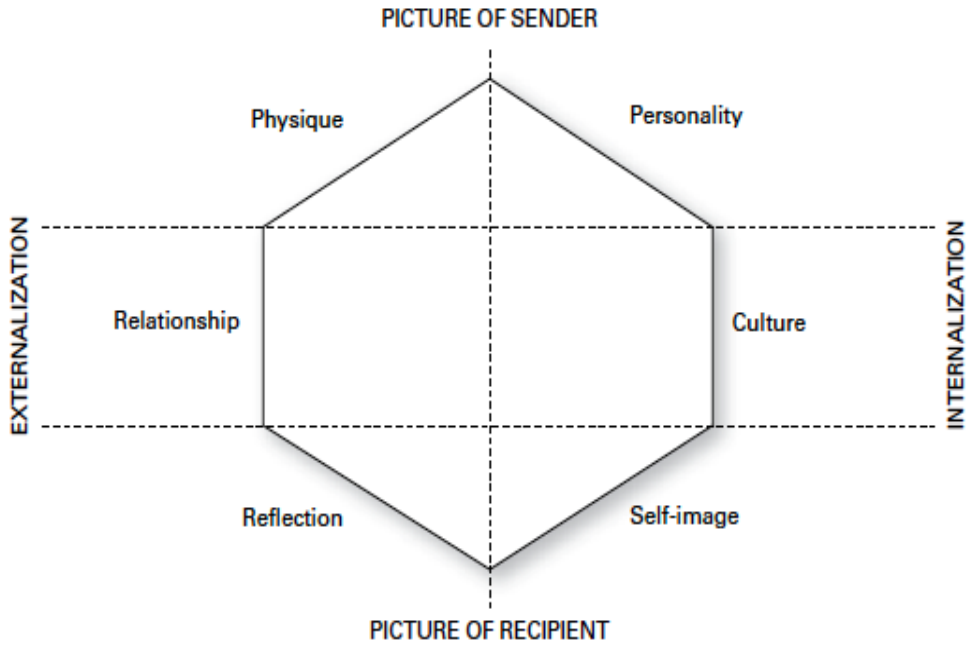


Figure 3.2 Kapferer's Brand Identity Prism

Source: Kapferer, Jean-Noël. *The New Strategic Brand Management: Advanced Insight and Strategic Thinking.* 5th ed., Kogan Page, 2012, p.158.

[262] Griffin, Ricky W., and Michael W. Pustay. *International Business: A Managerial Perspective*. Pearson Education, 2015.

[263] Konecnik, Maja and Go, Frank. "Tourism Destination Brand Identity: The Case of Slovenia." *Journal of Brand Management*, vol. 15, no. 3, 2007, pp. 177–189.

[264] *Ibid.*

Kapferer Brand Identity Prism is a marketing model which illustrates the constitutive elements of a strong brand and a durable brand identity. The main six elements of the prism are: physique, personality, culture, self-image, reflection, and relationship.[265]

The Kapferer prism is also two-dimensional. The first dimension is expressed by the *source-representation* (sender) and the *recipient representation* (receiver). The second dimension exhibits the internal and the external manifestations of the brand. Both dimensions help us better understand how the main six elements of the brand interact. The following broad divisions provide an explanation for the components of each dimension:

- **The horizontal division** groups the brand's six facets into three larger categories: (1) physique and personality, (2) reflection and self-image, (3) culture and relationships. A clarification for each category is provided below (pp. 87-93) and is indicated by an arrow (→).
- **The vertical division** groups the brand's facets into two main categories: (1) physique, relationship, and reflection, (2) personality, culture, and self-image. The first category will be called *social facets* while the second will be referred to as *brand spirit.*

Kapferer's Brand Identity Prism shows that all six facets are interconnected and reinforced by each other. In fact, the differentiating features presented by the hexagonal identity prism (Figure 3.2) helps identify and evaluate various components of a brand identity which can be used to assess how coherent a brand is and how consistent it is in sharing its values. This approach could also help explain the key differences between competing brands.

Given the instrumental role of State-sanctioned Islam in Morocco's projected values and identity, particular attention will be given to the ideological component of Morocco's nation-brand identity. By drawing on Pich and Dean's approach,[266] we will therefore examine Morocco's spiritual identity branding through Kapferer's brand identity prism. The six dimensions presented in Kapferer's prism can be defined as follows:

Physique

Physique relates to distinguished physical characteristics of the brand. This could refer to internal aesthetics, policy, and messages as well as figurehead or spokesperson. The

[265] Kapferer, Jean-Noël. The New Strategic Brand Management: Advanced Insight and Strategic Thinking. 5th ed., Kogan Page, 2012.

[266] Pich, Christopher, and Dianne Dean. "Political Branding: Sense of Identity or Identity Crisis? An Investigation of the Transfer Potential of the Brand Identity Prism to the UK Conservative Party." *Journal of Marketing Management*, vol. 31, no. 11-12, 2015, pp. 1353–1378.

purpose of the physique dimension is to provide a tangible visual that is faster to communicate and easier to grasp than a concept. For example, consistent visual representation of female preachers, Adouls, and Mourchidate provide a physical portrayal of a Moroccan 'model of Islam' accepting of women in religious affairs. Public appearances of female members of the royal family in official events could also indicate an intended visual representation of women's involvement in royal affairs. This is particularly relevant considering the King's religious credentials and authority which are reflected in his title of *Commander of the Faithful.* In these two examples, women are seen holding leadership positions and occupying male dominated spaces. The visual evidence indicated by the physical presence of women in religious and political events could therefore be understood as a way for Morocco to present its positive values of religious tolerance and moderation through gender inclusiveness.

This principle extends to Morocco's State religious services abroad particularly the ones that target the Moroccan diaspora. In 2016, and on the occasion of the month of Ramadan, a delegation of religious personnel was sent to "organise the Moroccan community abroad." 366 intercessors and preachers (male and female) were assigned to 9 different countries: France, Belgium, Italy, Spain, Holland, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, and Canada.

Table 3.1 Representation Delegates for the Religious Supervisory of the Moroccan Diaspora. Ramadan, 2016.

Country	Preachers	
	Male	Female
France	10	9
Belgium	3	2
Italy	3	3
Spain	5	5
Holland	2	2
Germany	2	2
Denmark	1	2
Sweden	1	-
Canada	1	1
Total	28	26

Source: 2016 Bulletin of Achievements, Minister of Habous and Islamic Affairs of the Kingdom of Morocco.[267]

With the exception of Sweden, the number of female preachers per country were close if not equal to the number of male preachers. The total amounts to 28 males against 26 female preachers. This further indicates the Kingdom's active engagement in communicating its gender inclusive approach to its religious affairs. This is particularly relevant given Morocco's outward foreign policy approach mentioned earlier in this chapter.

Personality

Personality pertains to positive or negative attributes the brand has in the eyes of the consumer. According de Chernatony, these attributes reflect "the set of human characteristics associated with a brand."[268] In his definition, Kapferer highlights the psychological function of brand personality. This includes a spokesperson/figurehead and a distinctive style of communication such as writing, tone, attitude, or colours.[269] In the context of this thesis, King Mohammed VI represents the figurehead of *Morocco Brand*. In addition to being the head of State, the King of Morocco is also the figurehead of Morocco's 'model of Islam'. As a religious figure, the monarch is not only imbued with religious significance, but is also a symbol and a visual representation of Morocco's religious identity. The *Commandery of the Faithful* could therefore be conceived as a distinctive attribute of *Morocco Brand* personality. However, given the multiple communication channels used in politics, Pich and Dean suggest subdividing the personality dimension into individual politicians which they referred to as "individual political brand."[270] Therefore, although the King of Morocco remains the ultimate figurehead of *Morocco Brand*, several political figures could also be identified as nation-brand ambassadors. This includes André Azoulay, the Moroccan Jewish advisor to the King and Ahmed Toufiq, the Sufi Minister of Islamic affairs. Both brand ambassadors

[267] Ministry of Habous and Islamic Affairs. Bulletin of achievements 2016. habous.gov. 2017, p. 54. www.habous.gov.ma/images/abook_file/NACHRA_2016%20%20%20%203-7-17%20%20version%20finale%20okkk.pdf.

[268] De Chernatony, Leslie. From Brand Vision to Brand Evaluation: The Strategic Process of Growing and Strengthening Brands. 3rd ed., Butterworth-Heinemann, 2010, p. 246.

[269] Gordon, W. "Accessing the Brand Through Research" in *Understanding Brands (2nd ed.)*. Cowley, D., eds., Kogan Page, London, 1996.

[270] Pich, Christopher, and Dianne Dean. "Political Branding: Sense of Identity or Identity Crisis? An Investigation of the Transfer Potential of the Brand Identity Prism to the UK Conservative Party." *Journal of Marketing Management*, vol. 31, no. 11-12, 2015, pp. 1353–1378.

represent two major components of Morocco's cultural and religious heritage, namely Sufi and Hebraic.[271]

→ *Category 1: Morocco Brand* is pictured through the brand's physical features, qualities, and personality traits which, according to the State's communication efforts, places Morocco's State-sanctioned-Islam at the core of its projected image.[272]

Reflection

Reflection refers to how a brand portrays its buyer or user type. It is understood to reflect consumers' sense of self, enabling them to identify with the brand. Reflection also fosters a desired impression of the brand and creates an incentive for customers to become brand ambassadors. In the case of Morocco, one question we could ask is: what does Morocco's 'model of Islam' represent? A plausible explanation could lie in Morocco's emphasis on its role as a factor of stability and peace, suggesting that the nation's brand is designed for users who share similar objectives.[273]

While the majority of users are likely to be interested in these two factors, Morocco's engagement in reflection serves several purposes. Firstly, it reinforces and strengthens these values, ensuring they remain central to the nation's image and identity. This allows Morocco to differentiate itself from other countries and create a unique, appealing brand. Secondly, reflection helps to build trust and credibility among both domestic and international audiences. By projecting a consistent image that aligns with these values, Morocco demonstrates its commitment to promoting peace and stability in the region and the world. Lastly, reflection can attract additional support and collaboration from like-minded countries, organisations, and individuals. As a champion of stability and peace, Morocco may forge stronger alliances and partnerships that further its political and economic goals. More on this topic will be discussed in Chapters Four and Five.

Self-image

Self-image is a critical factor that determines how customers perceive themselves in relation to a brand. Brands that successfully reflect and incorporate their target customers'

[271] See Chapter One.

[272] More on this in Chapter Three and Four.

[273] Maroc.ma. "Discours Royaux". Message Royal aux participants au colloque organisé à Rabat à l'occasion de la célébration de la Journée Nationale de la Diplomatie Marocaine, 26 March 2013. www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/message-royal-aux-participants-au-colloque-organis%C3%A9-%C3%A0-rabat-%C3%A0-loccasion-de-la.

self-image act as a mirror that resonates with their audience. Therefore, understanding customers' self-image can provide valuable insights into how consumers relate to a brand.

In the case of Morocco, a relevant question arises: how does the country's "outward image" convey the consumers' "inward picture"? The answer may lie in the statements made by the King, who has portrayed Morocco as a democratic, modern, moderate, and tolerant Muslim country.[274] Those who endorse Morocco's "model of Islam" are believed to embody similar universal traits.

Moreover, self-image and reflection are complementary in building brand loyalty and support. By promoting allegiance based on its "model of Islam," the Moroccan State can further anchor the religious component of its national character. In other words, fostering loyalty based on its values strengthens the brand's image and identity, creating a positive feedback loop.

→ *Category 2:* The receiver is not only indicated by the way *Morocco Brand* portrays its target groups, but also by its capacity to trigger feelings.[275]

Culture

Culture is a crucial element that gives insight into a brand's identity. It goes beyond the products and services a brand offers and provides an ideological tie that brings meaning and purpose. Brands may offer similar products, but their cultural aspect has the potential to resonate with the core values and ideals of the consumer, creating a sense of shared identity. Culture includes both the relationship between the brand and its audience, and the services offered.

As Kapferer suggests, "people tend to gather around causes, ideas, ideals, and values, and this is what the cultural facet of the brand is about. It acts as the ideological glue that ties everything together in the long run."[276] Morocco's 'model of Islam' can be understood as a cultural expression of its religious beliefs, aligned with the 'central power.' This approach emphasises the biding relationship between culture and religion assimilated into Morocco's official religious discourse and practices, thus making Morocco's' model of Islam' a fabric woven into Morocco's identity.

The cultural facet of Morocco's national brand is defined by positive values, such as hospitality, tolerance, and acceptance, presented as the "Moroccan way of life." This

[274] *Ibid.*

[275] See Chapter Four & Five.

[276] Kapferer, Jean-Noël. The New Strategic Brand Management: Advanced Insight and Strategic Thinking. 5th edition, Kogan Page, 2012, p.160.

projected cultural identity enhances Morocco's national brand by aligning with the core values and ideals of its audience. The cultural aspect of the brand provides a deeper insight into Morocco's identity, which goes beyond its products and services, thus strengthening its connection with the audience.

Relationship

Relationships are essential for brands to connect with both internal stakeholders and consumers. This connection is built through communication and interaction, which, when combined with a shared culture, can strengthen the bond between the sender and the recipient. The relationship dimension has clear implications for meeting customer expectations and earning brand loyalty.

One effective way of building a strong brand-consumer relationship is by incorporating the customer into the brand's origin story and emphasising shared beliefs and values. For example, Morocco has made efforts to maintain a strong connection with its diaspora by cultivating the cultural and ideological ties that the diaspora might have with its "country of origin." The importance of this connection was highlighted by the King during the 2013 National Day Celebrations of Moroccan Diplomacy, where he emphasised the need to maintain the "diaspora's connection to their identity." [277]

A specific example can be seen in Morocco's outreach to its diaspora through cultural events and initiatives, such as the annual Festival des Marocains du Monde d'Imilchil.[278] This event showcases Moroccan music, art, and cuisine, and provides a platform for the diaspora to reconnect with their roots and celebrate their shared heritage. By engaging with the diaspora in this manner, Morocco strengthens its bond with its citizens abroad and reinforces their sense of belonging to the nation.

Engaging with the diaspora requires tailored communication strategies based on the market segment, including both local and global branding strategies that are discussed in Chapter Four. At the local level, the relationship between internal stakeholders, such as local citizens and politicians, and Morocco's State-sanctioned-Islam can be seen as the "internal" brand relationship. This is in contrast to the "decentralised relationship" reflected in the diaspora's connection to Morocco's "model of Islam."

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[277] Maroc.ma. "Discours Royaux". Message Royal aux participants au colloque organisé à Rabat à l'occasion de la célébration de la Journée Nationale de la Diplomatie Marocaine, 26 March 2013. www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/message-royal-aux-participants-au-colloque-organis%C3%A9-%C3%A0-rabat-%C3%A0-loccasion-de-la.

[278] CCME - Imilchil Abrite La 1ère Édition Du Festival Des Marocains Du Monde Du 11 Au 13 Août. www.ccme.org.ma/fr/component/k2/50112.

The implications of a centralised or decentralised relationship include decision-making power, operating authority, and operational activities, all of which are reserved for the central power that manages and cultivates a sense of ideological cohesion.[279] Managing the *Morocco Brand* relationship is, therefore, an important component of Morocco's national policy.[280]

→ *Category 3:* Values, ideals, and mode of conduct connect *Morocco Brand* to its target groups.

Our exploration of Morocco's brand identity was conducted through the use of Kapferer's prism, a systematic approach that examines various dimensions of a brand. Pich and Dean previously observed that political parties can use this approach to understand how their brand is communicated and received.[281] Our case study extended this observation to the exploration of Morocco's nation brand identity.

By applying the general principles of Kapferer's prism to the case of Morocco, we reinforced our initial argument that identity branding is a functional communication method in both the domestic and international operations of Morocco. This systematic analysis not only confirms our hypothesis, but also highlights the effectiveness of using Kapferer's prism as a tool for exploring and understanding brand identity in various contexts.

Applying the Branding Lens to Morocco's State-Sanctioned-Islam

State-sanctioned-Islam plays a significant role in Morocco's domestic politics. The geopolitical element of nation branding, however, places Morocco in relation to other nations. To apply the branding lens to Morocco's State-sanctioned-Islam, we first need to understand how the Kingdom's religious-based identity is used to connect with other nations. Looking at Morocco's religious institutions could provide an interesting insight on the subject. This may reveal ways by which domestic institutions use State-sanctioned-Islam to form networks of influence beyond Morocco's national borders. To limit our scope of investigation, we will focus our attention on institutions that (1) are expressly or tacitly connected to the Moroccan *Ministry of Habous and Islamic Affairs*, (2) aim at increasing the reach of Morocco's religious

[279] See Chapter Four.

[280] Simon Anholt. "Competitive Identity: A New Model for the Brand Management of Nations, Cities and Regions." *Policy & Practice (Centre for Global Education)*, vol. 4, 2007, pp. 3–13.

[281] Pich, Christopher, and Dianne Dean. "Political Branding: Sense of Identity or Identity Crisis? An Investigation of the Transfer Potential of the Brand Identity Prism to the UK Conservative Party." *Journal of Marketing Management*, vol. 31, no. 11-12, 2015, pp. 1353–1378.

policy beyond its borders. Of the eleven religious' institutions of the *Ministry of Habous and Islamic Affairs*, two religious councils fall within our second criteria. The first is the *Moroccan Council of 'Ulema for Europe* and the second is *The Mohammed VI Foundation for African 'Ulema.*

The *Moroccan Council of 'Ulema for Europe* (Conseil Marocain des Oulémas pour l'Europe - CMOE), established by *Dahir* 1.03.300 of the 22 April 2004. Under *Dahir* n°1.08.17, the council was reorganised on the 20 October 2008.[282] According to the royal decree, the CMOE is connected to the *Superior Council of 'Ulema* which is itself part of the *Ministry of Habous and Islamic Affairs*. In charge of the *Dahir's* execution are the *Superior Council of 'Ulema*, the *Ministry of Habous and Islamic Affairs*, and the *Ministry of Foreign Affairs, of African Cooperation and Moroccans Living Abroad*.[283]

According to the 2008 *dahir*, the council's mission involves the coordination "of its work with the Council of the Moroccan Community Abroad."[284] The CMOE was in fact created a year after the *Council of the Moroccan Community Abroad* (Conseil de la Communauté Marocaine à l'Étranger - CCME) which was established by Dahir n°1.07.208 on the 21 December 2007.[285] Although the name refers to the general overseas community of Moroccans, the CCME efforts are generally oriented towards Europe.[286] An example of such orientation is indicated in Table 3.1 (p. 88). The CCME's general missions involve "consultation and contribution to the formulation and development of policies relating to immigration and the affairs of the community of Moroccans abroad."[287] The council includes as an observer member the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.[288]

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[282] *Bulletin Officiel N.5688*. 08 December 2008. habous.gov. www.habous.gov.ma/fr/files/bo_5688_fr_conseil_des_oulmaseurope2.pdf.

[283] *Ibid.*

[284] *Ibid.*

[285] Royaume du Maroc. *Bulletin Officiel, edition de traduction officielle, n.5602*, 07 February 2008. www.ccme.org.ma/images/conseil/Royal_Dahir_CCME_Fr.pdf.

[286] *Ibid.*

[287] CCME - the Council. www.ccme.org.ma/en/the-council.

[288] Part of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was The Ministry Delegate in Charge of Moroccans Residing Abroad. This department could have been in charge of overseeing ("observing") the CCME. It is worth noting, however, that in 2022 and under Aziz Akhannouch government, the ministry delegate was replaced by the "General Secretariat of the sector of Moroccans living abroad" in the departmental list of the Ministry of foreign affairs.

The CMOE and CCME share a target audience and regional focus, suggesting a joint strategy related to the religious component of Moroccan national identity.[289] The CCME's institutional links between the *Ministry of Foreign Affairs* and the *Ministry of Habous and Islamic Affairs* allow it to act as a bridge between the two entities, as shown in Figure 3.3. This coordination between ministries reflects Morocco's hybrid religious institutional basis, which aims to ensure sustainable social, political, and economic development.

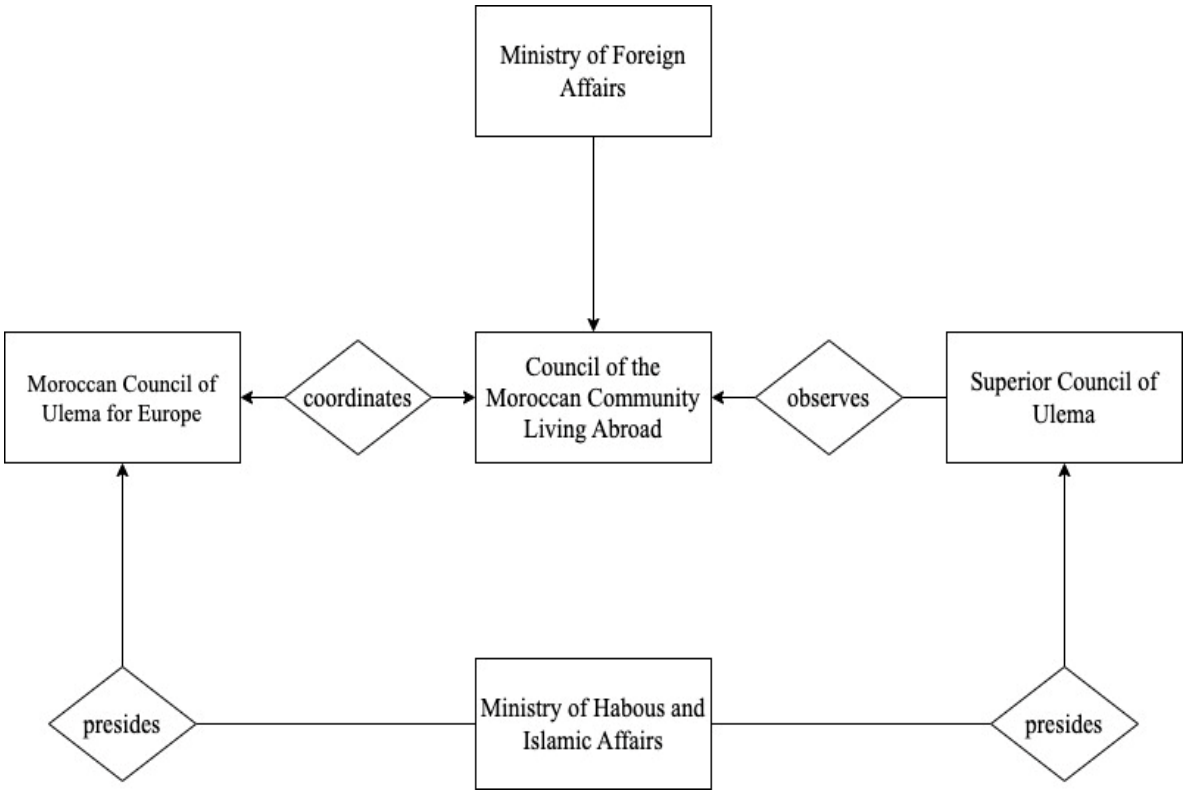


Figure 3.3 CMOE and CCME Institutional Links

The Mohammed VI Foundation for African 'Ulema (FM6OA) is the second religious council that falls within our selection criteria. Established by Royal Decree in June 2015,[290] the FM6OA is a Moroccan organisation that aims to enhance cooperation among African religious preachers, according to its official website.[291] The council's partners include the *Ministry of*

[289] CCME - the Council. www.ccme.org.ma/en/the-council.

[290] Royaume du Maroc. "Secrétariat Général du Gouvernement". *Dahir n° 1-15-75 du 07 ramadan 1436 (24 juin 2015) portant création de la Fondation Mohammed VI des Ouléma africains.* www.sgg.gov.ma/Portals/0/publications/Fondation-M6OA_Fr.pdf.

[291] Fondation Mohammed VI des Oulémas Africains. "Amir al Mouminine". *Le discours de SM le Roi lors de l'installation du Conseil Supérieur de la Fondation Mohammed VI des Ouléma Africains*, 15

Habous and Islamic Affairs, the *University of al-Qarawiyyin*, the *Mohammed VI Institute for the Training of Imams, Morchidines and Morchidates*, and the *Mohammed VI Foundation for Publishing the Holy Qur'an*.[292]

The COEM and M6FAU share significant similarities as religious councils of '*Ulema* as they both play a crucial role in expanding the reach of Morocco's religious policies using religious scholars as intermediaries. In 2008, the King expounded on the rationale behind the COEM's establishment during his speech to the Superior Council of '*Ulema*.[293] His goal was to encourage tolerance towards "the religious and cultural specificities of the Moroccan community in Europe" while safeguarding their faith and values from extremist and fundamentalist leanings.[294]

By highlighting the significance of preserving the religious and cultural identity of Moroccans living in Europe, the King recognises the centrality of these elements to their "Moroccan identity." This insight underscores the COEM's function as a religious council, entrusted with preserving the identity of Moroccans abroad by treating their religious identity as a vital, intangible asset. Similarly, during the installation of the FM6OA's Superior Council in Fes, the King defined the foundation's purpose as a means of promoting the values of moderation, tolerance, and coexistence among its members.[295] The FM6OA aims to achieve this goal through image-related promotion and communication techniques, which is in line with the 2013 speech's emphasis on Morocco's "new image" as it seeks recognition from the international public opinion.[296]

July 2016. www.fm6oa.org/fr/le-discours-de-sm-le-roi-lors-de-linstallation-du-conseil-superieur-de-la-fondation-mohammed-vi-des-oulema-africains/.

[292] Fondation Mohammed VI des Oulémas Africains. "Partenaires – Fondation Mohammed VI des Oulémas Africains." *Fondation Mohammed VI des Oulémas Africains*. www.fm6oa.org/fr/category/partenaires/.

[293] Ministere des Habous et des Affaires Islamiques. 27 septembre 2008 : Discours de SM le Roi à l'occasion de la tenue à Tétouan de la Session ordinaire du Conseil supérieur des Oulémas. habous.gov, 27 September 2008.www.habous.gov.ma/fr/discours-royaux/126-Discours-royaux/665-27-septembre-2008-discours-de-sm-le-roi-a-l-occasion-de-la-tenue-a-tetouan-de-la-session-ordinaire-du-conseil-superieur-des-oulemas.html.

[294] *Ibid.*

[295] Fondation Mohammed VI des Oulémas Africains. "Amir al Mouminine". *Le discours de SM le Roi lors de l'installation du Conseil Supérieur de la Fondation Mohammed VI des Ouléma Africains*, 15 July 2016. www.fm6oa.org/fr/le-discours-de-sm-le-roi-lors-de-linstallation-du-conseil-superieur-de-la-fondation-mohammed-vi-des-oulema-africains/.

[296] Maroc.ma. "Discours Royaux". Message Royal aux participants au colloque organisé à Rabat à l'occasion de la célébration de la Journée Nationale de la Diplomatie Marocaine, 26 March 2013. www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/message-royal-aux-participants-au-colloque-organisé-à-rabat-à-loccasion-de-la.

Both the COEM and the FM6OA have an international focus, targeting groups beyond Morocco's borders. As such, they serve as instruments of Morocco's foreign policy. While the COEM aims to safeguard the religious beliefs and uphold the moral values of its target audience, the FM6OA seeks to actively promote them. For example, the COEM might organise educational programmes, workshops, or seminars to ensure that the religious and cultural practices of Moroccan expatriates are preserved and passed down to future generations. This could include teaching the correct methods of prayer or providing guidance on religious observances such as fasting during Ramadan. In contrast, the FM6OA may actively promote Moroccan religious and cultural values through initiatives such as cultural exchange programmes, interfaith dialogues, or even sponsoring Moroccan art exhibitions and performances abroad. These efforts help to showcase Moroccan values to a wider audience and foster a positive image of the country on the international stage.

Despite their differing goals, both organisations employ religious-based values to achieve their objectives. The table below highlights the key similarities between the two councils and how they support Morocco's policy objectives (Table 3.2).

Table 3.2 Representation of The COEM & FM6OA Through the Conceptual Lens of Branding

	COEM	**FM6OA**
Geographic Market Segmentation	Europe	Africa
Audience/Customer Type	Moroccan Community	African religious preachers (including '*Ulema*)
Style Exercise	Network of support and guidance	· Network of collaboration · Provision of religious training
Distinct Values & Messaging	"**Values of tolerance, moderation**, solidarity, peace	"**Values of moderation and tolerance** and the desire for coexistence."[298]

[298] Fondation Mohammed VI des Oulémas Africains. "Amir al Mouminine". *Le discours de SM le Roi lors de l'installation du Conseil Supérieur de la Fondation Mohammed VI des Ouléma Africains*, 15 July 2016. www.fm6oa.org/fr/le-discours-de-sm-le-roi-lors-de-linstallation-du-conseil-superieur-de-la-fondation-mohammed-vi-des-oulema-africains/.

	and friendship advocated by Islam."[297]	
Claimed Purpose & Aim	· "To ensure the defence of the interests of overseas Moroccans"[299] · "Strengthening their contribution to the economic, social and human development of the country."[300] · "To reinforce the diplomatic relations and cooperation between Morocco and their respective countries of residence."[301]	· To unify and coordinate the work of the '*Ulema*. · To foster and strengthen the religious values of a tolerant Islam. · For the development in Africa and of the African States. · To promote a common African Islamic cultural heritage.

As previously mentioned, image, identity, and positioning (soft power) are key elements of Morocco's nation branding. Table 3.2 shows that the COEM and the FM6OA display characteristics of nation branding, which can be defined as follows:

Identity: Both organisations advocate for a tolerant and moderate Islam, which could constitute their brand identity since they are attached to the *Ministry of Habous and Religious Affairs*.

Image: Although the COEM's name does not incorporate the term '*Ulema*, both councils' names reflect a sense of belonging to Morocco, making them a tangible expression of the country's image.

Positioning: The COEM tailors its offerings based on the "singularity" of the Moroccan community in Europe, while the FM6OA incorporates shared religious values and a regional

[297] MAP in Conseil de la Communauté Marocaine à l'Étranger. "Médias et migration". *Le Conseil des Oulémas pour la communauté marocaine en Europe, un support pour l'encadrement et l'orientation (président)*, 07 February 2012. www.ccme.org.ma/fr/medias-et-migration/10794#:~:text=Le Conseil des Oulémas pour la communauté marocaine d'Europe,la sécurité spirituelle des musulmans.

[299] CCME - the Council. www.ccme.org.ma/en/the-council.

[300] *Ibid.*

[301] *Ibid.*

focus on Africa.[302] The COEM's positioning can be defined as *geo-national*, while the FM6OA's positioning is *geo-spiritual*.

Soft power:

- As a resource: The COEM and FM6OA put forward State-sanctioned-Islam as a key marker of identity, constituting a soft power resource for which the councils act as distribution channels with specific target segments (*i.e.*, "Moroccan Community in Europe" and "African '*Ulema*").[303]
- As an instrument: The COEM and FM6OA serve as structures within which various actors operate, offering possibilities for linkage that would have been difficult to forge without them. Their exercise focuses on creating a network of collaboration and support to establish a common interest.

Figure 3.4 emerges when the abovementioned characteristics are applied to Mouline's description of Morocco's nation branding (Figure 3.1). The figure seemingly indicates how the COEA and the FM6OA act as channels of Morocco's nation brand identity. Given that both councils use 'moderation and tolerance' to project their brand identity, we would therefore like to situate Morocco's projected religious identity in relation to its overall brand.

[302] Ministère des Habous et des Affaires Islamiques. 27 septembre 2008 : Discours de SM le Roi à l'occasion de la tenue à Tétouan de la Session ordinaire du Conseil supérieur des Oulémas. habous.gov, 27 September 2008. www.habous.gov.ma/fr/discours-royaux/126-Discours-royaux/665-27-septembre-2008-discours-de-sm-le-roi-a-l-occasion-de-la-tenue-a-tetouan-de-la-session-ordinaire-du-conseil-superieur-des-oulemas.html.

[303] More details regarding the institutional framework of Morocco's soft power can be found in Chapter Four.

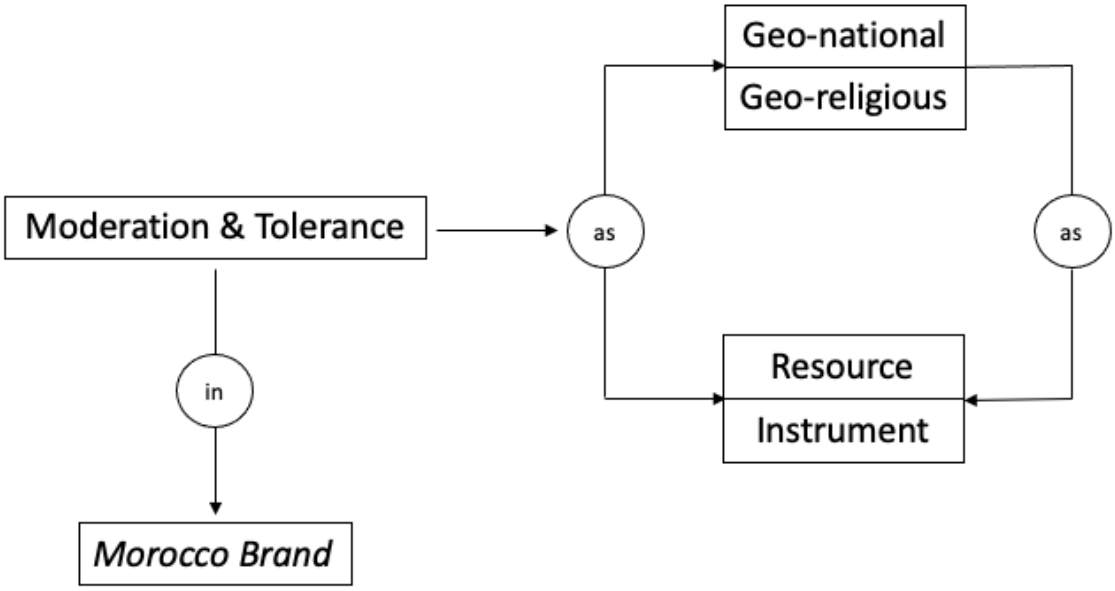


Figure 3.4 The COEA and The FM6OA Through the Conceptual Lens of Branding

State-Sanctioned-Islam as a Distinctive Attribute of Morocco's Nation Brand

Drawing on the concept of branding in the corporate world, Aronczyk argues that a brand has the capacity "to mediate a nation's value both as a market and a moral category."[304] This argument is supported by Gilmore, who notes that branding a country requires "an amplification of what is already there and not a fabrication."[305] In other words, the goal is to highlight a particular facet in its wider context to shift attitudes.[306]

Aronczyk and Gilmore's arguments are evident in the way Morocco uses State-sanctioned Islam as a gravitational pull to frame its nation-state identity.[307] As previously mentioned in Chapter One of this thesis, Morocco's emphasis on Islam as a "unifying force" frames its nation-state identity around the idea of *centrality,* which Chevallier refers to as the *centripetal model*.[308] This model favours the notion of unity and cohesion by subjugating various

[304] Aronczyk, Melissa. "How to Do Things with Brands: Uses of National Identity." *Canadian Journal of Communication*, vol. 34, no. 2, 2009, p. 292.

[305] Gilmore, Fiona. "A Country - Can It Be Repositioned? Spain - the Success Story of Country Branding." *Journal of Brand Management*, vol. 9, no. 4/5, 2002, pp. 281–293.

[306] *Ibid.*

[307] Althusser, Louis. *Essays on Ideology*. London: Verso, 1984.

[308] Chevallier, Jacques. "Le modèle centre/périphérie dans l'analyse politique." *Centre, périphérie, territoire*, 1978.

constituents to normative principles established by "the centre." [309] Peripheral elements are then "pulled towards" the "central pole" through a perceived sense of belonging. [310] In this way, State-sanctioned Islam is presented as a source of cohesion and stability - a constitutive and representative element of Morocco's nation-state identity.[311]

Furthermore, Morocco's model of Islam places State-sanctioned Islam as the "central pole" of the Kingdom's nation-state identity. This ultimately presents State-sanctioned Islam "both as a market and a moral category," [312] reflecting Aronczyk's argument that a brand can mediate a nation's value in both of these realms.

The use of State-sanctioned-Islam as a mediator of Morocco's nation-state identity presents stability as a crucial element of its functioning. In this context, stability is equated with unity and homogeneity, which are necessary for the coherence of the country's identity. However, it is important to note that this stability is primarily for the benefit of the centre, namely the state-sanctioned Islam whose ultimate guardian is *Amir Al Muʾminīn*. This means that the stability of the nation is essentially the stability of the commanders of the faithful, and their ability to maintain their position at the centre of power relies on the perception of stability and unity within the country. Thus, the use of State-sanctioned-Islam as a mediator not only projects an image of Morocco as a stable and unified country but also serves the interests of the central power structure.

The Role of State-sanctioned Islam in Morocco's Nation Branding

Positive Reputation for Sustainable Economic Development

Morocco's 'model of Islam' is a powerful driver of influence, making the religious component of its brand identity, image, and reputation important for increasing its perceived value. Attention should be given to this aspect of the nation brand identity, as it is a major indicator of Morocco's nation-brand identity. According to de Chernatony, a brand's reputation relies on its internal stakeholders whose coherent set of values indicate the brand's identity.[313] Therefore, the perceived value of a brand's identity reflects its brand reputation. Morocco's

[309] *Ibid.*

[310] *Ibid.*

[311] Althusser, Louis. *Essays on Ideology*. London: Verso, 1984.

[312] Aronczyk, Melissa. "How to Do Things with Brands: Uses of National Identity." *Canadian Journal of Communication*, vol. 34, no. 2, 2009, p. 292.

[313] De Chernatony, Leslie. "Brand Management Through Narrowing the Gap Between Brand Identity and Brand Reputation". *Journal of Marketing Management*, 15:1-3, 1999, pp. 157-179.

brand reputation relies on the perceived value of its nation-brand identity, and the perceived value of Morocco's 'model of Islam' could impact its brand reputation.[314] The religious dimension of Morocco's nation branding is a strategic tool for managing the nation's reputation, as national reputation influences and is influenced by the country's policies.

In 2019, The Royal Institute for Strategic Studies (IRES) produced a report highlighting the importance of reputation to Morocco.[315] The report aimed to evaluate Morocco's strengths and weaknesses, identifying opportunities for communication that can project a positive image of the Kingdom. While the report did not mention Morocco's State-sanctioned Islam, we find that it raises key points that may indicate how it is a crucial component of the country's reputation-building efforts. Morocco's moderate interpretation of Islam promotes religious tolerance, which helps to project a positive image of the country globally.

The report equates reputation with image, suggesting that the reputation index utilised reflects the successes and shortcomings of the *Morocco Brand* in fulfilling its promises. For instance, Morocco's hosting of Pope Francis in 2019 was a significant event that helped to boost the country's image and reputation as an interfaith hub in the region.[316] Emotional factors are found to be essential in influencing consumers' attitudes and actions towards the *Marque Maroc*, as the report assesses the level of emotional appeal of the *Morocco Brand* based on consumer support. The country's efforts to promote cultural diplomacy through initiatives such as the *Bayt Dakira* museum, which showcases Morocco's Jewish heritage and promotes interfaith dialogue, exemplify the importance of emotional factors in projecting a positive image of the country.[317] Some other examples include the *Marrakesh Declaration* in 2016,[318] which focused on protecting the rights of religious minorities in Muslim-majority countries,

[314] See Chapter Four & Five.

[315] Institut Royal des Études Stratégiques. *La Réputation du Maroc dans le Monde*, Country RepTrak® 2019, July 2019. www.ires.ma/index.php/fr/publications/rapports-g%C3%A9n%C3%A9raux/7020-la-r%C3%A9putation-du-maroc-dans-le-monde.

[316] "UN Representative Calls Pope Francis' Visit to Morocco 'Historic.'" *Morocco World News,* 26 April 2019. www.moroccoworldnews.com/2019/04/269837/un-representative-calls-pope-francis-visit-to-morocco-historic.

[317] Rédaction, La. "Portfolio: Bayt Dakira Ou La Diversité Heureuse." *Telquel.ma,* 24 Jan. 2020. www.telquel.ma/2020/01/24/portfolio-bayt-dakira-ou-la-diversite-heureuse_1666504.

[318] Pisani, Emmanuel. "La Déclaration de Marrakech du 27 janvier 2016. De la civilité au devoir de citoyenneté en islam." *MIDÉO. Mélanges de l'Institut dominicain d'études orientales* 32, 2017, pp. 267-293.

and the annual *Fes Festival of World Sacred Music*,[319] which brings together artists from various religious backgrounds to celebrate their shared spiritual heritage.

According to the report, reputation has a significant impact on various aspects of Morocco's economy, including exports, investment, tourism, and diplomatic relations.[320] A positive reputation can lead to a successful brand, explaining why IRES is assessing Morocco's reputation.[321] Interestingly, Morocco's State-sanctioned Islam promotes religious tolerance and interfaith dialogue, which helps to project a positive image of Morocco globally. This positive image can have a significant impact on various aspects of Morocco's economy. A positive reputation can lead to a successful brand, making Morocco an attractive destination for foreign investment. Additionally, the country's reputation for hospitality and safety, often associated with its moderate interpretation of Islam, is suggested to have played a role in its prominence in the tourism industry.[322] In fact, the report notes that improving Morocco's external reputation by just one point can lead to a potential increase in the number of tourist arrivals.[323] This indicates that a positive reputation can result in higher profits for the country. Therefore, by managing its image and reputation, Morocco aims to not only attract positive attention to its nation brand but also achieve enduring economic development.[324]

Furthermore, the country's State-sanctioned Islam promotes interfaith dialogue, which helps to enhance its soft power and diplomatic relations with other countries. The religious dimension of Morocco's nation branding is known as "spiritual diplomacy," meant to attract positive attention to the nation-state.

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[319] Note from the President of the Fes Foundation, Abderrafih Zouitene, on the Festival of World Scared Music. www.fesfestival.com/2016/en/le-mot-du-president/.

[320] *Ibid.* p.47.

[321] Martin, Graeme, and Susan, Hetrick. *Corporate Reputations, Branding and People Management: A Strategic Approach to HR*. Butterworth-Heinemann, 2006.

[322] El Haitami, Merieme. "Religious diversity at the contours of Moroccan Islam." *The Journal of North African Studies*, 2021, pp.1-17.

[323] *Ibid.* p.47.

[324] White, Candace, and Iulia Kolesnicov. "Nation Branding in a Transitional Democracy: The Role of Corporate Diplomacy in Promoting National Identity." *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, vol. 11, no. 4, 2015, pp. 324–337.

Riezebos suggests that nation branding can enhance a nation's currency stability, which is an important consideration for Morocco's projected image.[325] The emphasis on unity, peace, and stability in Morocco's 2011 constitution demonstrates the importance of stability in the nation's domestic politics.[326] Within the context of Morocco's history, the notion of stability has been linked to the unifying nature of the monarchical system and the Kingdom's State-sanctioned Islam. Furthermore, Morocco's reputation for cohesiveness and stability extends into the international arena, underlining the necessity for a more comprehensive understanding of stability that situates it within both regional and global contexts.[327] To accomplish this, the Kingdom has established itself as a "regional pillar and a source of stability and peace" across various settings, encompassing the Maghreb, Arab, Islamic, Euro-Mediterranean, African, and American regions.[328]

As we saw in Chapter One, Morocco's model of Islam is presented as a unifying force and a cornerstone of its nation-state identity. Therefore, the country's unified national identity rests on its state-sanctioned Islam, which creates a sense of cohesiveness linked to stability. This intangible aspect of stability is also essential to Morocco's nation brand identity, which constitutes a shared vision of stability with tangible outcomes, such as international security, economic growth, and development. Furthermore, Morocco's brand identity attaches positive value to stability, making it an integral part of the nation's image. The link between stability and the *Morocco Brand* allows the positive associations of stability to reflect in the country's brand.

In Chapters One and Two, we also identified two aspects of stability: tangible and intangible. The tangible aspect rests on the measurable outcomes of stability, such as economic growth, while the intangible aspect relates to elements such as a unified national identity. Regardless of which aspect is emphasised, the King of Morocco, as the ultimate representative of the State and the guardian of state-sanctioned Islam, is usually linked to it. Thus, the notion

[325] Riezebos, H. J., et al. *Brand Management: A Theoretical and Practical Approach*. Financial Times Prentice Hall, 2003.

[326] 2011 Moroccan constitution. Retrieved from the official website of the General Secretariat of the Moroccan Government. www.sgg.gov.ma/Portals/0/constitution/constitution_2011_Fr.pdf.

[327] See previous chapter.

[328] Maroc.ma. "Discours Royaux". Message Royal aux participants au colloque organisé à Rabat à l'occasion de la célébration de la Journée Nationale de la Diplomatie Marocaine, 26 March 2013. www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/message-royal-aux-participants-au-colloque-organisé-à-rabat-à-loccasion-de-la.

of stability is reflected by the face of the nation,[329] the King of Morocco, much like two facets of the same coin, with the dirham bearing the King's face on one side and the emblem of the Kingdom on the other.

Stability for Sustainable Economic Development in Africa

During a conference commemorating the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' 62nd anniversary,[330] Nasser Bourita highlighted the significance of economic factors to Morocco's diplomacy, stressing that "Morocco's force resides in its stability and its soft power."[331] By examining the case of Morocco's global development strategy in Africa, we can gain some interesting insights into the issues raised. In his speech on Morocco's diplomacy, Bourita emphasised the importance of the country's diplomatic strategy in Africa to secure economic conventions with other African states.[332] This suggests a connection between Morocco's economic strategy, its diplomatic actions in Africa, and its conception of stability. To explore this further, we will use the case of the African Union to delve into Morocco's key positive value associations in its national brand and nation branding. The African Union, as a group of interacting nations, can supplement and extend our understanding of Morocco's claim of unity and cohesion at the regional level.

At the 2018 African Union Extraordinary Summit on the Continental Free Trade Area, the King of Morocco stressed the importance of a united African community, stating that "Morocco's return to its institutional family strongly reflects this unifying determination, as does our unwavering attachment to coherence, unity, territorial integrity, and African solidarity."[333] By comparing the African Union to an "institutional family," the speech highlights the familial bond Morocco shares with the "African community" and projects a sense

[329] Anholt, Simon. *Places: Identity, Image, and Reputation.* Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.

[330] The conference took place in April 2018 and was organised by the Moroccan Diplomatic Club.

MAP in Maroc.ma. "Actualités". *La défense de l'unité territoriale et la promotion du modèle marocain, priorités de la diplomatie nationale*, 26 April 2018. www.maroc.ma/fr/actualites/la-defense-de-lunite-territoriale-et-la-promotion-du-modele-marocain-priorites-de-la-0.

[331] The event was covered by the Moroccan Press Agency (Agence Marocaine de Presse – MAP), who reported Nasser Bourita's statements.

Ibid.

[332] MAP in Maroc.ma. "Actualités". *La défense de l'unité territoriale et la promotion du modèle marocain, priorités de la diplomatie nationale*, 26 April 2018. www.maroc.ma/fr/actualites/la-defense-de-lunite-territoriale-et-la-promotion-du-modele-marocain-priorites-de-la-0.

[333] Maroc.ma. "Discours Royaux". Texte intégral du discours royal au Sommet extraordinaire de l'UA sur la Zone de libre-échange continentale, 21 March 2018. www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/texte-integral-du-discours-royal-au-sommet-extraordinaire-de-lua-sur-la-zone-de.

of family unity among its members through shared "coherence, unity, territorial integrity, and African solidarity."[334]

After re-joining the African Union in January 2017, Morocco has actively worked towards implementing and strengthening its foreign policy and diplomatic functions in the African continent. The Kingdom's strategy includes promoting a sense of belonging, which is also presented as the premise or rationale behind its diplomatic approach. This implies that Morocco's presence on the global stage and the expansion of its soft power is perceived as legitimate by the international community and suggests that the African continent could benefit from it to advance its development plan. As the 2016 conference on the *Morocco Brand* indicates, Morocco's regional ambitions, particularly in Africa, are based on a nation branding diplomacy strategy.[335] This allows Morocco to leverage its assets to rise to the rank of regional leader.[336]

Morocco's nation branding strategy targets various sectors, including the sharing of knowledge and the fight against terrorism, with a focus on its religious dimension. The *Mohammed VI Institute of African 'Ulema* serves as a prime example of the strategy, presented as an institutional vessel disseminating the values of tolerance and moderation throughout Africa. These values are projected as integral to the shared heritage and identity of the African community, and fundamental principles of openness that promote unity and coexistence beyond Morocco's borders. The Kingdom also presents moderation and tolerance as key values for eradicating terrorism, leveraging these assets to enhance the impact of its diplomatic initiatives in the spiritual and security sectors.[337] For instance, in 2019, Morocco organised an international conference in Oujda, focusing on religious diplomacy and the challenges of regional security and stability, which showcased its commitment to addressing these issues through dialogue and cooperation.[338]

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[334] *Ibid.*

[335] Institut Amadeus, "Report of the Morocco Brand Conference", 31 May 2016. www.amadeusonline.org/actualites/actualites-de-linstitut-amadeus/compte-rendu-de-la-conference-marque-maroc/.

[336] Mouline, Mohammed Tawfik. "What Levers for Building a Morocco Brand Strategy?". Speech given during the 2016 Conference on the Morocco brand. Amadeus/Maroc Export, May 27, 2016. www.ires.ma/images/pdfs/Forums/Activites_externes/ELEMENTS-DINTERVENTION-DG_CONFERENCE-AMADEUS_27-MAI-2016.pdf.

[337] See Chapter Five.

[338] "Ouverture À Oujda D'un Colloque International Sur La Diplomatie Religieuse Et Les Défis De La Sécurité Et De La Stabilité Régionales." *mapexpress.ma*, 09 March 2017. www.mapexpress.ma/actualite/societe-et-regions/ouverture-a-oujda-dun-colloque-international-sur-la-diplomatie-religieuse-et-les-defis-de-la-securite-et-de-la-stabilite-regionales.

Morocco's nation branding strategy in Africa also includes its State-sanctioned Islam, specifically, its model of Islam, as a crucial intangible power resource. This model is a key feature of Morocco's projected unity and an essential element of the nation's identity. By leveraging these positive associations, Morocco's brand strategy can actively enhance its projected image, as successful brands rely on consistent alignment with promised values. De Chernatony's observations suggest that dominant values define a population's behavioural characteristics, with the country's constitution, religion, and social mores defining the boundary points of the value cluster.[339] Thus, Morocco seeks to amplify established associations with its model of Islam, held by domestic and international actors, to actively leverage its ideological characteristics.

Moreover, our analysis of Mouline's speech highlights that Morocco considers soft power as a crucial element for positioning its brand. This positioning can be defined as the distinguishing characteristics and competitive advantage of the *Morocco Brand*.[340] Since Morocco's efforts to shape its image appear to target the religious dimension of its projected identity, Morocco's State-sanctioned Islam can be viewed as a distinctive attribute of the *Marque Maroc*. One reason other countries in the region may struggle to compete with Morocco on this aspect is due to Morocco's claimed long-standing history of religious moderation, tolerance, and interfaith dialogue. This unique heritage has enabled Morocco to carve out a niche in the regional landscape, which may be difficult for other countries to replicate. However, claiming distinctiveness involves selecting a set of characteristics over others, which may potentially alienate a consumer segment. According to Dinnie, nation brands tend to minimise the risk of alienating potential consumer segments by selecting a positioning platform.[341]

As indicated in Table 3.2 (p. 97), the distinctive values and messaging of the CCME and FM6OA are centred around moderation and tolerance. Furthermore, we have previously argued that the word order and dependency relations of 'moderation' and 'tolerance' create an independent semantic feature. Therefore, Morocco's brand positioning platform can be identified as "Moderation and Tolerance" (M&T), which has been used to communicate key intangible attributes of *Marque Maroc*. The linguistic device of M&T encompasses various

[339] De Chernatony, Leslie. "Adapting brand theory to the context of nation branding." In Dinnie, Keith. *Nation Branding: Concepts, Issues, Practice*. Butterworth-Heinemann, Oxford, 2008, p.16.

[340] Rua, Orlando Lima, and Catarina Santos. "Linking brand and competitive advantage: The mediating effect of positioning and market orientation." *European Research on Management and Business Economics* 28.2, 2022, pp. 100-194.

[341] Dinnie, Keith. *Nation branding: concepts, Issues, Practice.* Butterworth-Heinemann, 2008.

concepts favourable to the brand's overall value, particularly when understood as a religious-based principle and/or a humanistic one. Such an approach presents M&T as a common indicator that allows the "brand receiver" to assign meaning to the message. Although Morocco's active positioning is evident through its nation branding efforts, the platform positioning enables it to operate across market segments and adapt its messaging and style based on target groups and global dynamics.

Heritage and Identity as Mediators of Diplomatic Relations

Morocco's strategy of enhancing its position in the African continent involves leveraging its nation brand identity as a "brand identifier" to promote the *Marque Maroc*. This brand identity is the projected image communicated to stakeholders,[342] based on the central ideas that convey the internal perspective of the brand.[343] The 2015 Throne Day speech by the King of Morocco exemplifies the envisaged associations that the brand aims to project.[344] In this speech, the King stressed the importance of preserving the "authentic Moroccan identity" characterised by civilisational values of tolerance and moderation.[345] He further emphasised the diverse origins of Morocco's component elements, spanning from Europe to Africa.[346]

The speech projects an image of a moderate and tolerant country whose attributes are rooted in its identity and based on the Sunni Malekite rite and the *Commanding of the Faithful*.[347] It highlights "tolerance" and "moderation" as intrinsic values of Morocco's identity and reinforces the use of M&T as a key attribute of the nation brand identity. Moreover, since these characteristics can be considered universal values, the speech presents Morocco's intrinsic values as shared universal principles.

Furthermore, the King's speech suggests that Morocco's identity and heritage act as a bridge between Europe and Africa. The language used in the speech highlights how Morocco's historical, cultural, and geographic assets enable it to mediate international relations,

[342] De Chernatony, L. *From Brand Vision to Brand Evaluation: The Strategic Process of Growing and Strengthening Brands*. 3rd ed., Butterworth-Heinemann, 2010.

[343] Bosch, Johan, et al. "The Impact of Brand Identity on the Perceived Brand Image of a Merged Higher Education Institution: Part One." *Management Dynamics*, vol. 15, no. 2, 2006, pp. 10–30.

[344] Maroc.ma. "Les Discours du Roi". *Full text of the royal speech given during the 16th anniversary of the Feast of the Throne,* 30 July 2015. www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/texte-integral-du-discours-royal-loccasion-du-16eme-anniversaire-de-la-fete-du-trone.

[345] *Ibid.*

[346] *Ibid.*

[347] See Chapter One.

positioning the country as a strategic partner and a key player in global affairs. Winter's examination of the narrative of shared heritage in diplomatic relations sheds light on the significance of *heritage diplomacy*,[348] which involves "cultural and natural pasts shared between and across nations becoming subject to exchanges, collaborations, and forms of cooperative governance."[349]

Morocco's diplomatic message appears to prioritise reciprocity and commonality as key elements of its international discourse.[350] As the King's speeches and messages are official channels of State communication, Morocco's heritage discourse may be part of a political agenda that goes beyond a mere sense of reciprocity. As Pamment points out, "the circulation of information is not considered neutral or objective, but rather a reflection of transnational power relations."[351]

Winter makes a distinction between two forms of heritage diplomacy: "heritage *in* diplomacy" and "heritage *as* diplomacy."[352] The former refers to collaboration that arises from cultural interactions, whereas the latter involves presenting shared heritage as the foundation for future cooperation between nations. Meskell highlights the deeper implications of heritage diplomacy, arguing that cultural heritage is intertwined with issues of identity, sovereignty, territory, and history, with potentially serious consequences.[353]

Together, Winter and Meskell describe the intricate role of shared heritage as an intangible resource in diplomatic collaboration. Morocco's use of its heritage and identity allows for the identification of commonalities and shared values, which can be viewed as a form of heritage *as* diplomacy. Therefore, Morocco's case illustrates how heritage *as* diplomacy can give diplomatic value to intangible assets.

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[348] Winter, Tim. *Post-Conflict Heritage, Postcolonial Tourism: Tourism, Politics and Development at Angkor*. Routledge, 2007.

[349] Winter, Tim. "Heritage Diplomacy." *International Journal of Heritage Studies: IJHS*, vol. 21, no. 10, 2015, p.1007.

[350] Maroc.ma. "Les Discours du Roi". *Full text of the royal speech given during the 16th anniversary of the Feast of the Throne*, 30 July 2015, www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/texte-integral-du-discours-royal-loccasion-du-16eme-anniversaire-de-la-fete-du-trone.

[351] Pamment, James, and Karin Gwinn Wilkins. Communicating National Image through Development and Diplomacy: The Politics of Foreign Aid. 2018. *Chapter 2. Communication at the Crossroads of Development, Public Diplomacy and Soft Power*, p.25.

[352] Winter, Tim. "Heritage Diplomacy." *International Journal of Heritage Studies: IJHS*, vol. 21, no. 10, 2015, pp. 997–1015.

[353] Meskell, Lynn. A Future in Ruins: UNESCO, World Heritage, and the Dream of Peace. 2020, p.226.

In summary, the use of shared heritage and identity as a bridge between nations is a complex issue with potential consequences. However, when used effectively, heritage diplomacy can provide a basis for diplomatic collaboration and enhance the value of intangible assets.

Returning to Mouline's speech mentioned in pp. 81-83 of this chapter, Morocco's unique assets are described as its "international behaviour based on political and religious moderation which has given the country the opportunity to play the role of privileged mediator and bridge between the Muslim world and the West."[354] This statement echoes several speeches and messages made by the King in which he emphasises Morocco's role as a mediator, whose cultural and historical affinities help foster cooperation with other nations. For instance, during the 2015 Summit of Arab States and Latin American States, King Mohammed VI stated: "From its strategic position, as a portal between America and the Arab world, and a link between Europe and Africa, Morocco continues to contribute to building bridges of communication and cooperation between the states of the groups to which it belongs."[355] Likewise, in his 2016 Message given during the first Mediterranean Concert, the Monarch remarked that: "By positioning itself as a bridge between Europe and Africa, between East and West, Morocco has never ceased to consolidate its Mediterranean, Arab, and African roots, rich in this heritage."[356]

Both speeches indicate that Morocco's enduring characteristics combine both tangible and intangible assets. In fact, comparing Morocco's "strategic position" to a "portal" or "link" could be interpreted as an explicit geographical reference intended to underscore Morocco's geostrategic position. Here, Morocco's tangible asset is derived from its geographic location, which places it as a *geopolitical bridge* that connects different "groups to which it belongs." The sense of belonging to these groups echoes the notion of communal identity. Since heritage serves as a foundation for the development and creation of identity, it has the potential to

[354] Mouline, Mohammed Tawfik. "What Levers for Building a Morocco Brand Strategy?". Speech given during the 2016 Conference on the Morocco brand. Amadeus/Maroc Export, May 27, 2016. www.ires.ma/images/pdfs/Forums/Activites_externes/ELEMENTS-DINTERVENTION-DG_CONFERENCE-AMADEUS_27-MAI-2016.pdf.

[355] Maroc.ma. "Activités Royales". SM le Roi Mohammed VI adresse un discours aux participants à la 4ème session du Sommet des Etats arabes et des Etats d'Amérique Latine, 11 November 2015. www.maroc.ma/fr/activites-royales/sm-le-roi-mohammed-vi-adresse-un-discours-aux-participants-la-4eme-session-du-0.

[356] Maroc.ma. "Activités Royales". *Texte intégral du Message Royal à l'occasion du premier Concert de la Méditerranée*, 10 July 2016. www.maroc.ma/fr/activites-royales/texte-integral-du-message-royal-loccasion-du-premier-concert-de-la-mediterranee.

enhance one's sense of belonging. In other words, both speeches illustrate how Morocco strategically uses heritage and communal identity to shape a more positive self-identity.[357]

In addition, Morocco's heritage and identity bestow it with anthropomorphic characteristics. As these traits are linked to human characteristics, it could be argued that Morocco's intangible assets enable other nations to interact and identify with it. This idea is similar to how brands use anthropomorphic traits to connect with their consumers. This could explain why there is a good correlation between *Morocco as a nation-state* and *as a nation-brand*, further supporting our argument that Morocco uses nation branding strategies to foster relationships between states.

By incorporating the concepts of identity, heritage, and positioning, we propose a mental model for the personification of Morocco: Morocco's geographic location serves as its body, the groups it belongs to inform its identity, and its heritage constitutes its memory.

Conclusion

Understanding how Morocco manages its image and identity is essential to comprehending how the country operates in the international arena. Morocco's membership in various international organisations highlights the importance of cultural and regional markers of identity in shaping its national narrative and projecting its interests on the global stage. The credibility of Morocco is strongly influenced by the credibility of the groups to which it belongs, emphasising the significance of its membership and relations to global organisations. This chapter takes a theoretical approach by examining Morocco's strategic framing and use of its nation-state identity through the conceptual lens of branding. By doing so, we can gain a deeper understanding of how Morocco's identity is constructed and projected in its foreign affairs, and how it shapes the Kingdom's global positioning and pursuit of recognition on the international stage.

This chapter examined Morocco's strategic framing and use of its nation-state identity through the conceptual lens of branding. The results of our investigation show that nation branding is becoming a major instrument in Morocco's foreign policy. Our findings also support the idea that Morocco's nation branding aims at reconciling both its cultural diversity and national unity under one umbrella, namely, the *Morocco Brand.* Thus, this chapter contributes additional evidence to the growing role of promotional politics and branding

[357] Mclean, Fiona. "Introduction: Heritage and Identity." *International Journal of Heritage Studies: IJHS*, vol. 12, no. 1, 2006, pp. 3–7.

strategies as powerful governance tools meant to increase Morocco's competitive advantage in global affairs.

We found that Morocco's conscious effort in engaging in nation branding derives from its desire to develop and strengthen its soft power capabilities. Morocco's nation branding is the expression of a national, regional, and international strategic vision. As indicated by Mouline's speech, this vision is that of a brand strategy – a model chosen by the State to manage its nation's image and reputation.

Furthermore, Morocco's strategic use of its intangible assets was evidenced by several Royal speeches in which Morocco's sets of attributes are presented as intrinsic values entrenched in its identity, heritage, and culture. In fact, this present chapter corroborates our previous findings regarding the power dynamic involved in identity framing.

Another key aspect of branding discussed in this chapter is brand image, which can be exemplified through the projected visual and symbolic aspects of Morocco's nation-state identity. This approach is comparable to corporate identity, for which visual identifiers such as product design, logo, and branding play a major role in communicating identity. In fact, while national identity could be conceived as a form of self-perception, and therefore an inward expression of the brand, national reputation, on the other hand, relies on external perceptions of a nation's image. The IRES exemplifies this as it shows how brand reputation was treated by the State as a key performance indicator of the *Morocco Brand*.

4. From Local to Global: The Halo Effect of Morocco's 'Model of Islam'

In June 2016, the King delivered a speech at the installation ceremony of the Higher Council of the Mohammed VI Foundation of African '*Ulema*.[358] During the event, the King emphasised the *'Ulema's* 'duty' to promote the "real image" of Islam as a tolerant religion. The language of the speech conveyed the King's shared vision with the '*Ulema* present at the event, based on a common understanding of Islamic values. Furthermore, the speech seemed to target a wider audience beyond the *'Ulema*, as evidenced by the mentions of "mesdames et messieurs." Such an address signalled the collective comprehension of moral and ethical values associated with Islam, transcending the religious field. In doing so, the speech appeared to underscore the universal character of Morocco's 'model of Islam' and the Mohammed VI Foundation of African '*Ulema*.

The example of the speech illustrates the importance Morocco places on communicating the positive values associated with its 'model of Islam'. To align its intangible assets with its strategy, the King's communication efforts reflect a strategic vision aiming to globalise Morocco's soft power and leverage its 'model of Islam' to achieve economic prosperity. As discussed in Chapters Two and Three, globalisation, soft power, and strategy for economic prosperity reinforce the idea that Morocco's 'model of Islam' is part of a broader strategy to promote the country's brand image. By using its soft power to project its cultural and religious values, a brand can increase its appeal to global audiences and attract more business and investment opportunities. As part of *Morocco Brand*, the promotion of Morocco's State-sanctioned Islam is therefore not just about promoting religion, but also about advancing the country's economic interests.

Having established a link between Morocco's nation branding strategy and its projected identity, it is safe to say that, in the case of its 'model of Islam', the value-adding strategy occurs within a marketing context. In other words, Morocco's efforts to connect with its audience through value-based principles involve a tailored communication strategy.

[358] Maroc.ma. Full text of the King's speech at the "Inauguration Ceremony of Higher Council of Mohammed VI Foundation for African *Ulema*". www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/texte-integral-du-discours-royal-loccasion-de-la-ceremonie-dinstallation-du-conseil.

The previous chapter explored how Morocco's state-sanctioned Islam is linked to its brand identity, as it seeks to add value to the Morocco Brand beyond its products and services. In this chapter, we examine how Morocco endeavours to extend the appeal of its 'model of Islam' to promote its brand image globally. This is particularly important given that the perceived utility and value of Morocco's state-sanctioned Islam have long been locally managed and distributed.

Understanding Morocco's Brand Structure

According to Douglas et al., companies that effectively expand by introducing powerful domestic brands into international markets usually adopt a product-level brand strategy.[359] They assert that this approach is most successful when customer preferences and desired product qualities are consistent globally, and when the brand image serves as a crucial indicator for consumers. Applying this concept to Morocco's nation branding, we can draw an analogy between States and firms.

Morocco's 'model of Islam' can be seen as its unique "product" in the context of nation branding. This model, which promotes religious tolerance and moderation, has been effectively utilised to create a positive Brand image for the *Morocco Brand*. Implementing a product-level brand strategy centred around its 'model of Islam' allows Morocco to create a coherent and appealing brand identity in the global market. This branding strategy has not only enabled Morocco to differentiate itself from other nations but also allowed it to garner international support and recognition for its efforts in promoting religious tolerance and moderation.[360] For instance, Morocco's efforts in fostering interfaith dialogue and hosting events, such as the Marrakesh Declaration in 2016, have showcased the country's commitment to religious tolerance and moderation.[361] Additionally, Morocco has taken steps to train imams from African and European countries in its moderate Islamic approach, further solidifying its image (and role) as a promoter of religious tolerance in the region and beyond.

Delving deeper into the structure of Morocco's brand, the sub-national levels, specifically cities like Marrakesh, Casablanca, and Fez, are essential components. Their unique cultural and historical narratives contribute individual threads to the broader Moroccan tapestry. At the supra-national level, Morocco's affiliations with North Africa, MENA, and the wider African

[359] Douglas, Susan, et al. "Executive Insights: Integrating Branding Strategy across Markets: Building International Brand Architecture." *Journal of International Marketing*, vol. 9, no. 2, 2001, pp. 97–114.

[360] See Chapter Two and Three.

[361] Pisani, Emmanuel. "La Déclaration de Marrakech du 27 janvier 2016. De la civilité au devoir de citoyenneté en islam." *MIDÉO. Mélanges de l'Institut dominicain d'études orientales* 32, 2017, pp. 267-293.

continent further influence its nation branding, reflecting shared histories, geostrategic importance, and regional dynamics.

Douglas et al. introduce the notion of a "coherent international brand architecture."[362] This structure allows brands to integrate more markets, enabling them to strengthen their competitive advantage in the global market.[363] To borrow Douglas et al. words: "Just as architectural plans provide the basis for a sound building, international brand architecture establishes the plan for developing a sound branding strategy."[364] Identifying Morocco's brand architecture could offer insights into the State's branding structure and marketing strategy, potentially leading to a better understanding of Morocco's modes of governance.

To further clarify this point, it is important to consider the distinction made by Douglas et al. between *brand structure* and *brand architecture*.[365] According to the authors, *brand structure* refers to the overall outcome arising from market competition and management decisions that have been inherited from the past. In contrast, *brand architecture* entails the rationalisation and systematisation of a firm's brand, which enables more effective management and application of the brand. This differentiation between brand structure and architecture sheds light on the intricacies of Morocco's nation branding, serving as a valuable perspective for examining its branding efforts.

Building upon the distinction between brand structure and architecture discussed earlier, we can further explore Morocco's nation branding in the context of its 'model of Islam'. As argued in Chapters One and Two, this model serves as a diplomatic tool that leverages heritage, culture, and identity for the benefit of strengthening inter-state relationships. Introducing Morocco's 'model of Islam' to an international audience thus requires understanding the market and the decisions it drives (*i.e.*, brand structure) as well as establishing a strategy that allows a brand to be more effective.

To gain a deeper understanding of Morocco's branding structure, it is helpful to consider Douglas et al.'s framework for analysing international brand architecture. The authors contend that a brand's structure typically consists of three components: firm-based drivers, product-

[362] Douglas, Susan, et al. "Executive Insights: Integrating Branding Strategy across Markets: Building International Brand Architecture." *Journal of International Marketing*, vol. 9, no. 2, 2001, pp. 97–114.

[363] *Ibid.*

[364] Douglas, Susan, et al. "Executive Insights: Integrating Branding Strategy across Markets: Building International Brand Architecture." *Journal of International Marketing*, vol. 9, no. 2, 2001, p.98.

[365] *Ibid.*

based drivers, and market dynamics.[366] The first two elements represent the blueprint of the brand architecture, while the market dynamics involve the internal and external forces that must be balanced to achieve economies of scale. Each of these factors is briefly outlined in the figure below:

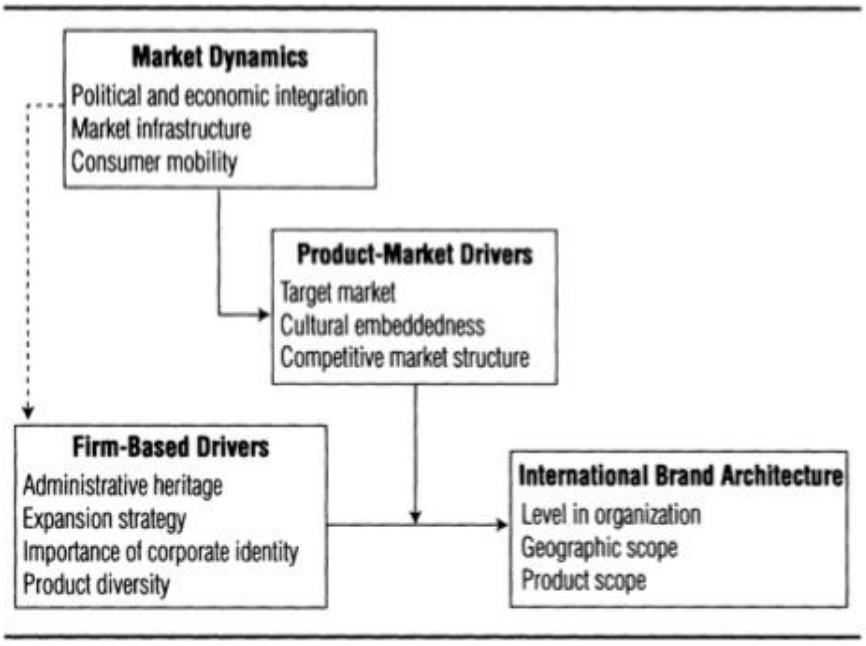


Figure 4.1 Douglas et al. Framework for Analysing International Brand Architecture

Source: Douglas, Susan, et al. "Executive Insights: Integrating Branding Strategy across Markets: Building International Brand Architecture." Journal of International Marketing, vol. 9, no. 2, 2001, pp. 97–114.

Figure 4.1 illustrates the primary drivers that influence a firm's international brand structure. Firm-based drivers are centred around the company's history and identity, which in turn impact its brand strategy. Additionally, this strategy adapts to market dynamics and product-market drivers. Consolidating a branding strategy across markets necessitates the integration of diverse elements, such as market infrastructure, consumer mobility, and the cultural embeddedness of the product. Consequently, market dynamics and drivers promote economies of scale, positioning the brand's structure as both an object and agent of change. As such, it should be perceived as a dynamic, evolving entity.

Figure 4.1 offers a valuable framework for analysing the international brand architecture of *Morocco Brand* by drawing parallels between the elements described in the figure and the nation branding context. In the case of *Morocco Brand,* Firm-Based Drivers can be compared

[366] *Ibid.* pp. 97–114.

to Nation-Based Drivers, which encompass the country's historical background, cultural identity, and political landscape. These drivers shape the foundation of Morocco's branding strategy and influence how the nation presents itself on the global stage. Product Market Drivers, in this context, can be likened to Service Market Drivers, specifically relating to Morocco's 'model of Islam'. This model, which emphasises religious tolerance and moderation, serves as a unique service offered by Morocco on the international stage. The efficacy of this model is suggested to hinge on its adaptability to diverse markets and its ability to integrate various elements such as local religious infrastructure, cross-cultural communication, and the socio-cultural nuances of the regions where the 'model of Islam' is being promoted. By understanding and applying these parallels, we can gain insights into the international brand architecture of *Morocco Brand*, shedding light on its potential for fostering a strong and coherent global presence.

Nation-Based Drivers of the Morocco Brand

Since 2011, Morocco has undergone numerous decentralisation reforms, with various mandates being implemented. Despite these efforts, the central authority continues to wield significant power and maintain substantial control over Morocco's political landscape. The country's *administrative heritage* is a clear indication of its highly centralised organisational structure. One example of this centralisation is the institutionalisation of religion in Morocco, which positions the 'model of Islam' as an integral component of the State structure.[367]

Morocco's expansion in its religious field has been marked by several developments. Among the most visible and prominent aspects of this expansion is the exponential increase in religious institutions. For example, in 2006, *The Rabita Mohammadia of 'Ulema* was established,[368] followed by *The Council of the Moroccan Community living abroad* (CCME) in 2007,[369] *The Mohammed VI Foundation for the Edition of the Holy Quran* in 2010,[370] *The Mohammed VI Institute for the Training of Imams, Morchidines and Morchidates (Religious*

[367] Wainscott, Ann Marie. Bureaucratizing Islam: Morocco and the War on Terror. 2017.

[368] "The Sherifian Dahir - the portal of the Muhammadiyah Association of Scholars." *arrabita.ma*, www.arrabita.ma/%d8%a7%d9%84%d8%b8%d9%87%d9%8a%d8%b1-%d8%a7%d9%84%d8%b4%d8%b1%d9%8a%d9%81.

[369] *CCME - Le Conseil*. www.ccme.org.ma/fr/ccme.

[370] "The Mohammed VI Foundation for the Edition of the Holy Quran." *Mohammed VI Foundation of African Oulema*, April 2019. www.fm6oa.org/en/the-mohammed-vi-foundation-for-the-edition-of-the-holy-quran.

Preachers) in 2014,[371] and *The Mohammed VI Foundation of African 'Ulema in 2015*.[372] These institutions are viewed as part of Morocco's bureaucratisation of Islam.[373] Another aspect of this expansion is the substantial increase in the budget allocated to the religious field, as outlined in Chapter 5.

Furthermore, in Morocco's 'model of Islam', the term "model" implies a level of standardisation necessary for a global brand's distribution, as discussed in Chapters Two and Three. Similar to a communication flow, Morocco's *expansion strategy* necessitates an established internal and external framework for effective communication. In fact, Morocco's *internal expansion* is characterised by standardisation in the domestic religious sector. This expansion is accomplished through the intensive bureaucratisation of the country's religious institutions and organisations, which enhances control over Morocco's 'model of Islam' communication channels and facilitates the integration of branding strategies across markets (see Chapter Three). In terms of *external expansion*, Morocco relies on strategic alliances and incentives in its communicative efforts. For instance, Morocco leverages its geostrategic position and administrative heritage to secure support from the European Union, earning the country the title of privileged partner.[374] Re-joining the African Union exemplifies how Morocco establishes strategic alliances with African member-states to act as a catalyst for significant development projects on the continent. These examples broaden the geographic scope of Morocco's nation branding strategies and highlight major international organisations' willingness to support and integrate Morocco into their structures. While identity plays a crucial role in brand structure, as emphasised by Douglas et al., it is not the sole determinant of attraction and interest.[375] Other variables, such as product and service diversity, also influence consumers' brand perception.[376] Indeed, Morocco's perceived global value significantly affects the variety of products and services offered. An example of how identity contributes to Morocco's nation branding is the country's promotion of Sufism, a mystical

[371] "L'Institut Mohammed VI De Formation Des Imams Mourchidine Et Mourchidat." *Mohammed VI Foundation of African Oulema*, June 2019. www.fm6oa.org/fr/linstitut-mohammed-vi-pour-la-formation-des-imams-mourchidines-et-mourchidates.

[372] "FM6OA - Home – Mohammed VI of African Oulema" *Mohammed VI Foundation of African Oulema*, 23 April 2021. www.fm6oa.org/en/home.

[373] *Ibid.*

[374] See thesis introduction.

[375] Douglas, Susan, et al. "Executive Insights: Integrating Branding Strategy across Markets: Building International Brand Architecture." *Journal of International Marketing*, vol. 9, no. 2, 2001, p.98.

[376] *Ibid.*

Islamic practice.[377] Morocco has a long history of Sufism and has used this aspect of its identity to promote itself as a hub for spiritual and religious tourism.[378] The country has established Sufi brotherhoods and shrines throughout its territory, and the government has invested in promoting Sufism as a form of soft power. Through Sufism, Morocco projects an image of tolerance and openness, attracting tourists and visitors interested in exploring the country's spiritual heritage.[379] The promotion of Sufism demonstrates how Morocco's identity as a Muslim-majority nation can be leveraged to create a distinctive brand image that appeals to specific audiences.

Service Market Drivers of the Morocco Brand

According to Douglas et al., a global brand must consistently appeal to the global market. This appeal is determined by three factors. The first factor is the *nature and scope of the target market*. For example, the *Mohammed VI Institute of African 'Ulema* (FM6OA) reveals its market segment in its name, signalling the homogenisation of the market's needs and interests. The institute's regal name, "Mohammed VI," and its identification of its target group as "African '*Ulema*," create a unique global identity that can appeal to a global consumer base. This homogenisation makes the market segment accessible and enables an efficient communication strategy.

The *Council of 'Ulema for the Moroccan Community of Europe* (CCME) also exemplifies Morocco's use of regional market segmentation. This segmentation not only facilitates effective product/service distribution but also enables access to global brands by maintaining a physical presence in each territory. However, when examining the effectiveness of this approach, it is essential to consider the role of *cultural embeddedness*. The regional segmentation (*i.e.,* Africa and Europe) relies on established local preferences based on the cultural and historical appeal of the products or services offered by the FM6OA and the CCME. By taking these preferences into account and understanding the cultural nuances of each region, Morocco can better tailor its branding efforts to create meaningful connections and resonate

[377] Bounouh, Noureddine. "Brand Morocco and the Promotion of Sufism as Soft Power." *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, vol. 9, no. 3, 2018, pp. 713-726.

[378] Parker, Richard. "Morocco's spiritual traditions: a journey through time." *The National*, 10 February 2018. www.thenationalnews.com/lifestyle/travel/morocco-s-spiritual-traditions-a-journey-through-time-1.702837.

[379] Mokhtari, Tarik. "The Kingdom of Morocco and the Soft Power of Sufism." *HuffPost*, 26 March 2018. www.huffpost.com/entry/the-kingdom-of-morocco-and-the-soft-power-of-sufism_b_5ab6cbfae4b008c9e5f74df5.

with its target audience in each region. One example of how Morocco takes cultural preferences and nuances into account is by focusing on the specific religious practices and historical connections within each region. In West African countries, for instance, Morocco emphasises its shared religious heritage through the *Tijaniyya* Sufi order, which has a strong presence in the region. By supporting and promoting the *Tijaniyya* brotherhood, Morocco creates a sense of familiarity and connection with its West African audience, strengthening its religious and cultural ties with the region.

In Europe, where the Moroccan diaspora is more diverse and includes both first- and second-generation immigrants, Morocco adapts its approach to cater to the needs of this varied audience. The CCME provides religious guidance and support that is sensitive to the unique challenges faced by Moroccan immigrants in Europe. By offering tailored religious and cultural resources, such as language courses, workshops on Islamic practice in a European context, and community-building initiatives, Morocco ensures that its branding efforts resonate with the Moroccan community in Europe.

Furthermore, Morocco recognises the importance of interfaith dialogue in its branding efforts, particularly in European countries where religious pluralism is more common. By actively engaging in and promoting interfaith dialogue, Morocco positions itself as a tolerant and open-minded nation that values religious diversity. This approach helps Morocco appeal to a broader audience, fostering positive relations with host countries and their diverse populations.

That being said, although the level of *cultural embeddedness* provides competitive differentiation, it may not be sufficient when the *market structure* allows potential national or global competitors to thrive (see Chapter Two).

Market Dynamics of the Morocco Brand

To effectively develop a global brand, external factors like political and economic integration can influence a brand structure's evolution. In Morocco's case, promoting its 'model of Islam' is a key element of its development strategy, requiring the consolidation of specific institutions and initiatives aimed at fostering religious tolerance, moderation, and a unique Moroccan approach to Islam.

Adapting to the market infrastructure is also essential to expanding the *Morocco Brand.* Religious infrastructural frameworks, such as the FM6OA or the CCME, act as mediators of

the brand and create a basis for recognition.[380] Legal and symbolic recognitions from participating countries indicate that the presence of these institutions caters to a need and is beneficial to a segment of their population.

Increasing exposure not only reflects the targeted regional segment but also offers passive exposure to the brand, which is relevant in today's market dynamics that account for *consumer mobility* through international travel and media exposure. An increased presence across nations aids in communicating credibility and capacity building, affecting the perceived value and desirability of Morocco's brand. By addressing both the homogenisation of branding efforts and adapting to market infrastructure, Morocco ensures that its branding strategy covers all essential aspects to effectively develop a global brand.

Morocco's 'Model of Islam' as a Local & Global Governance Tool

Conceptual Background: Understanding What We Mean by Local and Global

Douglas et al.'s framework provides a rationale for a coherent brand architecture, allowing brands to leverage their strengths and expand to other markets. Analysing Morocco's case through this framework reveals that nation-based drivers and service market drivers form the structural base of its brand architecture. Both elements require an internal process involving the identification and definition of the values and identity of the *Morocco Brand*, and an external process involving an understanding of the market structure and product diversity. It is important to note that internal and external processes do not necessarily correspond to spatial units like inside or outside borders, but rather are based on the distinction between local and global. The internal process can be expressed in its local governance, while the external process can be expressed in its global governance.

In order to clarify our terminology, it is essential to distinguish between global and local brands, as this distinction is fundamental to our investigation from a branding perspective. Local brands are specific to a particular geographic region,[381] whereas global brands target multiple markets while maintaining a consistent marketing strategy.[382] In the context of our investigation, Perceived Brand Localness (PBL) refers to consumers' perception of a brand's local relevance and cultural fit in a given market.

[380] See previous Chapter.

[381] Wolfe, Alan. "The single European market: national or Euro-brands?". *International Journal of Advertising* 10.1, 1991, pp. 49-58.

[382] Levitt, Theodore. "The globalization of markets." 1983, pp. 69-81.

Through our analysis of Morocco's branding efforts, religious infrastructure, and strategic objectives, we found that the country follows a monolithic brand strategy, which is characterised by a unified and consistent approach to promoting its 'model of Islam' across various aspects.[383] The Moroccan brand is tailored to local markets, endorsed locally, and enjoys high recognition and ingrained local preferences due to its well-established local brand.[384] This strategy is further evidenced by institutions like the FM6OA and the CCME, which all share the same name or reference, reinforcing the monolithic branding approach.

Morocco's efforts to create a sense of brand loyalty and trust among consumers by consistently communicating the country's culture, heritage, and values across all markets also align with the principles of a monolithic brand strategy. Furthermore, the integration of its branding efforts with its legal system and the reinforcement of established rules under the label of Morocco's 'model of Islam' indicate the country's commitment to a monolithic branding approach.

Morocco's monolithic brand strategy aims to communicate the country's culture, heritage, and values consistently across all markets, creating a sense of brand loyalty and trust among consumers.[385] This approach aligns with Morocco's economic objectives and reinforces its claimed position as a leader in religious tourism and a tolerant Islamic nation. Additionally, Morocco's strategic objective of promoting itself as a gateway to Africa and the 'Arab world'[386] is reinforced by its promotion of its 'model of Islam' and brand identity.

George Yip's systematic approach to global strategy emphasises the importance of maintaining a brand name and marketing strategies across markets, as this can lead to economies of scale and scope.[387] The concept of Perceived Brand Globalness (PBG), based on consumers' perception of a brand's presence across borders, is at the core of this approach.[388] Therefore, Morocco's promotion of its 'model of Islam' and brand identity aligns with Yip's

[383] Chaker, A. Morocco's Soft Power: Branding the Nation for Tourism and Investment. Routledge, 2019.

[384] Chalaby, Jean K. The Political Economy of Arab Satellite Broadcasting. Routledge, 2015.

[385] Kapferer, Jean-Noël. The New Strategic Brand Management: Advanced Insights and Strategic Thinking. Kogan Page Publishers, 2012.

[386] See previous Chapter.

[387] Yip, George S. Total Global Strategy: Managing for Worldwide Competitive Advantage. Business school ed., Prentice Hall, 1995.

[388] Jan-Benedict E M Steenkamp, et al. "How Perceived Brand Globalness Creates Brand Value." *Journal of International Business Studies*, vol. 34, no. 1, 2002, pp. 53–65.

approach to global strategy by creating a consistent and recognisable image of the country across markets.

In the context of nation branding, Morocco's promotion of its 'model of Islam' aligns with the country's strategic objective of projecting a consistent global image. This is achieved by establishing confidence in its services, as Scammell suggests, through information policies, externally authenticated records of achievement, and credible commitments and promises.[389] Thus, Morocco can be seen as a service supplier, and its promotion of its 'model of Islam' is a way of establishing confidence in its services and projecting a consistent image across markets.

While Morocco's monolithic brand strategy has been effective in establishing a strong national brand, its brand architecture also requires a level of organisation to carry out specific strategies. This organisation can be seen in the country's religious infrastructure, which consists of various institutions such as the FM6OA and the CCME, all sharing the same name or reference.

The Importance of Local and Global Brand Class

Key components of Morocco's branding strategy include its unified brand approach, public relations, and marketing, building trust in services through transparent information policies and credible commitments, and leveraging the country's religious infrastructure to promote recognition and consistency. These elements form the foundation of Morocco's branding structure, which relies on both internal and external processes to succeed. This involves identifying and articulating the values and identity of the *Morocco Brand*, as well as navigating the market structure and product diversity.

Davvetas and Halkia's research posits that a brand's classification as local or global can affect its perceived value, which in turn influences consumer response to the brand's offerings.[390] They argue that audiences tend to personify brands and use their attributes to make value judgments, subsequently categorising brands into distinct groups. This process, known as *stereotype formation*, can shape consumer behaviour towards a brand's products or services.

In the case of the *Morocco Brand*, consumers' value judgments of its 'model of Islam' can influence their reactions, particularly when classifying it as a local or global brand. These classifications can affect consumers' perceptions of the brand's global or local status,

[389] Scammell, Margaret. "Political Marketing: Lessons for Political Science." *Political Studies*, xlvii, no. 4, 1999, p.728.

[390] Davvetas, Vasileios, and Georgios Halkias. "Global and local brand stereotypes: formation, content transfer, and impact." *International Marketing Review* 36.5, 2016, pp. 675-701.

ultimately determining their responses. The study also emphasises the impact of stereotypical judgments and categorisations on consumer behaviour towards brands. Thus, it is vital to understand how consumers' brand categorisation affects their behaviour towards the *Marque Maroc* when evaluating the success of its branding strategy.

Taking this into account, the perceived brand category of the *Morocco Brand* could affect the value attributed to its 'model of Islam.' Davvetas and Halkia note that local brands are often stereotyped as *warm*, while global brands are seen as *competent*. These stereotypes encompass both the brand's intentions and abilities. In light of this, Morocco faces intriguing questions about how to utilise its brand category to effectively communicate its 'model of Islam' and create a smooth transition between the local and global perceptions of its brand.

To corroborate this, Morocco has made efforts to showcase its commitment to the 'model of Islam' by promoting religious tolerance and a moderate interpretation of Islam, as seen in King Mohammed VI's speeches and policies. Additionally, the country has hosted interfaith dialogues and invested in religious tourism to present a welcoming image to the international community. Furthermore, Morocco's "Green Morocco Plan" and its commitment to renewable energy demonstrate the country's dedication to sustainable development, aligning with global values and goals.[391] By recognising these stereotypes and their impact on consumer perceptions of the *Morocco Brand*, the country can refine its branding strategy to reflect the desired image and values it aims to project.

Davvetas and Halkia perceive local and global branding as deliberate marketplace agents or "classes of personified marketplace units."[392] This idea aligns with Kervyn, Bergsieker, and Malone's Brand as Intentional Agents Framework (BIAF), which posits that consumers' perceptions of a brand's intentions and abilities influence their behaviour towards the brand. [393] Consequently, presenting the *Morocco Brand* as either local or global could affect not only consumers' perceptions of the brand's intentions and abilities but also their overall responses. Although the concept of Perceived Brand Globalness (PBG) has been associated with positive

[391] "Main Achievements of the Green Morocco Plan." *ADA*. www.ada.gov.ma/en/main-achievements-green-morocco-plan.

[392] *Ibid.*

[393] Kervyn, Nicolas, Susan T. Fiske, and Chris Malone. "Brands as intentional agents framework: How perceived intentions and ability can map brand perception." *Journal of Consumer Psychology* 22.2, 2012, pp. 166-176.

emotions among consumers, it is essential to critically examine the potential implications of these perceptions on the *Morocco Brand*.[394]

Considering the significance of the Morocco Brand's perceived globalness in shaping consumer responses, it is crucial for the country to effectively communicate its branding strategy and values to its target markets. By doing so, Morocco can capitalise on the positive associations with global brands and enhance the overall perception of its 'model of Islam' and the country as a whole. However, it is worth noting that the success of this approach depends on striking a balance between global appeal and maintaining the brand's unique identity.

As Morocco's network boundaries expand, an adaptive and hybrid governance system is required to ensure the continued effectiveness of its branding strategy, particularly in the religious sector. This is evident through the expansion of institutions such as the MVI Institute and the FM6OA.[395] As the network of stakeholders becomes more diverse, it leads to a heterarchical organisational design, where regulation and control become decentralised.[396] In this context, Morocco needs to establish a flexible and collaborative system that can accommodate various stakeholders while maintaining the core values of its branding strategy.

Morocco's soft power is subject to changes in network boundaries, stakeholders, and market dynamics. To address this, it is necessary to cultivate a "biodiversity of globalisation," as stated by the King during the 3rd World Policy Conference.[397] This quote implies the importance of embracing multiple perspectives and approaches to globalisation, which is inherently fluid and multidimensional.[398] According to Pieterse, globalisation can be seen as either a policy (globalism) or a project.[399] In the case of FM6OA, Morocco's religious sector, this dichotomy is evident in how the country has translated its 'model of Islam' into a hybrid offering that combines both security and spiritual dimensions. This approach, while innovative,

[394] Dimofte, Claudiu V, et al. "Cognitive and Affective Reactions of U.S. Consumers to Global Brands." *Journal of International Marketing* (East Lansing, Mich.), vol. 16, no. 4, 2008, pp. 113–135.

[395] More on this further down.

[396] Granovetter, Mark. "Economic Action and Social Structure: The Problem of Embeddedness." *The American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 91, no. 3, 1985, pp. 481–510.

[397] Maroc.ma. "Discours Royaux". *Texte intégral du message de SM le Roi à la troisième World Policy Conference*, Marrakech, 16 October 2010. www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/texte-int%C3%A9gral-du-message-de-sm-le-roi-la-troisi%C3%A8me-world-policy-conference.

[398] Pieterse, Jan Nederveen. "Globalisation as Hybridisation." *International Sociology* 9, no. 2, June 1994, pp. 161–84.

[399] *Ibid.*

warrants further investigation to assess its long-term implications and effectiveness within the context of Morocco's branding strategy.

From Local to Global Mechanisms of Governance

In 2004, the King's speech to members of the Superior Council and Provincial Councils of 'Ulema revealed that Morocco's institutional reforms were part of its multidimensional global strategy to address challenges posed by globalisation. These reforms, which included political party reform, family law, audio-visual sector reform, and the abolition of the Special Court of Justice, were designed to modernise Morocco's political, legal, and social systems to better align with international standards and expectations.

The political party reform sought to consolidate the political landscape, strengthen democratic institutions, and enhance political stability, making Morocco more attractive to foreign investors and partners.[400] The family law reform, or the *Moudawana*, aimed to promote gender equality and women's rights in line with international human rights standards, thus improving Morocco's image abroad and fostering social development. The liberalisation of the audio-visual sector promoted freedom of expression, plurality of voices, and access to information, creating a more open society that appealed to foreign investors and partners.[401] Lastly, the abolition of the Special Court of Justice demonstrated Morocco's commitment to promoting the rule of law and ensuring a transparent and accountable judiciary, which in turn improved its credibility in the eyes of the international community.[402]

In 2004, the *Moroccan Council of 'Ulema for Europe* (CMOE) was established, as discussed in Chapter Three. The council's primary objective is to provide "consultation and contribution to the formulation and development of policies relating to immigration and the affairs of the community of Moroccans abroad."[403] To achieve this, the CMOE works in close coordination with the *Council of the Moroccan Community Abroad* (CCME). The nature of the organisation, as well as the diversity of fields attached to the reforms mentioned above, reveal the deployment of multiple management strategies across functions. It is no coincidence that

[400] Maroc.ma. "Discours Royaux". *Discours de SM le Roi Mohammed VI à l'ouverture de la première session de la troisième année législative*, 8 Octobre 2004. www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/discours-de-sm-le-roi-mohammed-vi-%C3%A0-luverture-de-la-premi%C3%A8re-session-de-la.

[401] Décret nº 2-02-163, relatif à la suppression du monopole de l'État en matière de radiodiffusion et de télévision et la création du Conseil Supérieur des Moyens Audiovisuels. www.idpbarcelona.net/docs/recerca/marroc/pdf/cron_maroc_2004.pdf.

[402] Dahir nº 1-04-129 de 15 septembre 2004 de promulgation de la loi nº 79-03 qui modifie et complète le code pénal en supprimant la cours spéciale de justice. B.O. Nº 5248 de 16 septembre 2004.

[403] *CCME - the Council*. www.ccme.org.ma/en/the-council.

in 2005, the King revealed Morocco's National Initiative for Human Development while underlining the national and global character of this Initiative.[404] The key dimensions for human development are health, knowledge, and living standards. These measures provide a standardised way for defining and evaluating the efficacy of the reforms and programs put in place by the Kingdom. The use of a globally recognised system for measuring the development of the country indicates Morocco's conscious effort in communicating its advancements to a global audience. As stated by the King during his 2005 speech to the nation, the ambition is "to raise the human development indices […] to a level comparable to that of the developed countries."[405] The local, global, and national are thus integrated into Morocco's governance strategy.

Globalisation calls for diversity in governance mechanisms and stakeholder involvement to effect change. In response to this demand, innovative and hybrid governance approaches have emerged. King Mohammed VI, during the 3rd World Policy Forum in 2010, expressed the hope that the conference would explore the possibility of rethinking global governance mechanisms to grant more prominent roles to regional groups, particularly those in Africa.[406] This highlights the significance of regional groups in Africa and establishes a strong connection between Morocco's innovative governance, its global development strategy on the continent, and *Marque Maroc*. Morocco's nation branding can thus be seen as an innovative governance model aimed at enhancing and consolidating its brand presence in Africa.

Chapter Two underscored Morocco's intangible assets, such as identity, culture, and heritage, which the State presents as factors that contribute to its perceived value. Our study also emphasised the pivotal role of Morocco's 'model of Islam' in linking local and global networks, showcasing the country's distinctiveness. This local brand, combined with the nation's branding strategy and organisational network, embodies essential aspects of Morocco's network governance.

The network's hierarchical structure is apparent in the vertical relationships between the King and state organisations. The King's authority manifests in various roles, including Head of State, Head of the Army, Commander of the Faithful, and President of the Councils of

[404] Maroc.ma. "Discours Royaux". *Discours de SM le Roi Mohammed VI à la Nation*, 18 May 2005. www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/discours-de-sm-le-roi-mohammed-vi-%C3%A0-la-nation-0.

[405] Maroc.ma. "Discours Royaux". *Discours de SM le Roi Mohammed VI à la Nation*, 15 May 2005. www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/discours-de-sm-le-roi-mohammed-vi-%C3%A0-la-nation.

[406] Maroc.ma. "Discours Royaux". *Texte intégral du message de SM le Roi à la troisième World Policy Conference*, Marrakech, 16 October 2010. www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/texte-int%C3%A9gral-du-message-de-sm-le-roi-la-troisi%C3%A8me-world-policy-conference.

'Ulema, depending on the organisation. Thus, Morocco's 'model of Islam' functions as a vital link between its local and global networks, with its branding strategy and organisational network reflecting its unique network governance, characterised by a hierarchy based on the King's authority over state organisations. In his 2010 speech at the 3rd World Policy Forum, the King stressed the value of innovative governance and the importance of participatory contributions to achieve it, emphasising that the local is not the antithesis of the universal and that all matters ultimately return to the local level.[407]

Morocco's network governance model also aligns with the Network Administrative Organisation (NAO) model, facilitating network development and coordination. For instance, the Ministry of Habous oversees the coordination of other organisations, such as the *Moroccan Council of 'Ulema for Europe* (CMOE) and the *Mohammed VI Foundation for African 'Ulema* (FMO6).[408] By using 2010 as a reference point, we can see that the CMOE was established six years before the speech, while the FMO6 was created six years after. This indicates Morocco's longstanding commitment to reinforcing the role of its 'model of Islam' in bridging the global and local. Morocco's domestic and international asset identification and implementation mechanisms reflect the Kingdom's authoritative framework. The 2010 speech's reference to accessing "the universal through the regional and the singular" implies that Morocco seeks to integrate both hierarchical and heterarchical governance structures, reinforcing the idea that these systems, while distinct, are not mutually exclusive.[409] This approach forms part of Morocco's ongoing development model, as King Mohammed VI stated in his 2019 Throne Day address: "rather than adopting a logic of breaking with the past, it is a question of setting a new milestone in our development process."[410]

[407] *Ibid.*

[408] See Chapter Two.

[409] Maroc.ma. "Discours Royaux". *Texte intégral du message de SM le Roi à la troisième World Policy Conference*, Marrakech, 16 October 2010. www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/texte-int%C3%A9gral-du-message-de-sm-le-roi-la-troisi%C3%A8me-world-policy-conference.

[410] Maroc.ma. "Discours Royaux". *Texte intégral de SM le Roi Mohammed VI adressé à la Nation à l'occasion de la Fête du Trône*, 29 July 2019. www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/texte-integral-de-sm-le-roi-mohammed-vi-adresse-la-nation-loccasion-de-la-fete-du.

Research indicates that consumers' attitudes towards global and local brands are influenced by the brand's perceived value.[411] In the case of Morocco's 'model of Islam,' it is essential to determine what constitutes quality value for both domestic and international consumers. To better understand this, we must explore the underlying value mechanisms associated with Morocco's 'model of Islam' and how it affects consumer perception.

Perceived Brand Globalness (PBG) is an important indicator of perceived quality by the consumer, as it signals recognition, desirability, and quality.[412] In this context, the presence of Morocco's institutional religious framework across borders, including its 'model of Islam,' may play a significant role in increasing Morocco's PBG. By actively promoting its 'model of Islam' internationally, Morocco is strategically leveraging its existing brand equity to enter new market sectors.

However, research has shown that the assumed correlation between globality and quality perceptions does not account for brand strength.[413] In fact, global brands tend to have higher brand equity, but it is the brand's perceived strength that biases its perceived quality, not its perceived globalness.[414] This indicates that the intentional promotion of Morocco's 'model of Islam' as part of the *Morocco Brand* is aimed at enhancing the brand's perceived strength, which in turn positively influences its perceived quality. By doing so, Morocco can create a brand *halo effect*, making consumers more receptive to other offerings from the same brand.

In the context of Morocco's public policy, *Morocco Brand*'s PBG, including its 'model of Islam,' may signify an explicit role of perceived globality in granting Morocco a "more eminent position on the regional groups, especially those in Africa."[415] This perceived globality could be an integral part of Morocco's global mechanisms of world governance, designed to

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[411] Steenkamp, Jan-Benedict EM, and Martijn G. De Jong. "A global investigation into the constellation of consumer attitudes toward global and local products." *Journal of Marketing* 74.6, 2010, pp. 18-40.

[412] Holt, DB, et al. "How Global Brands Compete." *Harvard Business Review*, vol. 82, no. 9, 2004, pp. 68–136.

[413] Dimofte, Claudiu V, et al. "Cognitive and Affective Reactions of U.S. Consumers to Global Brands." *Journal of International Marketing* (East Lansing, Mich.), vol. 16, no. 4, 2008, pp. 113–135.

[414] Dillon, William R, et al. "Understanding What's in a Brand Rating: A Model for Assessing Brand and Attribute Effects and Their Relationship to Brand Equity." *Journal of Marketing Research*, vol. 38, no. 4, 2001, pp. 415–429.

[415] Maroc.ma. "Discours Royaux". *Texte intégral du message de SM le Roi à la troisième World Policy Conference*, Marrakech, 16 October 2010. www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/texte-int%C3%A9gral-du-message-de-sm-le-roi-la-troisi%C3%A8me-world-policy-conference.

communicate strength and brand equity. For example, Morocco's active engagement in international religious dialogues and its efforts to train African imams showcase its commitment to regional cooperation and leadership. By critically examining the role of PBG and its impact on Morocco's regional standing, this analysis provides a more in-depth understanding of the relationship between Morocco's 'model of Islam' and retail patronage.

Strategic Nation Branding: The Role of Morocco's 'Model of Islam' in Consumer Perception and Retail Patronage

Theoretical Framework: Country-of-Origin (COO) Labelling and Perceived Brand Globalness

Usunier and Lee argue that national images are conveyed through various levels and can be influenced by elements such as the brand's name and product origin.[416] When a product's brand name is associated with a specific country of origin, it generates domestic and regional associations that impact both the product's perceived utility and value.[417] As such, managing a product's national image necessitates targeting different components, including the product itself, the manufacturer, the brand name label, and the 'Made in' label.[418] In the case of *Marque Maroc*, Morocco's 'model of Islam' can be considered a brand-related product image reflecting the nation's projected cultural and religious identity.

The Role of Morocco's 'Model of Islam' in COO Labelling

Morocco's marketing strategies and practices suggest that the country capitalises on its 'model of Islam' to draw positive attention to its 'made in' label, thus creating value through nationality bias. Additionally, the 'made in' Morocco label serves as an extrinsic cue implying positive attributes associated with Morocco's 'model of Islam.' Our findings show that many of Morocco's religious institutions located in various countries exhibit a close association with Morocco, incorporating identifiable markers linking them directly to the *Morocco Brand*. The names of these institutions often include the country's name or regal titles, suggesting a deliberate deployment of the 'made in' or 'owned by' label.

Country-of-origin (COO) labelling can provide brands with exposure, allowing them to leverage intangible resources such as history and culture to influence consumers' product

[416] Usunier, Jean-Claude, and Lee, Julie Anne. *Marketing across Cultures*. 6th ed., Pearson, 2013.

[417] *Ibid.*

[418] *Ibid.*

evaluations.[419] Morocco's use of COO labelling implies a purposeful effort to gain national exposure beyond traditional borders. For instance, the *Council of Moroccan 'Ulema in Europe* (COEM) and the *Mohammed VI Foundation for African 'Ulema* (FM6OA) exemplify effective COO labelling. These organisations may be part of a strategy to project a global image for Morocco as it seeks to assert itself as a "full partner in globalisation."[420] This is particularly evident given that Perceived Brand Globalness (PBG) accounts for a brand's physical or virtual presence across borders.[421] The importance placed on COO labelling lies in its ability to affect the perceived value of the brand. This view is supported by Erikson et al., who consider COO an image variable capable of affecting consumers' value perception, indicating a link between a brand's image, its COO cues, and consumers' brand perception.[422] It is likely that Morocco views COO labelling as a communication tool capable of influencing consumers' beliefs about the *Morocco Brand*.

The use of COO labelling in Morocco is supported by extensive reforms introduced to its religious institutions since 2004. Following the 2003 terrorist attack in Casablanca, the King of Morocco announced the State's engagement in a multidimensional global strategy to combat radicalisation and terrorism and "to win our real battle, the one we wage against underdevelopment, ignorance, withdrawal, and ostracism."[423] Morocco's fight against radicalisation and terrorism involves both security and identity dimensions of its 'model of Islam.' However, the negative image generated by terrorists who use Islam to justify their actions has also affected Morocco's image. In March 2004, two Moroccan citisens were involved in Madrid train bombings resulting in around 200 deaths and 2,000 injured. On the 30th of April 2004, King Mohammed VI announced a new religious policy strategy "to stimulate and renew the religious field," with the goal of "protecting Morocco against

[419] Maheswaran, D. et al. "Nation Equity: Integrating the Multiple Dimensions of Country of Origin Effects." 2013.

[420] Maroc.ma. "Discours Royaux". *Texte intégral du message de SM le Roi à la troisième World Policy Conference,* Marrakech, 16 October 2010. www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/texte-int%C3%A9gral-du-message-de-sm-le-roi-la-troisi%C3%A8me-world-policy-conference.

[421] Jan-Benedict E M Steenkamp, et al. "How Perceived Brand Globalness Creates Brand Value." *Journal of International Business Studies,* vol. 34, no. 1, 2002, pp. 53–65.

[422] Erickson, Gary M, et al. "Image Variables in Multi-Attribute Product Evaluations: Country-of-Origin Effects." *The Journal of Consumer Research,* vol. 11, no. 2, 1984, pp. 694–699.

[423] Maroc.ma. "Discours Royaux". *Discours de S.M le Roi Mohammed VI suite aux attentats de Casablanca du 16 mai 2003,* 29 May 2003. www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/discours-de-sm-le-roi-mohammed-vi-suite-aux-attentats-de-casablanca-du-16-mai-2003.

inclinations of extremism and terrorism, and preserving its identity, which bears the seal of moderation and tolerance."[424]

Morocco continues to present Islam as a core component of its national identity, and terrorist attacks conducted under the name of Islam have the potential to influence people's value perception of Islam, and in this case, Morocco's State-sanctioned Islam. This is even more relevant given that Morocco's 'model of Islam' is a fundamental component of the country's political, legal, and social structures. Therefore, a 'weak image of Islam' resulting from terrorist attacks may negatively affect the perceived value of Morocco's 'model of Islam' and undermine Morocco's political norms and values, which could ultimately weaken Morocco's religious soft power. King Mohammed VI's emphasis on "redressing the image of Islam"[425] suggests that Morocco's fight against terrorism extends beyond security and identity dimensions, encompassing a broader effort to reshape global perceptions of Islam.

In terms of Morocco's nation branding, the COO cues related to its 'model of Islam' can act as co-variables that influence consumers' evaluation process and purchase intention.[426] While some researchers have questioned the causal link between COO and purchase intention, they agree that COO strongly affects consumers' perception of a brand's quality.[427] Usunier and Cestre, for example, have argued that despite a lack of evidence of such a link, COO strongly affects consumers' quality perception of a product or service.[428] This argument is supported by Erikson et al., who found that while COO affects consumers' belief formation, it does not directly influence their attitude towards the brand.[429] Therefore, while Morocco's COO cues may not directly impact consumers' behaviour towards the *Morocco Brand*, they can inform their evaluation of the brand's globalness and quality. This is why Morocco's use of COO labelling, enhanced with embedded identity cues, can act as a communication route

[424] Maroc.ma. "Discours Royaux". *Discours de SM le Roi devant les membres du Conseil Supérieur et des Conseils provinciaux des Oulémas,* 30 April 2004. www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/discours-de-sm-le-roi-devant-les-membres-du-conseil-supérieur-et-des-conseils.

[425] *Ibid.*

[426] Rashid, Md Sanuwar. "Weakening the Effect of Unfavorable Country of Origin: A Process- and Parameter-Associated Theoretical Framework." *Journal of Global Marketing*, vol. 30, no. 2, 2017, pp. 87–98.

[427] Hussein, Rania, and Salah Hassan. "Antecedents of Global Brand Purchase Likelihood: Exploring the Mediating Effect of Quality, Prestige and Familiarity." *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, vol. 30, no. 5, 2018, pp. 288–303.

[428] Usunier, Jean-claude, and Ghislaine Cestre. "Further Considerations on the Relevance of Country-of-Origin Research." *European Management Review*, vol. 5, no. 4, 2008, pp. 271–274.

[429] Erickson, Gary M, et al. "Image Variables in Multi-Attribute Product Evaluations: Country-of-Origin Effects." *The Journal of Consumer Research*, vol. 11, no. 2, 1984, pp. 694–699.

for the State to control and manage its projected image. By increasing its visibility on the international stage, Morocco can simultaneously promote its politico-religious-cultural identity. Thus, it can be argued that Morocco's perceived brand globalness and the evaluation of its COO cues related to its 'model of Islam' affect its perceived brand quality and strength.

The Interplay of Cognitive and Affective Dimensions in COO Labelling

While it is true that the literature on COO labelling is predominantly based on studies from developed countries,[430] it is crucial to consider the unique relationship between foreign origin and global brands in developing nations like Morocco.[431] According to Dimofte et al., this correlation has led to the interchangeable use of PBG and COO in emerging markets.[432] This highlights the need to explore the Moroccan consumers' framework, as illustrated in Ben Oumlil's study. The study found that the evaluation of COO's perceived value depended on the country's perceived level of development, with more developed nations being more likely to receive favourable product evaluations.[433] Consequently, Morocco may utilise COO labelling as a strategic branding tool to manage its national image and promote its development using its intangible assets.[434] The set of information and beliefs a consumer holds about a given country constitutes COO's *cognitive dimension,*[435] reinforcing the idea that COO labelling is an integral aspect of Morocco's development strategy, as a favourable evaluation of its COO may enhance its development prospects.[436]

Taking this into account, Morocco positions itself as a moderate and tolerant country, employing its 'model of Islam' as a mediator for its brand image, PBG, and brand strength. This makes COO labelling a vital mechanism of global governance for the nation. It is

[430] Dimofte, Claudiu V, et al. "Cognitive and Affective Reactions of U.S. Consumers to Global Brands." *Journal of International Marketing* (East Lansing, Mich.), vol. 16, no. 4, 2008, pp. 113–135.

[431] *Ibid.*

[432] *Ibid.*

[433] A Ben Oumlil. "Country-Of-Origin (COO) Impact and Product Categories' Evaluations: The Case of an Emerging Market." *Journal of Marketing Development and Competitiveness*, vol. 14, no. 1, 2020, pp. 57–65.

[434] Mouline, Mohammed Tawfik. "What Levers for Building a Morocco Brand Strategy?". Speech on the occasion of Conference on the Morocco brand. *Amadeus/Maroc Export*, May 27, 2016. www.ires.ma/images/pdfs/Forums/Activites_externes/ELEMENTS-DINTERVENTION-DG_CONFERENCE-AMADEUS_27-MAI-2016.pdf.

[435] Zolfagharian, Mohammadali, et al. "Owned-by and Made-in Cues: Cognitive and Affective Dimensions of Country of Origin Effect in Immigrant Markets." *International Marketing Review*, vol. 37, no. 1, 2019, pp. 29–55.

[436] *Ibid.*

important to note, however, that other moderating factors, such as the product/service category and targeted market segments, can influence consumers' perception of a brand. Additionally, the affective dimension of COO can evoke consumers' feelings, pride, and identity, leading to the emergence of the concept of ethnocentrism.[437]

Consumer Ethnocentrism and its Impact on Brand Preferences

The influence of consumer ethnocentrism on brand preferences is an essential aspect to consider when evaluating the impact of Morocco's COO labelling strategy. Consumer ethnocentrism refers to the tendency of consumers to favour domestic products over foreign ones based on nationalistic beliefs. It is essential to understand the role of ethnocentrism in consumers' evaluation of Morocco's 'model of Islam' and how it interacts with the cognitive and affective dimensions of COO cues.

To explore this further, it is crucial to examine the relationship between consumer ethnocentrism and consumers' perceptions of Morocco's 'model of Islam.' Research has shown that highly ethnocentric consumers are more likely to have a favourable attitude toward domestic products and a negative attitude toward foreign ones. This suggests that for Moroccan consumers, ethnocentrism may positively influence their perception of Morocco's 'model of Islam' and its associated COO cues. On the other hand, for foreign consumers, ethnocentrism may negatively impact their evaluation of Morocco's 'model of Islam,' depending on their level of ethnocentrism and the perceived distance between their own culture and Morocco's.

In conclusion, Morocco's use of COO labelling, incorporating its 'model of Islam,' is a strategic branding tool aimed at managing its national image, promoting its development using intangible assets, and enhancing its visibility in the international arena. The interplay of cognitive and affective dimensions of COO cues, consumer ethnocentrism, and product/service category levels contribute to shaping consumers' perceptions and preferences related to Morocco's 'model of Islam.' Further research could expand on these findings by exploring the impact of different market segments and the role of cultural distance on consumers' evaluation of Morocco's nation branding efforts.

The Role of Product Categories and Market Segments in Shaping Perceptions of Morocco's 'Model of Islam' and its COO Labelling

Building upon our previous discussion of Country of Origin (COO) labelling and ethnocentrism, we will now examine the impact of product or service categories on the

[437] *Ibid.*

perceived value of Morocco's 'model of Islam.' It is crucial to explore the potential influence of these categories, as consumer preferences for global and local brands within the market sector may shape the value perception of Morocco's 'model of Islam.' By identifying these category levels, we can better understand the cognitive and emotional aspects of Morocco's origin labelling and their effects on consumer beliefs and attitudes.

Category levels refer to the different segments or classifications within a particular market sector or industry that Morocco's 'model of Islam' may be associated with. These category levels help to differentiate the offerings of various brands, products, or services based on factors such as functionality, symbolic value, and consumer preferences. By examining these category levels, we can better understand how Morocco's 'model of Islam' is positioned in the market and perceived by consumers. For example, category levels within the 'model of Islam' may include religious education, cultural products, and spiritual services, among others. By identifying and analysing these category levels, we can gain insights into the cognitive and emotional dimensions of Morocco's origin labelling and its impact on consumer beliefs and attitudes.

The relationship between COO cues and the identified category levels of Morocco's 'model of Islam' conveys the brand's overall strength. This highlights the significance of industry-specific strategic management processes, allowing Morocco to establish its brand positioning and maintain a consistent image across various sectors. The category levels not only communicate the functional and symbolic aspects of Morocco's 'model of Islam,' but also influence its perceived superiority and, consequently, its Perceived Brand Globalness.

Global brands that provide highly functional products or services and possess significant symbolic value are often seen as superior to local brands. This perception encourages the integration of both spiritual and security dimensions within a single institutional framework, emphasising their compatibility and offering a hybrid solution that enhances the perceived value of Morocco's 'model of Islam.'

To effectively implement this strategic approach, Morocco needs to critically assess and reform its governance mechanisms. This necessity is underscored by the explicit incorporation of the 'model of Islam' in the country's nation branding, which highlights the pivotal role it plays in enhancing Morocco's international visibility. As a key component of brand equity, the 'model of Islam' has a considerable influence on the nation's international relations.

A thorough analysis of the active use of COO labelling within the religious framework, the product categories the model engages in, and the targeted market segments it caters to, is essential to fully understand this impact. By scrutinising these elements, we can gain valuable

insights into the relationship between the 'model of Islam' and its role in shaping Morocco's global presence. In the subsequent section, we will delve deeper into the analysis of how consumer-specific factors may affect brand preferences, further expanding our understanding of the intricacies involved in the perception and reception of Morocco's 'model of Islam.'

Consumer-Specific Factors: How Identity Shapes Product Preference

The global market has been dominated by brands from developed countries due to their strong economies, allowing them to thrive in the global economy. However, when developing countries opened their economies, foreign brands entered their markets, creating a correlation between foreign origin and global brands in consumers' minds, as explained by Batra et al.[438] With the rise of economic globalisation, more global brands from emerging nations are now occupying the international market. This leads us to question whether the positive correlation between PBG and a brand's foreign origin is also applicable to global brands from developing countries.

The case of Morocco provides a unique opportunity to investigate the pathways through which a global brand from a developing country can influence local and non-local consumers' brand attitude. By examining Morocco's 'model of Islam,' this section will explore how the country leverages its local culture to project a global image in order to benefit both its foreign and domestic politics.

Underlying Effect of the Nation's Economic Development on Consumers' Responses to Local and Global Brands

Morocco's branding strategies are being investigated as a means of understanding how a global brand from a developing country can positively impact local and non-local consumers' attitudes toward the brand. From a branding lens perspective, exploring Morocco's 'model of Islam' allows us to examine how the country utilises its local culture to project a global image that benefits both its foreign and domestic politics.

To mediate the correlation between PBG and foreign origin, it is assumed that Morocco chooses a pathway that positively affects global audiences' attitudes toward the *Morocco Brand* and the projected image of its 'model of Islam' and. By treating PBG as an image variable, both perceived brand localness and globalness can coexist within Morocco's brand image. This strategy also enables Morocco to coordinate its brand building activities across

[438] Batra, Rajeev, et al. "Effects of Brand Local and Nonlocal Origin on Consumer Attitudes in Developing Countries." *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, vol. 9, no. 2, 2000, pp. 83–95.

market segments while maintaining a local anchorage.[439] The fluid nature of national identity allows Morocco to harness its network structures, including its diaspora, to manage and coordinate its nation brand.

Dong and Yu suggest that the origin of the global brand influences consumer attitudes and purchase intention in emerging markets.[440] *Traditional global brands* from developed nations have long been viewed as superior, with the PBG effect on consumer attitudes greater than PBL. However, PBL remains an important lever used by traditional global brands to increase credibility by appealing to local culture. Consumers' brand attitude and purchase intention are affected by the brand's perceived localness, including its physical presence in the host country and its appeal and adaptation to the local culture.[441]

In contrast, emerging global brands from developing countries use PBL to leverage their local identity and stimulate consumers' pride and identity.[442] Consumers' local identity and the brand's credibility are both positively affected when emerging global brands are purchased. Building or maintaining a strong PBL is essential for emerging global brands to positively affect local consumers' brand attitude.

Morocco's branding strategies take into account market behaviours towards both global and local brands. To positively influence local consumers' attitudes towards its projected global image of the 'model of Islam,' Morocco selects a specific approach in the domestic context. By adopting the appearance of a global brand, Morocco treats its PBG as an image variable, allowing for the coexistence of both perceived brand localness and globalness within Morocco's brand image. This strategy allows Morocco to coordinate its brand-building activities across different market segments. By treating PBG as an image variable, Morocco can harness its network structures, including its diaspora, enabling it to manage and coordinate its nation brand while simultaneously maintaining local roots.

The case study of Morocco highlights the active use of COO cues to positively influence local consumers' attitude towards the *Morocco brand*. This includes not only consumers in Morocco but also those who prefer Morocco's local brand over a global one within the product category of Morocco's 'model of Islam.' Identifying consumer types and segments is necessary

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[439] Davvetas, Vasileios, and Adamantios Diamantopoulos. "How Product Category Shapes Preferences toward Global and Local Brands: A Schema Theory Perspective." *Journal of International Marketing*, vol. 24, no. 4, 2016, pp. 61–81.

[440] Dong, Lily C., and Chunling Yu. "Globalization or Localization: Global Brand Perception in Emerging Markets." *International Business Research* 13.10, 2020, pp. 53-65.

[441] *Ibid.*

[442] *Ibid.*

for Morocco to increase its brand appeal both locally and globally. ÖZsomer argues that the product category and consumer segment affect the brand's perceived globalness and localness.[443] Hence, it is likely that Morocco's brand strategy involves strengthening its PBL through defined market segments to influence consumers' attitude towards its *emerging global brand*.

Morocco treats 'West Africa' and the 'Moroccan diaspora based in Europe' as distinct market segments, and the manifestation of PBL, therefore, differs between these regions. In other words, the demographic segmentation of Morocco's targeted consumer groups helps the *Morocco Brand* to optimise its positioning strategies. Through the West African market segment, PBL impacts brand credibility by arousing regional and continental pride, while through the Moroccan diaspora, PBL stimulates national pride and identity, both of which serve Morocco.

Identity, credibility, and trust are notable factors that influence consumers' brand attitude and also form bases of persuasion in diplomacy. As such, they are important levers for soft power. Morocco's use of PBL and PBG as pathways of influence can, therefore, be considered non-conventional policy instruments that ultimately operationalise its soft power in terms of global and local brand equity. It is, however, important to note that consumers' brand attitude does not necessarily translate into purchase intention. According to Dong and Yu, purchase intention is mediated by the brand's perceived value, which can be identified as brand credibility.[444] Successful global brands are generally perceived as more credible, which is vital for traditional global brands. This credibility can therefore be mediated by the use of globally recognised measures that would support Morocco's claim of success. This is where the 2005 National Initiative for Human Development comes to play.

Brand Extension Through Brand Innovation: Morocco's 'Model of Islam' as a Global Brand

According to Kapferer, in today's age of cultural integration, modernity is expressed through internationalism, and the perception of globalness can increase perceived value.[445] However,

[443] ÖZsomer, Aysegül. "The Interplay between Global and Local Brands: A Closer Look at Perceived Brand Globalness and Local Iconness." *Journal of International Marketing*, vol. 20, no. 2, 2012, pp. 72–95.

[444] Dong, Lily C., and Chunling Yu. "Globalization or Localization: Global Brand Perception in Emerging Markets." *International Business Research* 13.10, 2020, pp. 53-65.

[445] Kapferer, Jean-Noël. The New Strategic Brand Management: Advanced Insights and Strategic Thinking. Kogan Page Publishers, 2012, p.415.

understanding and valuing global brands can be highly segmented, as value perception varies.[446] Schuiling and Kapferer's analysis found that local-global brands have the best brand profile in their home country, but they also discovered a significant deficit between local and global brands in terms of perceived health value, reliability, and trust.[447] This finding echoes Usunier and Lee's work, which emphasises the importance of communication in maintaining trust with consumers, particularly on a global scale.[448] Given that diplomacy is often seen as a communication tool for managing international relations,[449] building strong diplomacy is essential for Morocco to consolidate its "spiritual influence."

Morocco's 'model of Islam' seeks to create a counter-narrative to radical Islam at the international level by leveraging its endogenous cultural and historical resources to promote community resilience. This model fosters inter-state and inter-regional cooperation and facilitates integrated development strategies across borders. As discussed in Chapter Two, Morocco uses its heritage and identity as mediators for diplomatic relations, making the country-of-origin (COO) an intangible resource for Morocco's diplomatic collaboration. This nationality bias, created and reflected in COO labelling, is known as the country-of-origin effect (COO effect).

The complex relationship between local consumers' religio-cultural identity and domestic religio-political authority plays an ambivalent role in shaping the perceived value of Morocco's 'model of Islam'. This intricate relationship highlights the importance of balancing global and local brand elements to cater to the unique preferences of consumers in different markets.[450]

Morocco's 'model of Islam' serves as an example of religion functioning as identity politics, with significant domestic and international implications. The country's rich cultural heritage also includes the Moroccan Jewish community, further demonstrating the complex

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[446] *Ibid.* p.416.

[447] Schuiling, Isabelle. "Executive Insights: Real Differences Between Local and International Brands: Strategic Implications for International Marketers." *Journal of International Marketing*, vol. 12, no. 4, 2004, pp. 97–112.

[448] Usunier, Jean-Claude., and Julie Anne. Lee. *Marketing across Cultures*. 6th ed., Pearson, 2013.

[449] Grunig, James. "Public Relations and International Affairs: Effects, Ethics." *Journal of International Affairs*, vol. 47, no. 1, 1993, p.137.

[450] ÖZsomer, Aysegül. "The Interplay between Global and Local Brands: A Closer Look at Perceived Brand Globalness and Local Iconness." *Journal of International Marketing*, vol. 20, no. 2, 2012, pp. 72–95.

interplay between various religious and cultural identities in shaping Morocco's brand image, both domestically and internationally.[451]

Global consumer culture operates within a fluid dynamic, capable of triggering various social identities within a particular consumer group. This highlights the importance of considering both global and local factors when developing marketing strategies to appeal to diverse consumer bases.[452] Morocco's efforts to increase the Perceived Brand Globalness (PBG) of its 'model of Islam' showcase a complexity comparable to understanding the dynamic nature of identity.[453] By identifying and defining the function of its brand elements, Morocco lays the foundation for its brand architecture, differentiating the brand from competitors by providing clarity in its organisational structure.

In this context, Morocco's unique positioning as a nation with a diverse cultural and religious landscape presents both challenges and opportunities for the country to establish a strong global and local brand presence. The country's 'model of Islam' presents potential to bridge the gap between global and local brand considerations, creating a cohesive narrative that appeals to a wide range of consumer groups both within and beyond its borders.

To effectively communicate the values and identity of Morocco's 'model of Islam', it is crucial to consider the role of communication and diplomacy in shaping brand perceptions. As Usunier and Lee argue, marketing communication must be carefully managed to avoid betraying the beliefs invested in the brand.[454] In the case of Morocco, the country must develop a coherent communication strategy that considers the diverse and complex nature of its national identity while promoting its 'model of Islam' as a counter-narrative to radical Islam.

To achieve this, Morocco can leverage its rich cultural heritage, including the Moroccan Jewish community, as a means to foster intercultural understanding and build bridges between different religious and cultural groups. By doing so, the country can strengthen its brand image and diplomatic relations, positioning itself as a leader in promoting religious tolerance and cultural diversity on the global stage.

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[451] Yeboah-Banin, Abena A, and Quaye, Emmanuel Silva. "Pathways to Global versus Local Brand Preferences: The Roles of Cultural Identity and Brand Perceptions in Emerging African Markets." *Journal of Global Marketing*, 2021, pp. 1–20.

[452] Zolfagharian, Mohammadali, et al. "Owned-by and Made-in Cues: Cognitive and Affective Dimensions of Country of Origin Effect in Immigrant Markets." *International Marketing Review*, vol. 37, no. 1, 2019, pp. 29–55.

[453] Huang, Yan, et al. "The Influence of Ethnic Attributes on Ethnic Consumer Choice of Service Outlet." *European Journal of Marketing*, vol. 47, no. 5/6, 2013, pp. 877–898.

[454] Usunier, Jean-Claude., and Julie Anne. Lee. *Marketing across Cultures*. 6th ed., Pearson, 2013.

Additionally, understanding the dynamics of global consumer culture and the multiple social identities it encompasses is vital for Morocco to develop targeted marketing strategies that resonate with various consumer groups. By recognising the fluidity of identity and the complex interplay between global and local factors, Morocco can craft a compelling narrative that appeals to diverse audiences and enhances the perceived value of its 'model of Islam'.

Ultimately, Morocco's unique position as a nation with a rich cultural and religious heritage offers the opportunity to establish a strong global and local brand presence. By carefully balancing global and local considerations, effectively communicating its values, and leveraging its cultural diversity, Morocco aims to promote its 'model of Islam' as an alternative narrative to radical Islam and enhance its diplomatic relations on the international stage. Building on this foundation, the following chapter will explore the example of the King's speech as a demonstration of the role of fluid discourse in communicating a fluid identity, further highlighting the intricacies of Morocco's nation-branding efforts and their implications on both the domestic and international levels.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Chapter 4 critically examines Morocco's 'model of Islam' as an integral part of the country's nation branding efforts, particularly focusing on the complex interplay between global and local factors in shaping the perceptions of Morocco's religious institutions. Through the analysis of the country-of-origin (COO) effect and the role of Perceived Brand Globalness (PBG) and Perceived Brand Localness (PBL), this chapter sheds light on the various mechanisms that impact the consumer's preferences and the perceived value of the 'Model of Islam'.

The presence of Morocco's religious framework across borders seeks to increase its Perceived Brand Globalness (PBG), which can potentially signal quality and desirability to consumers. However, it is crucial to recognise that the assumed correlation between globality and quality perceptions may not always hold true. Morocco may adopt the appearance of a global brand to communicate its soft power capabilities, and its 'model of Islam' may serve as a deliberate extension of the Morocco Brand.

The chapter acknowledges the importance of understanding consumer ethnocentrism, cultural identity, brand globalness and localness, and brand ethnicity in the context of Morocco's 'model of Islam'. This understanding can inform marketing strategies that effectively cater to diverse consumer bases in local and global contexts. Furthermore, the intricate relationship between local consumers' religio-cultural identity and domestic religio-

political authority, as well as Morocco's diverse religious and cultural heritage, adds complexity to the interplay between brand globalness and brand localness.

Morocco's 'model of Islam' serves as an important indicator of the country's projected cultural and religious image. Its marketing strategies leverage this image to create value through nationality bias, with the 'made in' or 'owned by' label consciously deployed to evoke positive associations with the 'model of Islam'. This highlights the significance of a consistent image of Morocco's culture, heritage, and values across all markets.

In light of the dynamic nature of globalisation, Morocco needs to implement an adaptive and hybrid governance system that is able to navigate the diverse stakeholders and diffused networks of regulation and control that come with expanding into new markets. By embracing the plural and multidimensional nature of globalisation and striving for a "biodiversity of globalisation", Morocco can ensure that its branding strategy remains effective and relevant in an ever-changing global landscape.

Overall, Chapter 4 contributes to a deeper understanding of Morocco's 'model of Islam' in the context of nation branding, exploring the complex relationships between various factors influencing consumer preferences, and emphasising the importance of balancing global and local elements in shaping perceptions of the brand. The insights gleaned from this chapter have implications for future research and the development of effective marketing strategies that cater to diverse consumer bases in both local and global contexts.

5. Schematising Morocco's 'Model of Islam': from Attributes to Assets

During the 2013 celebration of the National Day of Moroccan Diplomacy, the King of Morocco emphasised the necessity for the country's cooperation mechanisms to adapt to contemporary requirements.[455] As outlined in the speech, Morocco faces numerous challenges that can be organised into six primary themes: (1) media and communication, (2) international cooperation, (3) technical and complex issues in foreign policy, (4) new actors in diplomatic action, (5) international organisations, and (6) preventive diplomacy. Taking these themes into account, as well as the role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the main sectors that the King may target through Moroccan diplomacy include the following: Economy and Trade; International Security; Immigration; Environment; Human Rights; and Culture and Religion. Although the speech does not explicitly refer to Morocco's 'model of Islam,' it can be inferred that the King seeks to project a positive image of the nation through its distinctive approach to Islam. This approach is relevant in various ways, such as promoting interfaith dialogue and understanding, combating religious extremism and terrorism, encouraging cultural exchanges and cooperation, and demonstrating Morocco's commitment to religious freedom and tolerance. By enhancing Morocco's projected image through its 'model of Islam,' the nation can fortify its international relations and diplomatic endeavours, addressing the challenges highlighted in the speech more effectively.

To address these challenges, the King provides a general outline of the action agenda: "... to draw the main lines of a forward-looking orientation to meet these challenges and to redouble our efforts to develop a new institutional framework."[456] This statement illustrates the King's intention to establish a proactive strategy that tackles the aforementioned challenges while simultaneously promoting the development of an updated institutional framework to better support Morocco's diplomatic efforts.

[455] Maroc.ma. "Discours Royaux". Message Royal aux participants au colloque organisé à Rabat à l'occasion de la célébration de la Journée Nationale de la Diplomatie Marocaine, 26 March 2013. www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/message-royal-aux-participants-au-colloque-organis%C3%A9-%C3%A0-rabat-%C3%A0-loccasion-de-la.

[456] *Ibid.* [My translation from French]

The significance of cooperation in Morocco's diplomatic action extends beyond addressing current needs. As stated in the speech, restructuring Morocco's cooperation mechanisms will enable the country to "assume the role of pioneer." In practical terms, this means that Morocco's diplomatic strategy aims to position the nation as a leader and innovator in the international arena, strengthening its economic and political position, and equipping it to compete against more powerful countries.

In Chapters Two and Three, we demonstrated how nation branding could be leveraged to maintain or strengthen Morocco's strategic advantage. Indeed, the King's speech highlights the nation's intangible assets as a force:

> [...] so that Morocco can assume the role of pioneer to which the capital of its historical relations, its spiritual influence, its geostrategic situation, and its project of democratic and modernist society predispose it. Our goal is to build a solid diplomacy to consolidate the role of Morocco at the start of the third millennium.[457]

This excerpt clearly indicates Morocco's ambition to promote its history, culture, and geography. Intriguingly, "spiritual influence" is presented as an asset that would enable Morocco to achieve its goal. This strongly suggests that Morocco's 'model of Islam' is perceived as cultural, economic, and social capital from which the nation could benefit. The term cultural capital, introduced by Pierre Bourdieu, is defined as a 'habitus'.[458] This concept can be compared to economic capital, where resources (tangible or intangible) can be leveraged for economic benefits.

The significance attributed to Morocco's 'model of Islam' is evident through the creation of a distinct category of diplomatic action, enabling the model to operate internationally. Morocco's spiritual diplomacy acquires the status of a strategic tool that merits special attention. Moreover, Morocco's *spiritual diplomacy* aligns with the framework of diplomatic innovation intended to better communicate the nation's "forward-looking orientation." In its 2020 report on the Kingdom's international relations, the Royal Institute for Strategic Studies

[457] Maroc.ma. "Discours Royaux". Message Royal aux participants au colloque organisé à Rabat à l'occasion de la célébration de la Journée Nationale de la Diplomatie Marocaine, 26 March 2013. www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/message-royal-aux-participants-au-colloque-organis%C3%A9-%C3%A0-rabat-%C3%A0-loccasion-de-la.
[My translation from French]

[458] Bourdieu, Pierre. "The Forms of Capital." *Readings in Economic Sociology*, Blackwell Publishers Ltd, Oxford, UK, 2002, pp. 280–291.

(IRES)[459] identified Morocco's multiform diplomacy as: Parliamentary; Economic; Cultural; Spiritual; Climatic; and Citizen. The report defines Morocco's *spiritual diplomacy* by emphasising the importance of "the Moroccan model of Islam" and the institution of the *Commander of the Faithful*.[460] Both elements are presented as intrinsic assets of Morocco's *spiritual diplomacy*. The report also describes how the proliferation of violent extremism has bolstered Morocco's spiritual diplomacy and underscores the need for a more efficient and formalised doctrine. As the report states: "this doctrine could constitute a framework of reference, useful to the international community in its fight against the indoctrination and recruitment of terrorists."[461] It suggests that Morocco should employ *spiritual diplomacy* to present its 'model of Islam' as a functional and advantageous framework for the international community in their battle against terrorism.

However, a crucial component is missing: a clear understanding of what Morocco's 'model of Islam' represents. According to the aforementioned report, the doctrinal component of Morocco's 'model of Islam' serves as an identifying feature of the country's *spiritual diplomacy*. This is because Morocco's formalised doctrine offers a frame of reference for the international community, complemented by the institution of the *Commander of the Faithful*, whose religious and political image influences Morocco's 'model of Islam'.

Considering everything discussed thus far, Morocco's 'model of Islam can be conceived as the projected intrinsic assets of the nation's state identity. Identifying the key projected attributes of Morocco's State identity may aid in understanding the nation's 'model of Islam'. Furthermore, viewing Morocco's 'model of Islam' as a strategic asset might reflect the nation's engagement with nation branding. As previously argued in Chapter Two, identity and image constitute Morocco's "intangible capital." Given that Morocco's brand recognition rests on its 'model of Islam,' it constitutes a critical intangible asset, with its perceived value informing the nation's intangible capital. This concept aligns with Mouline's notion of 'soft power.'[462]

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[459] IRES is a state-sanctioned Think Tank focusing on matters set forth by King Mohammed VI. Therefore, the various analyses conducted by the institute reflect the Kingdom's current focus and interests both at the domestic and international levels.

[460] "Panorama of Morocco in the World: The Kingdom's International Relations". Royal Institute for Strategic Studies. Updated Version of December 2019. www.ires.ma/en/publications-english/general-reports/7521-panorama-of-morocco-in-the-world-the-kingdom%E2%80%99s-international-relations.html.

[461] *Ibid.*

[462] Mouline, Mohammed Tawfik. "What Levers for Building a Morocco Brand Strategy?". Speech given during the 2016 Conference on the Morocco brand. *Amadeus/Maroc Export*, 27 May 2016. www.ires.ma/images/pdfs/Forums/Activites_externes/ELEMENTS-DINTERVENTION-DG_CONFERENCE-AMADEUS_27-MAI-2016.pdf.

Using the case of the *Mohammed VI Foundation for African 'Ulema*, this chapter investigates the projected symbolic level of Morocco's 'model of Islam' and its utilitarian function. In doing so, it explores the political language that contributes to the creation of applied discourse. It demonstrates how ideological ambiguity helps Morocco promote its 'moderate Islam.' This aspect is particularly important, given that Morocco's communication strategy reveals clear aspirations with implied executive functions.[463]

By examining the role of Morocco's 'model of Islam' within the context of the nation's diplomatic strategy, this analysis highlights the importance of cultural and religious identity as an intangible asset. As the nation seeks to strengthen its position on the global stage, understanding and leveraging its unique 'model of Islam' becomes increasingly crucial in achieving its diplomatic goals. This approach not only contributes to Morocco's nation branding but also allows the country to present itself as a valuable partner and resource in combating global challenges such as terrorism and religious extremism.

Places of Significance and Symbolic Value

When the Memory of the Past Potentiates the Future

Various factors affect how a message is understood. These may include the time that was chosen to deliver the message and the place where the speech was given. This is certainly the case for the inauguration speech of the *Mohammed VI Foundation for African 'Ulema*.[464] The event took place just one week into Ramadan, the holiest month of Islam on the 14th of June 2016 at *Al Qaraouiyine Mosque*, in Fes. The religious significance of the date is supplemented by the 22nd edition of *The Fes Festival of World Sacred Music* which was held a few weeks prior (6-14 May 2016).[465] According to Belghazi, the festival is meant to encapsulate the idea of sacredness inherited from the Golden Age of Islam where a nostalgic past of an Andalusian glory is believed to be rooted.[466] Interestingly enough, the 2016 festival was in tribute to the "founding women." Emphasising the role of women here signals Morocco's inclusive and

[463] Balfour, Michael. "The Politics of Intention: Looking for a Theatre of Little Changes." Research in Drama Education 14.3, 2009, p.349.

[464] Maroc.ma. Full text of the King's speech at the "Inauguration Ceremony of Higher Council of Mohammed VI Foundation for African Ulema". www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/texte-integral-du-discours-royal-loccasion-de-la-ceremonie-dinstallation-du-conseil.

[465] Note from the President of the Fes Foundation, Abderrafih Zouitene, on the Festival of World Scared Music. www.fesfestival.com/2016/en/le-mot-du-president/.

[466] Belghazi, Taieb. "Festivalization of Urban Space in Morocco." *Critique (Saint Paul, Minn.)*, vol. 15, no. 1, 2006, pp. 97–107.

forward-looking approach to spiritual life. The chosen theme echoes the notion of knowledge symbolised by Fatima El Fihriya, the founder of *Al Qaraouiyine University.*[467] The festival's theme also acts as a reminder of the origin of *Al Qaraouiyine Mosque*, the oldest running university in the world which helps highlight the *glorious* intellectual past of the city of Fes. Celebrating the "founding women" therefore brings together the holy character of the Mosque and the spiritual function of the city. And in doing so highlights the sacrality of the space where the Foundation's inauguration speech was taking place.

According to Abderrafih Zouitene, President of the Fes Foundation, the *Fes Festival of World Sacred Music* aimed at celebrating women's role in the Kingdom's development. Zouitene gives the example of Kenza El Awrabiya, the wife of Moulay Idriss I (788–791 CE), the father of the Idrisid dynasty and founder of Moroccan statehood. According to Zouitene, Kenza El Awrabiya was credited with the unification of the Amazigh people and the Arabs. It is worth noting, however, that this role hinged upon her father's role as an Amazigh tribal leader and her marriage to Idriss I, which ultimately marked the union between Arabs and Amazighs. Although the example is characterised by its selective depiction of historical events, it does, nevertheless, express a clear intention to place women at the centre of Morocco's history (and development). The example of Kenza El Awrabiya also points to the achievements of Moulay Idriss I who has been credited with being the first prominent Islamic ruler in Morocco. This thus places the religion of Islam and political cohesion under the monarchy's unifying power.

Zouitene also gives the example of Lalla Khnata Bent Bakkar, one of Sultan Moulay Ismail Ibn Sharif's (1672-1727) four wives, who was the first woman to fulfil the function of secretary and Minister in Morocco. The example of Lalla Khnata Bent Bakkar was used to underline the role of a "founding woman" in bringing stability to the country. This is due to the succession crisis between her husband's 10 male offspring and her subsequent support to her son, Sultan Moulay Abdallah who ascended the throne six times between the 1729 and 1757.[468] Even more interesting, however, is the fact that Lalla Khnata Bent Bakkar's matrimonial and maternal link to the ruling Sultan bring attention to the dynastical rule of the time and puts the accent on the intense dynastic struggle between the heirs of Ismail.

[467] Dahir n° 1-15-71 of 7 Ramadan 1436 (June 24, 2015), places Al Qaraouiyine University under the High Patronage of the King Mohammed VI and the supervision of the Ministry of Habous and Islamic Affairs. The dahir establishes the university as a scientific institution of reference in matters of theology and history of Islamic thought and civilization.

[468] Glacier, Osire. "La trace des femmes dans l'histoire du Maroc." *Relations 777*, 2015, pp. 35-37.

In addition to highlighting their role as wives and mothers, the example of Kenza El Awrabiya and Lalla Khnata Bent Bakkar puts the accent on their ties to the Sultan and their dynastical rule. This is further indicated by the fact that each of the Sultans mentioned above shaped Morocco's history in one way or another. Moulay Idriss I, for example, was accredited with the creation of Moroccan statehood. Moulay Ismail Ibn Sharif was the second ruler of the Alaoui dynasty, whose descendant still rules Morocco today in the person of King Mohammed VI, and the longest reigning monarch in the history of Morocco. Finally, Sultan Moulay Abdallah was deposed 5 times but reigned for nine consecutive years until his death after which the smoothest succession to the throne happened.

The symbolic example of Kenza El Awrabiya and Lalla Khnata Bent Bakkar appears therefore to be used to commemorate the monarchy's unifying role and its capacity in bringing stability. This example also puts forward two key notions (*i.e.*, unity and stability) both of which play a major role in shaping Morocco's international reputation.[469]

In addition to emphasising their role in fostering unity and stability within the nation, the "founding women" also contribute to preserving the memory of the dynastic rule that shaped present-day Morocco. Their political relevance resonates within the walls of *Al Qaraouiyine Mosque*, a place of worship founded by another "founding woman," Fatima El Fihriya. Like Kenza El Awrabiya, her story is situated during the Idrisi period, a time when Moroccan statehood was established. This connection links Morocco's origins to the religious and educational initiatives symbolised by the creation of *Al Qaraouiyine Mosque*. It is at *Al Qaraouiyine* where the Islamic Golden Age intersects with the memory of the nationalist cause in Morocco, particularly against the French colonial regime.

The nationalist significance of the venue may have been intentionally utilised to convey the struggle associated with colonisation. Such a message could serve as a reminder of the necessity to preserve one's identity. This notion is supported by the fact that the audience attending the event mainly consisted of *'Ulema* from African countries that were previously under France's colonial rule. The message about Moroccan nationalism could resonate with people from other African countries as they share a common history of colonial struggle and the fight for preserving their cultural and national identities. This idea is further reinforced by the fact that it was in Fes where the protectorate was officially established in 1912 after Sultan Abd al-Hafid signed the infamous Treaty of Fes.

[469] See Chapter Two.

Thus far, it is evident that the selected venue for the inauguration speech of the *Mohammed VI Foundation for African 'Ulema* carries political ideas designed to evoke the audience's emotions. Indeed, the emotional significance of the chosen time and space for the inauguration speech appears to be connected to the value attributed to the past. This approach contributes to the creation of a nostalgic narrative, one in which the history of *the* spiritual city of Fes is elevated by *Al Qaraouiyine Mosque*, the intellectual and educational centre of the Islamic Golden Age. This concept aligns with what Volkan refers to as a "linking object," which he defines as "the externalised version of an introject."[470] Such externalisation allows *Al Qaraouiyine Mosque* to serve as a tangible representation of a *lost*, yet idealised past. This association enables the past, during which *Al Qaraouiyine Mosque* flourished, to be the lens through which it is recognised and appreciated.

The intangible value associated with the venue also becomes evident through the orator of the speech, the King of Morocco, whose religious significance finds its roots in the spiritual city of Fes. As the Head of State and a claimed descendant of the first Muslim monarchs, he embodies the dynastic rule that enabled *Al Qaraouiyine Mosque* to flourish and become the symbol it represents today. Both functions (*i.e.,* religious and temporal) situate the King within a world that preserves the memory of past glory. In accordance with Volkan's principle of a "linking object", the King's image allows him to act as a linking subject, thereby serving as a living reminder of a resplendent past.

The history and heritage linked to the symbolic meaning of the venue and the figure of the King were employed to evoke feelings of nostalgia. Tannock defines nostalgia as a 'structure of feeling' which "invokes a positively evaluated past world in response to a deficient present world."[471] This perspective is supported by Pickering, who asserts that nostalgia provides familiarity to the audience.[472] In this context, the lens of familiarity enables the audience to assess the inauguration event based on past knowledge or experiences connected to the space where it is taking place. The resulting nostalgic narrative implies a deliberate effort to enhance the relevance (and legitimacy) of both the inauguration event and the King himself. This is particularly pertinent considering the political implications inherent in the 2015 *Dahir*, which

[470] Volkan, Vamik D. "Nostalgia as a linking phenomenon." *Journal of Applied Psychoanalytic Studies* 1.2, 1999, pp. 169-179.

[471] Tannock, Stuart. "Nostalgia Critique." *Cultural Studies (London, England),* vol. 9, no. 3, 1995, pp. 453–464.

[472] Pickering, Michael, and Keightley, Emily. "The Modalities of Nostalgia." Current Sociology, vol. 54, no. 6, 2006, pp. 919–941.

places *Al Qaraouiyine University* under the High Patronage of King Mohammed VI and the supervision of the Ministry of Habous and Islamic Affairs.

In addition to attributing value to the event, the collective longing for past glory enables feelings of nostalgia to serve as a bond that unites people. This is because the positive affect associated with the past serves as a reminder of the benefits it conferred to the group. Consequently, collective nostalgia helps illuminate the ingroup members associated with it. It could thus be argued that the nostalgic narrative was employed to reinforce the audience's (particularly the *'Ulema*'s) social identification. This argument is supported by Wildschut et al., who discovered that social collective nostalgia facilitates pro-social decisions through the mediating effect of social identification. At the domestic level, this could be manifested in the nationalist cause symbolised by the Mosque. At the global level, however, it is reflected in the need to preserve one's identity.

Wildschut et al.'s findings also suggest that collective nostalgia involves a strong intention to approach, which aids in reinforcing behavioural intention.[473] Similarly, Volkan posits that identifying what has been lost assists the mourner in taking the lead and adapting to change.[474] This places the task of reviving the lost glory in the hands of the "mourners", the *'Ulema*. In other words, the symbolic message of the venue assigns the responsibility for reviving the glorious past of Islam to the *'Ulema*. Such responsibility is inextricably linked to the function of *Al Qaraouiyine Mosque* - an educational centre of the Muslim world.

Sacrality, Power, and Influence: Unearthing the Legacy of a Glorious Past

The nostalgic narrative presents an essentialised view of the relationship between Fes, the Mosque, and the King of Morocco, highlighting the religious attributes that underpin Morocco's 'model of Islam'. Identifying these attributes can offer insights into the essence of Morocco's 'model of Islam' and the implicit power structures within the model.

We have argued that the nostalgic narrative imbues value to the Mosque, the city of Fes, and the King of Morocco, which is connected to the glorious past of Islam. As the religious character of these entities is the mediating factor of sacredness, examining the meta-information they carry can provide valuable insights into the function of sacrality and its implications. Thus, the sacred character attributed to the land, the structure, and the King offers an additional approach to understanding the value associated with Morocco's 'model of Islam'.

[473] *Ibid.*

[474] *Ibid.*

In our analysis, we find that the sacred character of the city of Fes and *Al Qaraouiyine Mosque* is intertwined with space. Here, the function of sacrality involves both cognitive and affective forms of experiences. The value perception of the city of Fes mediates the audience's **cognitive experience** of the space and the inauguration event. This communication strategy signals a sense of **legacy** to the elements associated with the inauguration event, conveying **consistency** in Morocco's engagement with African spiritual affairs. On the other hand, the Mosque prompts an **affective experience** of the structure, communicating the Kingdom's **depth of experience** in religious affairs, which lends a sense of **legitimacy**. Legitimacy is perceived as a psychological characteristic of **authority**, as it fosters a belief among those connected to it that the authority is appropriate and just. This sense of legitimacy serves to reinforce the King's authority and position in religious affairs. By establishing a connection between the glorious past of Islam, the sacred entities, and the King's role, the narrative strengthens the perception that the King's leadership in religious matters is not only appropriate but also deeply rooted in tradition and history. This, in turn, bolsters the King's influence and power within Morocco and in relation to its 'model of Islam'.

The combination of cognitive and affective approaches aims to generate forms of appeal associated with the venue, the event, and the speaker of the speech. Figure 5.1 illustrates some of the main characteristics of space and their role in imparting value to the King, the speaker of the speech. It begins with the assumption that the city of Fes and *Al Qaraouiyine Mosque* cannot be uniquely identified without their connection to Morocco. This distinction is indicated by a single rectangle for Morocco and a double rectangle for Fes and the Mosque.

The identifying relationship between both entities (*i.e.*, Fes and the Mosque) is based on the figure of the King, as indicated by a diamond shape. The connection between Fes and the Mosque is determined by the King's temporal and spiritual power. These links are labelled "HS" and "CF", referring to the King's dual roles as Head of State (HS) and Commander of the Faithful (CF). The expression (HS, CF) extends to the entities' tangible attributes, which we identified as "location" and "structure". The sacred character associated with these attributes (location and structure) defines the nature of their relationship. We used a double rhombus to indicate that the sacred nature of Fes and the Mosque is dependent on the figure of the King.

Moreover, the tangible expression of sacrality conveys a set of intangible attributes. As depicted in Figure 5.1, 'location' and 'structure' are represented by a dual oval to indicate multivalued properties - each possessing a set of attributes that we discuss below.

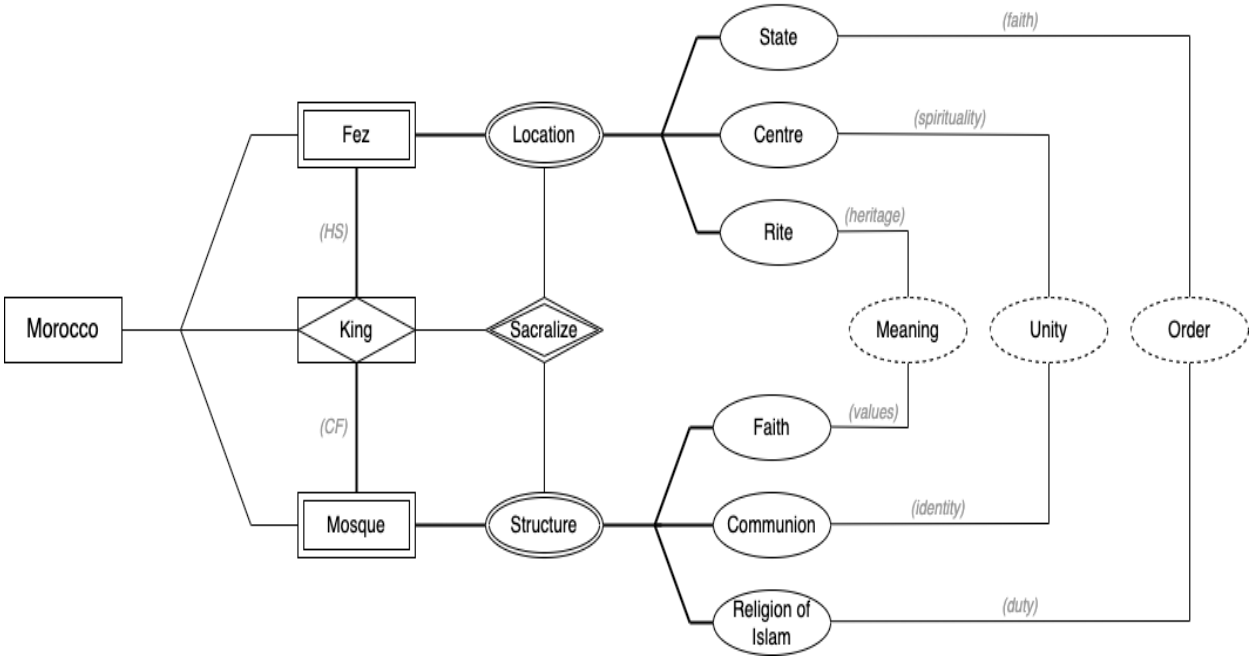


Figure 5.1 The Function of Sacrality

Faith & Rite

The sacred character of the structure lies in the understanding of faith. **Faith** shapes people's morals and values which in turn provide a firm foundation for faith itself. Consequently, the sacrality of the Mosque structure is therefore created by the inner sacrality and meaning associated with faith – without which, the Mosque would merely be a building. The symbolic value attached to the history of Fes supplements the sacral value of the Mosque. While the Mosque allows disciples to recognise *the truth* (through the values associated with Faith), Fes affirms it by emphasising the legacy (*i.e.*, heritage) it carries through **Rite**.

The meaning carried by values and heritage is what brings faith and rite together. 'Meaning' is expressed by a dotted outline oval to indicate that its value is derived from the 'faith' and 'rite' attributes.

Communion & Centre

When structured by space, sacrality involves a direct experience of the sacred via *Al Qaraouiyine Mosque*. Such an experience allows space to become a place of **communion** where the expression of *one's* identity (individual or collective) connects with the holy. The city of Fes also enables a connection to the holy to take place. As the spiritual city of Morocco, Fes plays a significant role in communicating **centrality**. We previously argued that the sacrality of Fes is shaped by the history of the city. Its symbolic value, therefore, positions Fes as the geographic heart of the spiritual ties that connect the '*Ulema* (and the wider religious community) to the holy. Here, the intangible value of the Mosque and of Fes communicates a

sense of unity. The information carried by the 'centre' and 'communion' attributes reveals the derived attribute of both entities, which is 'unity'.

Religion of Islam & State

The **religion of Islam** defines the sacred character of the Mosque. The structure's sacred value allows disciples to engage in modes of behaviour and expressions related to the space they occupy. For the '*Ulema*, this could relate to their duty as religious scholars. Furthermore, our analysis of the venue of the inauguration event indicates that the memory of the past links the sacrality of Fes to the State's ability to uphold its religious identity. It is, therefore, at the level of the **State** that religious faith and legal order inevitably interreact. This is further supported by the King's constitutional obligation to "see to the respect of Islam"[475] As such, a sense of order is reached when the dual expression of order (legal and religious) is combined. This is accomplished by reconciliating the value associated with faith and duty.

Spiritual & Temporal Power

Our analysis further indicates that the sacred value of the Mosque and Fes are defined by the 'meaning', 'sense of unity' and 'order' they bring. Meaning involves a form of consensus that helps connect people together. The expression of order also bestows a sense of unity, which further reinforces the unifying feature of the city of Fes and *Al Qaraouiyine Mosque*. However, their expression depends on the links that connect each entity's attributes to the other. We argue that it is the temporal and spiritual character of the King that allows for the manifestation of 'meaning', 'unity', and 'order'. In other words, it is the sacral character of kingship that brings forward the sacrality of the chosen location and structure of the inauguration speech. The reason for this is that sacrality (as structured by space) entails altered behaviour, which is mandated by the space itself. As indicated by our analysis, this is achieved through the King's temporal and spiritual attributes, which, for Fes, involve the activation of the King's temporal power reflected in his title of Head of State. For *Al Qaraouiyine Mosque*, however, it is his religious significance that allows him to inspire '*Ulema*'s behavioural change. The religious authority of the King is indicated by his title of *Commander of the Faithful*.

During the inauguration speech of the *Mohammed VI Foundation of African 'Ulema*, however, the King of Morocco stated that: "We have decided that the Mohammed VI Foundation of African '*Ulema* should have its headquarters in Fes, given the religious status

[475] 2011 Moroccan constitution. Retrieved from the official website of the General Secretariat of the Moroccan Government. www.sgg.gov.ma/Portals/0/constitution/constitution_2011_Fr.pdf. [My translation from French]

enjoyed by the city as the academic and spiritual capital of Morocco. The choice of Fes is also due to the consideration we have for it, given the place it occupies in the hearts of Africans."[476]

In essence, the sacrality of both Fes and *Al Qaraouiyine Mosque*, as well as their associated meanings, unity, and order, are inherently linked to the King's dual roles as the Head of State and *Commander of the Faithful*. By effectively navigating these roles, the King can maintain a balance between the spiritual and temporal aspects of power, reinforcing his authority and legitimising his rule within Morocco.

Sacredness and Nostalgia: Key Motivational Factors of the Bay'a Principle

As previously argued, the venue conveys meta-information that contributes to a narrative. The nostalgic narrative associated with this story presents an essentialisation of historical data. This process of storytelling allows for the normalisation of practices and values linked to the idealised past.[477] It contributes to the normative judgement of the social practices and religious principles involved in Morocco's 'model of Islam', thus emphasising its universal character. The nostalgic narrative, therefore, provides a discursive framework for the social context in which human interaction takes place. In fact, it may be argued that the interpretative strategies involved in the nostalgic narrative serve a political purpose. This is what McCutcheon refers to as **political nostalgia**, which he defines as "an ideological position in which, for example, things perfectly archaic are unilaterally prevalued as essential and beneficial, becoming the norm against which other social arrangements and forms of human behaviour are judged and found wanting."[478]

Morocco's politics of nostalgia, as defined by McCutcheon, presents a potent instrument for influencing social dynamics and promoting specific values or practices. This is consistent with our earlier observations, as we demonstrated that the nostalgic narrative aims to (1) generate appeal by triggering "past-oriented emotions"[479], (2) connect people on the basis of a shared loss, (3) reinforce high social identification, and (4) transform group-level emotions to

[476] Maroc.ma. Full text of the King's speech at the "Inauguration Ceremony of Higher Council of Mohammed VI Foundation for African Ulema". www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/texte-integral-du-discours-royal-loccasion-de-la-ceremonie-dinstallation-du-conseil

[477] McCutcheon, Russell T. *Manufacturing Religion: The Discourse on Sui Generis Religion and the Politics of Nostalgia*. Oxford University Press, 1997.

[478] *Ibid.* pp. 33-34

[479] Wildschut, Tim, et al. "Collective Nostalgia: A Group-Level Emotion That Confers Unique Benefits on the Group." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, vol. 107, no. 5, 2014, pp. 844–863.

behavioural intention.[480] This is further supported by our analysis of the entities' attributes, as it showed that the intangible attributes associated with the event signal a common purpose, which is based on (1) a mutual understanding of the religion of Islam (*i.e.*, meaning), (2) shared principles that define its unifying feature (*i.e.*, unity), and (3) a collective effort to engage with these principles and guide our behaviour (*i.e.*, order).

It appears, therefore, that the instrumentalization of the cultural symbols carried by the city of Fes, the Mosque, and the King serves a political purpose. As previously argued, the politics of nostalgia expresses a set of norms "prevalued as essential and beneficial",[481] which implies altered behaviour, thus making it a tool for social (re)arrangement. The functions of social change, however, involve the alteration of the mechanisms within the social structure. This is where 'meaning', 'unity' and 'order' come to play. As indicated in our analysis, cultural symbols were used to express a value system through 'meaning'. The normative judgement of these symbols implies a certain rule of conduct implicit in the principle of 'unity' and involves a form of social organisation which incites 'order'. The interaction between the '*Ulema* and the space they occupy, therefore, involves alterations of mechanisms within the social structure through meaning, unity, and order.

A number of *Dahirs* further indicate the political purpose of the cultural symbols used during the inauguration speech.[482] Two *Dahirs* were in fact issued a year prior to the Foundation's inauguration event on the 24 June 2015. These *Dahirs* are *Dahir* n° 1-15-71[483] concerning the organisation of *Al Qaraouiyine University*, and *Dahir* n° 1-15-75[484] establishing the *Mohammed VI Foundation of African 'Ulema.*

The first establishes *Al Qaraouiyine University* as a scientific institution in the fields of theology and history of Islamic thought and civilisation. It also places *Al Qaraouiyine University* under the High Patronage of the King and the supervision of the Ministry of Habous and Islamic Affairs. This is particularly relevant given that the process of policy creation

[480] *Ibid.*

[481] McCutcheon, Russell T. *Manufacturing Religion: the Discourse on Sui Generis Religion and the Politics of Nostalgia*. Oxford University Press, 1997, pp. 33-34.

[482] The Dahir is a royal order which has a force of a law in the Moroccan legal system. It is deployed in pursuit of a political goal.

[483] habous.gov. Textes Generaux: *Dahir* n° 1-15-71 du 7 ramadan 1436 (24 juin 2015) portant réorganisation de l'Université Al Qaraouyine. In Bulletin Officiel N° 6374, 02 July 2015. www.habous.gov.ma/fr/images/abook_file/BO_6374_Fr%20quaraouiyine%201%201.pdf.

[484] habous.gov. Textes Generaux: *Dahir* n° 1-15-75 du 7 ramadan 1436 (24 juin 2015) portant création de la Fondation Mohammed VI des Oulémas Africains. In Bulletin Officiel N° 6374, 02 July 2015. www.habous.gov.ma/fr/images/abook_file/BO_6374_Fr%20quaraouiyine%201%201.pdf.

requires the King's support and the ministry's ability to implement it. Combined with its supervisory function, the Ministry's policy actions therefore indicate its role in activating the institution's acting capacity. This *Dahir* alone therefore indicates that the significance of *Al Qaraouiyine Mosque* extends beyond its symbolic value.

The second *Dahir* establishes the Foundation's headquarter in Rabat and places it "under the honorary presidency" of the King of Morocco, *Amir al muʾminīn*.[485] While the honorary presidency could be seen as a signal of the Foundation's independence from the central power, it is important to note that the appointment of Ahmed Toufiq, Minister of the Habous since 2002, as deputy President of the Foundation suggests that the Foundation is still tightly linked to the Ministry of Habous, thereby maintaining a connection to central power.[486]

Al Qaraouiyine University and the *Mohammed VI Foundation of African 'Ulema* are of great relevance to our understanding of Morocco's 'model of Islam'. Their political character and their religious function present both institutions as theologico-political instruments of change.

Soon after the King's inauguration speech, *Dahir* n° 1-16-81of June 2016 declared that the Foundation's head office has now moved from Rabat, the political capital of the country, to the spiritual city of Fes.[487] Given our analysis of the venue, it may be argued that such a decision suggests the strengthening of the spiritual appeal (and links) that connect the Foundation to the Mosque. Such an approach therefore further marks the junction between the spiritual and the political.

Both royal decrees were established a year before the Foundation's inauguration speech which reveals the deliberate use of *Al Qaraouiyine Mosque* in signalling value and appealing to the audience. Most importantly, it indicates that the social (re)arrangement involved in the politics of nostalgia act as motivational factors of allegiance to the King of Morocco. This is indicated through the King's functions within *Al Qaraouiyine University* and the *Mohammed VI Foundation of African 'Ulema*. In fact, the established "honorary" status is linked to the symbolic significance of the monarch whose leadership refers back to his lineage as descendant

[485] Fm6oa.org. The Royal Initiative to Create the Mohammed VI Foundation of African Oulema. Published on Monday 13 July 2015. www.fm6oa.org/en/introductory-paper-on-the-royal-initiative-for-the-creation-of-the-mohammed-vi-foundation-of-african-oulema/.

[486] Wainscott, Ann Marie. *Bureaucratizing Islam: Morocco and the War on Terror*. 2017, p. 217.

[487] Fm6oa.org. *Dahir* n° 1-15-75 of the 7 Ramadan 1436 (June 24th, 2015) Establishing Mohammed VI Foundation of African Oulema and modified by *Dahir* n° 1-16-81 of 16 Ramadan 1437 (June 22nd, 2016) Establishing the transfer of the Registered Office of the Foundation to Fes. www.fm6oa.org/en/dahir-establishing-mohammed-vi-foundation-of-african-oulema/.

of Mohammed, the prophet of Islam. The significance of the monarch's lineage is reflected in his designation of *Commander of the Faithful* which communicates the oath of allegiance (*Bay'a*) between the *Amir al muʾminīn* and the *Ummah*.

The etymology of the term *Bay'a* can be traced to the word باع in Arabic which means 'to sell.' It implies the striking of hands after an exchange has been agreed upon.[488] In the legal and religious tradition of Islam, *Bay'a* is conferred to the leader of a group whose religious and political status is deemed worthy of such oath. It could thus be argued that the King's "honorary presidency" of the *Mohammed VI Foundation of African 'Ulema* is an attempt by the Kingdom to (directly /& indirectly) extend the *Bay'a* principle to other African countries. The *Bay'a* principle may therefore be what underpins the organisation's activities outside of Morocco including its international branches.

In Morocco, *Bay'a* takes the form of a written pact drafted by '*Ulema*. And although at the time of its creation the Foundation did not require a written agreement of the sort from the African '*Ulema*, on the 25-26 June 2022, however, an international scientific symposium under the theme: "Introducing *'Ulema* to Morocco's religious constants" was organised in Fes to discuss the "formulation of the legal anchoring of Moroccan religious constants."[489] The event was structured around Four major themes: *Imarat al-Muminin* (The Commandery of the Faithful), *Acha'arite Dogma*, *Malekite Doctrine*, and *Sunni Sufism*. The proposed project charter of African '*Ulema* mimics the domestic implications of the *Bay'a* principle in Morocco. Given that the *Mohammed VI Foundation of African 'Ulema* is a co-organiser of the event, it could be argued that the Foundation's work does in fact aim at extending the principle of *Bay'a* outside of Morocco's national borders. Such principle (*Bay'a*) therefore points to the Foundation's political role and shows how institutional channels of communication may be used by the Moroccan Kingdom to further legitimise the religious, spiritual, and political role of the King in the African continent.

Similarly, the figure of *Amir al muʾminīn* aims to be the most prominent feature of the Foundation's ties with the African people. As the King of Morocco puts it: "[it] is an initiative that reflects the depth of the spiritual **ties** that have always **united** the sub-Saharan African peoples to the King of Morocco, *Amir al muʾminīn*, peoples to whom We are **linked** by the

[488] Khel, Muhammad Nazeer Ka Ka, and Mohammad Nazeer Ka Ka Khel. "Bay'a and its Political Role in Early Islamic State." *Islamic Studies*, vol. 20, no. 3, 1981, pp. 227–38.

[489] Fm6oa.org. "Introducing Oulema to Morocco's religious constants." *Press Release*, 23 June 2022. www.fm6oa.org/en/introducing-oulema-to-moroccos-religious-constants-press-release/.

unity of faith and rite and by the **community** of civilisational heritage."[490] Given the significant unifying feature of the King, one could argue that the *Mohammed VI Foundation of African 'Ulema* extends the principle of *Bay'a* by presenting itself a unifier of voices, one that is "eager to preserve the unity of the Muslim religion."[491] The emphasis placed on the shared beliefs and values of its members does in fact illustrate this perfectly.

Ibn Khaldun's definition of *Bay'a* presents an interesting insight into the potential relevance (and therefore implications) of the *Bay'a* principle to Morocco's political affairs. According to the philosopher, *Bay'a* is "a contract to render obedience. It is as though the person who renders the oath of allegiance made a contract with their *Amir* to the effect that they surrender supervision of their own affairs and those of Muslims to *him* and that they will not contest *his* authority and that they will obey *him* by executing all the duties which they might be charged with whether agreeable or disagreeable."[492]

In Morocco, *Bay'a* is one of the principal foundations upon which the Moroccan monarchy rests.[493] The legally constituted authority of *Bay'a* involves the dual expression of *din* and *dunia* - a balancing of the temporal and spiritual worlds. As its primary source of legitimacy, *Bay'a* allows the King to be legally instituted under both the divine and temporal laws that bond subjects to their *Amir*. As a binding principle*, Bay'a* involves soft power capacity which is based on people's obedience and surrender of their affairs. Its binding effect, however, rests on the temporal dimension of the Amir's power. This is because the "contract to render obedience" involves the reciprocal and utilitarian character of exchange of obligation(s). In other words, *Bay'a* entails conditions that stipulate the nature of the exchange between the individual (or the group) that render the pledge and the *Amir al muʾminīn.* These conditions are based on *trust*: (1) trusting in the *Amir*'s intentions and (2) believing in *his* capacity to bring change. Here, the value of the *Bay'a*'s binding effect rest on the *Amir*'s capacity in building a trust-based relationship with *his* subjects.

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[490] Maroc.ma. Full text of the Royal Speech on the occasion of the installation ceremony of the Higher Council of the Mohammed VI Foundation of African 'Ulema. www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/texte-integral-du-discours-royal-loccasion-de-la-ceremonie-dinstallation-du-conseil.
[My translation from French]

[491] Fm6oa.org. Dahir Establishing Mohammed VI Foundation of African Oulema. Published on 02 July 2015. www.fm6oa.org/en/dahir-establishing-mohammed-vi-foundation-of-african-oulema/.

[492] Gellner, Ernest. "Ibn Khaldun: The Muqaddimah. Translated from the Arabic (and with an Introduction) by Franz Rosenthal. (Routledge & Kegan Paul. 1958. 3 Vols, 481, plus 463, plus 603 Pp. 6 Guineas the Set.)." *Philosophy*, vol. 36, no. 137, 1961, pp. 255–256.

[493] 2011 Moroccan constitution. Retrieved from the official website of the General Secretariat of the Moroccan Government. www.sgg.gov.ma/Portals/0/constitution/constitution_2011_Fr.pdf.

The rendering of obedience therefore requires a positive relationship between the King and the '*Ulema* (and the wider *Ummah*). The sacrality of kingship plays a major role in this relationship as it imparts a positive value to the King. His sacral character brings legitimacy to his claims and instils trust in his actions. Building a trust-based relationship between the *Amir* and *his* subjects is therefore based on the perceived validity of their mutual sense of 'meaning', 'unity' and 'order'. Given that these principles allow for the alteration of mechanisms within the social structure, it may be argued that their consolidation improves the prospects of *Bay'a* to the *Amir al muʾminīn.* This involves reinforcing the link between the King and the '*Ulema* which which we defined as 'heritage' and 'values', 'spirituality' and 'identity', 'faith' and 'duty'.[494]

Furthermore, the King is the higher representative of the State, his projected image and identity are therefore meant to reflect those of the State. From there it follows that the implications of the *Bay'a* principle not only shape the link between the *Amir* and his subjects, but also the Moroccan State with other nations. In other words, extending the *Bay'a* principle outside of Morocco's national borders is part of the State's foreign policy strategy to increase its soft power. Such an approach entails enhancing Morocco's perceived value (through image), serving a source of positive attraction (through reputation), and building positive relationship with other nations (through trust).

Speech and the Rhetorical Game[495]

Communicating Intangible Value Through Metaphors

The context of the speech (time and space) reveals the importance of symbolism to Morocco's political message. This is further indicated in the speech's text where metaphors, among other linguistic devices, are employed to signal various meanings and generate multiple perspectives.[496] Such devices offer discourse flexibility where meaning is produced,

[494] See previous section.

[495] Please note that the analysis presented in this section is based on the English translation of the speech, which was originally given in Arabic and officially translated into French. While this translation may introduce some variations in the specific wording and nuances, the overall argument and the key points derived from the text remain consistent across the different language versions. The analysis thus aims to identify and examine the main rhetorical devices, power relations, and ideologies embedded within the speech, regardless of these potential translation differences.

[496] Maroc.ma. Full text of the King's speech at the "Inauguration Ceremony of Higher Council of Mohammed VI Foundation for African Ulema". www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/texte-integral-du-discours-royal-loccasion-de-la-ceremonie-dinstallation-du-conseil.
[My translation from the official Arabic & French version of the text]

deconstructed, and reconstructed to fit a particular frame. Much like the way the city of Fes and *Al Qaraouiyine Mosque* were used to prompt affective and cognitive experience of the Foundation's inauguration event, the inauguration speech makes use of figure of speech to communicate intangible ideas in a tangible way. Such communication strategy helps present Morocco's 'model of Islam' as an abstract truth. The evidence of this can be seen below.

For the purpose of analysis, the following passage was extracted from the discourse. This text was carefully selected as it beautifully exposes the complex nature of the political discourse at hand. According to the King's speech to the members of the Higher Council of the *Mohammed VI Foundation for African 'Ulema*:

> We consider the Mohammed VI Foundation for African *'Ulema* a framework for cooperation, exchange of experiences, and coordination of efforts among *'Ulema*, to fulfil their duty, to make known the real image of the tolerant religion of Islam and to promote its values which are based on moderation, tolerance, and coexistence. The aim [of the Foundation] is to ensure that these values are in service of security, stability, and development in Africa.[497]

While the passage might not necessarily employ "metaphors" in their traditional literary sense, it uses phrases that can be viewed as "conceptual frames" or "descriptive constructs". These constructs allow values to be presented in a way that is understandable and relatable for most.

Furthermore, the *Mohammed VI Foundation for African* '*Ulema* acts as a communication delivery service that enables '*Ulema* to reach intended audiences across borders and provide "advice to the *Ummah*."[498] According to the Foundation's inauguration speech, the organisation is in fact "a framework for cooperation and the exchange of experiences and the coordination of efforts between '*Ulema*."[499] This phrase, which can be seen as a conceptual construct, suggests that the Foundation serves as a communication platform that provides African Islamic scholars with the space to connect. It could thus be argued that this network network of African '*Ulema* allows for the potential integration of existing communication channels that further improve the Foundation's operational efficiency. This is supported by the

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[497] *Ibid.*

[498] Fm6oa.org. The Royal Initiative to Create the Mohammed VI Foundation of African Oulema. Published on 13 July 2015. www.fm6oa.org/en/introductory-paper-on-the-royal-initiative-for-the-creation-of-the-mohammed-vi-foundation-of-african-oulema/.

[499] Maroc.ma. Full text of the King's speech at the "Inauguration Ceremony of Higher Council of Mohammed VI Foundation for African Ulema". www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/texte-integral-du-discours-royal-loccasion-de-la-ceremonie-dinstallation-du-conseil.
[My translation from the official Arabic & French version of the text]

Foundation's objective of promoting "security, stability, and development in Africa," [500] which implies that its role extends beyond mere connection.

Indeed, these linguistic constructs could be likened to strategies used in advertising campaigns which help re-frame ideology in 'marketable terms.' In this scenario, it might be about employing communication channels like *Al Qaraouiyine Mosque* or the *Mohammed VI Foundation for African 'Ulema* to propagate these messages.

The implied meanings of the descriptive constructs found in the passage are presented in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1 Conceptual Frames and Descriptive Constructs Analysis

Conceptual Frame	**Tenor** (Foundation or *'Ulema* or Both)	**The object describing the Tenor**	**Implied Meaning**
Framework for cooperation	Both	Structure or system	The Foundation and Ulema work together within an organised system for mutual support
Exchange of experiences	Both	Sharing knowledge or insights	The Foundation and Ulema learn from each other by sharing their individual experiences
Coordination of efforts	Both	Harmonious and efficient collaboration	The Foundation and Ulema work together effectively and in sync for a common goal
Make known the real image of Islam	Foundation	Accurate representation or portrayal	The Foundation strives to reveal and promote the true nature of Islam
Promote its values	Foundation	Endorsement or support	The Foundation actively advocates for Islamic values based on moderation and tolerance
In service of security, stability, & development	Foundation	Active agents working towards goals	The Foundation aims to use promoted values to contribute to Africa's well-being

[500] *Ibid.*

Table 5.1 illustrates the descriptive constructs used to explain the relationship between the Foundation and the *'Ulema*, emphasising their cooperation, exchange of experiences, and coordination of efforts. This shows the reciprocal relationship between the two entities.

As indicated by the table, the *'Ulema'*s duty is not solely confined to their connection to the divine (through obligation), but it also encompasses a performative function. According to the speech, this function is anchored in the *'Ulema*'s capacity to champion the positive values and image of Islam. The Foundation, conversely, is depicted as the indispensable backbone that enables the *'Ulema* to uphold their moral obligations.

This mutual relationship equates both the Foundation and the *'Ulema*, where each party's contribution aims to fulfil the anticipations of the other. Notably, the linguistic constructs identified in the speech and showcased in the table suggest that the Foundation acts as a reflective surface for the *'Ulema*. Like a mirror, these constructs become the vehicle for reciprocity. In this analogy, the image of the *'Ulema* is replicated, showcasing the Foundation's reflection.

This reading accentuates the interdependence between the Foundation and the *'Ulema*. Their joint venture to commend Islam's core values and serve the cause of security, stability, and development in Africa hinges on cooperation, knowledge exchange, and coordinated efforts, resulting in a fortified mutual bond.

Breyer's analysis on mirroring underscores the need to discern between a reflection and its origin.[501] He posits that truly grasping the disparity between reality and its representation requires a cognitive leap into another viewpoint. Breyer elaborates, "a natural understanding of the mirroring-phenomenon [thus] implies an imaginative transposition of the *self* into the place behind the mirror where another subject could stand, though this transposition is not actively and explicitly carried out."[502] This suggests the Foundation's use of linguistic constructs permits the *'Ulema* to envision themselves symbolically in the person behind the mirror - the King of Morocco who is both the orator of the speech and the head of the Foundation.

Being state-affiliated, the Foundation's communication structure mirrors its rapport with its constituency. Our primary analysis inferred that the Foundation values '*Ulema* as co-contributors in shaping a more positive image of Islam. It was also argued that the link between the Foundation and the '*Ulema* presupposes mutual action and reaction. However, while the

[501] Breyer, Thiemo. "Human mirrors: Metaphors of intersubjectivity." *Human Studies* 41.3, 2018, pp. 457-474.

[502] *Ibid.*

passage clearly outlines the benefits '*Ulema* get from such relationship, it remains unclear what the Foundation (and what it represents) gains from it. Despite the emphasis on the idea of equal standing, the difference between both entities becomes more evident when looking at the anticipated outcomes from each party. This implies that although both entities (the Foundation and the '*Ulema*) may share similar value-based attributes, their functional capabilities affect how they deploy their assets and perform their tasks. The difference in capability results in different modes of action. Factors influencing the dynamic between both parties are thus presented as the source of power, which in this case rests on the Foundation's capacity to achieve tangible outcomes of "security, stability, development."[503]

The emphasis on the symbolic aspect of mutuality allows the Moroccan State to present its State-sanctioned Islam as a constitutive element of its political image. As such, a closer look at the symbolic appeal of mutuality can provide an interesting insight into Morocco's 'model of Islam'.

Identifying the Attributes Involved in the Relationship between the Foundation and the 'Ulema.

In our previous section, we demonstrated that the contextual knowledge of the figure of speech allows Morocco's 'model of Islam' to be metaphorically grounded. This is achieved by generating appeal for the 'Foundation', the '*Ulema',* and the links connecting them. However, appealing to the audience depends on the perceived value of the arguments, which highlights the power of argumentation. The use of these linguistic features reveals the effects of persuasive strategies in generating appeal (and therefore value) for Morocco's 'model of Islam'. Moving forward, we will examine the specific language choices and their implications.

The Foundation

Before examining the passage, it is essential to note that the motives behind the Foundation's work are presented at the beginning of the speech as follows: " [The Foundation] is an initiative that reflects the depth of **the spiritual ties** that have always united the sub-Saharan African peoples to the King of Morocco, *Amir al muʾminīn*, peoples to whom we are linked by the **unity of faith and rite** and by **the community of civilizational heritage**."[504]

[503] Maroc.ma. Full text of the King's speech at the "Inauguration Ceremony of Higher Council of Mohammed VI Foundation for African Ulema". www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/texte-integral-du-discours-royal-loccasion-de-la-ceremonie-dinstallation-du-conseil.

[504] *Ibid.*

In bold are the terms reflecting the Foundation's forms of appeal, namely "the spiritual ties", "the unity of faith and rite", and "the community of civilisational heritage." These forms of appeal constitute the Foundation's motives and can be referred to as 'Spirituality', 'Faith', and 'Heritage'. Interestingly, the Foundation's purpose is also communicated in three parts. The selected passage begins with a description of the Foundation, revealing a trio of characteristics that answer the question of what the Foundation supports: cooperation, exchange, and coordination. The Foundation's purpose is also presented in three aspects: security, stability, and development. These points have been summarised in the following table:

Table 5.2 The Foundation's Motive, Drive, and Purpose

The Foundation's		
Motive	**Drive**	**Purpose**
Spirituality	Cooperation	Security
Faith	Exchange	Stability
Heritage	Coordination	Development

The rows of Table 5.2 should be interpreted as corresponding elements. For instance, 'Spirituality' as a motive aligns with 'Cooperation' as the drive to achieve 'Security' as a purpose. Similarly, 'Faith' corresponds with 'Exchange' to realise 'Stability', and 'Heritage' aligns with 'Coordination' to promote 'Development'.

Table 5.2 illustrates the various forms of appeal and how they relate to the Foundation's characteristics and purpose. By employing specific language choices, the speech effectively communicates the motives, objectives, and roles of the Foundation in promoting Morocco's 'model of Islam'. The organisation of the Foundation's motives and purpose in groups of three also highlights the significance of this rhetorical device in communicating intent and goals. Its implicit role in shaping power relations reveals the semiotic dimension of these relations. Examining the phenomenon of three may offer valuable insights into the power relations and ideologies embedded within the speech.

The '*Ulema*

The selected passage begins by identifying the Foundation's purpose (*i.e.*, cooperation, exchange, coordination). The remainder of the quote, however, advances these points by drawing attention to the '*Ulema'*s responsibilities, demonstrating the full effect of the speech's rhetorical artistry.

The purpose of '*Ulema*'s work is expressed through the transitive verbs "to fulfil," "to make known" and "to promote" which organise the text in a three-act structure. Before analysing the meaning behind such a structure, it is essential to examine the '*Ulema*'s objectives (as communicated by the transitive verbs) and their motivations (as defined by the object of the action). As the passage indicates, the '*Ulema*'s motivation is based on duty, image, and values. While the three transitive verbs mentioned earlier can describe the '*Ulema*'s objectives, for analytical purposes, we have extracted three categories of actions based on the described objects: enforce, reveal, and advocate.

According to the passage, the drive behind '*Ulema*'s motivation and objectives is the Foundation's communication network, which serves as the basis of the organisation's drive. It appears that '*Ulema*'s function relies on two forms of duties: (1) duty as an obligation; (2) duty as a performance. The first form of duty is based on faith, identity, and values whereas the second form of duty involves enforcing, revealing, and advocating for Islam. Our analysis suggests that the Foundation aims to connect both forms of duty through its communication networks (*i.e.,* exchange, coordination, and cooperation). These points are summarised in the following table (Table 5.3).

Table 5.3 *'Ulema's* Motive, Drive, and Purpose

'Ulema's		
Motive	**Drive**	**Purpose**
Duty	Exchange	Enforce
Image	Coordination	Reveal
Values	Cooperation	Advocate

The rows of Table 5.3 demonstrate the intertwined nature of the *'Ulema*'s motive, drive, and purpose. For clarity, 'Duty' as a motive corresponds with 'Exchange' as the drive, aiming to 'Enforce' the foundations of the religion. The motive of 'Image' pairs with 'Coordination' to ultimately 'Reveal' Islam's essence, while 'Values' aligns with 'Cooperation' to 'Advocate' for the principles of Islam.

The table above presents a clear overview of the *'Ulema'*s motive, drive, and purpose in relation to their role in promoting Morocco's 'model of Islam'. Organising the information in this manner elucidates how the *'Ulema*'s work is motivated, driven, and purposed in the context of the Foundation's communication network.

Additionally, the passage employs three transitive verbs ("to fulfil", "to make known" and "to promote") serve to connect each action to its direct object, delineating distinct segments that describe the '*Ulema*'s mission. The guiding principle of this mission can be outlined as follows:

Segment 1: To satisfy requirements and obligations incumbent upon them as Muslim scholars trained in Islam and Islamic law.

Segment 2: To reveal the "real image" of Islam.

Segment 3: To embrace, encourage, defend, guarantee, and establish the values of the "religion of Islam" identified as "moderation," "tolerance" and "coexistence."

The intentional use of the three-segment structure allows each segment to function independently while also connecting them to for a unified whole. The communication flow drives the three points towards a central idea: the promotion of a positive image of Islam. This concept is explicitly stated in the second segment, asserting that the '*Ulema*'s mission is "to make known the real image of the tolerant religion of Islam."[505]

Indeed, the significance of the ideas communicated in Segment 2 is emphasised by its position within the text and its succinct nature. According to Dinnie, both communication techniques help capture and maintain the audience's attention.[506] The second segment also exhibits a staccato flow pattern marked by the function word "of" (*de*). This structure divides the sentence into three distinct units (*i.e.,* "image", "tolerance", and "Islam") while concurrently connecting them to create a metaphoric image. This connection facilitates the telling of a story - one where tolerance is both a core component of Morocco's religious image and an integral part of the religion of Islam it promotes.

The three units of Segment Two (*i.e.,* image, tolerance, and Islam) are reflected in the '*Ulema*'s motives (*i.e.,* faith, identity, and values), which can be extracted from all three segments. The emphasis placed on these attributes and their categorisation indicates their importance to the Foundation's work. More significantly, the metaphorical image associated to the segment helps link Morocco's and the '*Ulema*'s attributes together. As a result, the '*Ulema*'s duty to promote the image of Islam becomes inextricably bound to Morocco's image.

[505] Maroc.ma. Full text of the King's speech at the "Inauguration Ceremony of Higher Council of Mohammed VI Foundation for African 'Ulema". www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/texte-integral-du-discours-royal-loccasion-de-la-ceremonie-dinstallation-du-conseil.
[My translation from the official Arabic & French version of the text]

[506] Dinnie, Keith. *Nation branding: concepts, Issues, Practice.* Butterworth-Heinemann, 2008.

The Foundation & the '*Ulema*

During the speech, the King refers the '*Ulema* three times as often as he mentions the Foundation. A cursory examination of the speech shows that the mention of "Venerable *'Ulema*" is immediately followed by a sentence where the "Mohammed VI Foundation of African *'Ulema*" is named. The use of mirrored repetition here helps convey the mutually beneficial aspect of collaboration between the '*Ulema* and the Foundation. This mirrored repetition is supplemented by the mirroring effect produced by the metaphors. To further emphasise the connection between the Foundation's role and the '*Ulema*'s mission, three forms of mutuality are expressed in the selected passage.

The first can be found in Segment 3 and is expressed through the double emphasis on the notion of **'Islam'**. The first triad of the segment relates to the intangible values that unite both the '*Ulema* and the Foundation which are "moderation", "tolerance", and "coexistence." Although each concept may hold several meanings individually, the brevity and simplicity of the threefold-pattern help bring weight to a single central idea, *Islam*. This is also the case for the following unit "security, stability, and development", where the connecting idea revolves around the notion of 'peace', which translates to *Islam* in Arabic. The segment thus reveals that the allocated figurative language of both units allows for a double emphasis on the notion of 'peace' - *Islam.* Such an emphasis reflects a sense of reciprocity between the '*Ulema*'s 'duty' and the Foundation's function.

The second form of mutuality lies in the notion of **tolerance**. Its significance is not only indicated by its mention but also by its position in the passage. Tolerance and its proxy (tolerant) are placed second in their respective triads, which helps draw attention to their enabling role. This is done in such a way where no distinction is made between tolerance as a religious belief and tolerance as a religious exercise. A closer examination of the passage reveals that the notion of tolerance takes three forms: tolerance as a value, tolerance as a duty, and tolerance as an asset.

Starting with Segment 2, tolerance is presented as an intrinsic Islamic value. It is also in Segment 2 where the transitive verb "to make known" is used to communicate one of the '*Ulema*'s missions. The juxtaposition of both meanings carried by the segment helps frame tolerance as both a value and a duty. Such duty involves the practice of toleration, which is where the Foundation's role comes to play. This is revealed in the following segment as it

reads: "to promote its values that are moderation, tolerance and willingness to coexistence."[507] The use of the term "tolerance" here refers back to the preceding segment where "tolerant religion of Islam" is mentioned.

The third form of mutuality is conveyed through the metaphorical understanding of the word "**Foundation**", which helps connect both units of Segment 3. "Foundation" carries associations with physical structure. Additionally, the term Foundation semantically and syntactically connects both units. Its position in the text allows the Foundation to act as a bridge between both units, creating a systematic analogy to bridges that help transfer the weight of the structure to the ground by translating the values of the Foundation into tangible outcomes.

The layered structure and metaphoric understanding of the figure of speech reveals the triad's power of persuasion in conveying a sense of reciprocity. Our analysis shows that the mutually beneficial aspect of collaboration between the *'Ulema* and the Foundation is based on three components: **Islam as an asset**, reflecting shared core beliefs **tolerance as the dominant principle** manifesting mutual respect, and the **Foundation as an operator** echoing the shared objective of cooperation and mutual growth. All three components generate three forms of appeal, which we can label as: **religious**, **institutional,** and **spiritual.**

It appears, therefore, that the motives behind the Foundation and *'Ulema's* relationship are rooted in faith (shared core beliefs), further demonstrated by their respective missions grounded in 'heritage' and 'spirituality'.

Furthermore, according to the speech, the Foundation and '*Ulema*'s drive rests of similar networks of communication. It could even be argued that the purpose behind their relationship is based on the link that connects each entity's purpose to the other. The passage seemingly presents the common purpose as 'moderation', 'tolerance' and 'coexistence'. These points have been summarised below in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4 The Foundation's and *'Ulema's* Drive, Motive, and Purpose

Foundation & *'Ulema's*	**Motive**	**Drive**	**Purpose**
Religion	Faith (shared core beliefs)	Exchange (mutual communication)	Moderation (advocating balanced perspectives)

[507] Maroc.ma. Full text of the King's speech at the "Inauguration Ceremony of Higher Council of Mohammed VI Foundation for African Ulema". www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/texte-integral-du-discours-royal-loccasion-de-la-ceremonie-dinstallation-du-conseil.
[My translation from the official Arabic & French version of the text]

Spirituality	Heritage (legacy and tradition)	Coordination (alignment of objectives)	Tolerance (promoting mutual respect)
Institution	Identity (distinct roles & responsibilities)	Cooperation (joint effort)	Coexistence (peaceful symbiosis amidst diverse beliefs)

In conclusion, our analysis of the speech underscores the significance of rhetorical devices, particularly the use of triads, in conveying the mutually beneficial relationship between the *'Ulema* and the Foundation. The speech illustrates that the collaboration is founded on shared religious, spiritual, and institutional connections, as well as a common drive to promote moderation, tolerance, and coexistence. By utilising metaphors and mirroring effects, the speech adeptly communicates the reciprocal nature of the relationship between the *'Ulema* and the Foundation, which is crucial for the accomplishment of their shared objectives. Our analysis unveils the intricate role of figures of speech in conveying complex ideas, particularly when aiming to generate symbolic forms of appeal. The evidence presented in this section implies that a detailed examination of the linguistic device of 'Three' may offer valuable insights into the model's religious and spiritual forms of appeal.

The Triad of Argumentation and Emotions: How Modes of Persuasion Communicate Appeal

Time and space convey affective and cognitive information that assists the *receiver* in constructing the lens through which the message will be understood and interpreted. As previously argued, the chosen time and venue of the inauguration speech presents *Al Qaraouiyine* as a *lieu de mémoire*[508] - a place where nationalistic sentiments are fuelled by heritage through shared religious, cultural and historical roots.

The purpose presented by collective nostalgia presupposes a goal-oriented behaviour, and although behavioural intention may lead to actual behaviour, it does not necessarily guarantee it. The Foundation's role appears to aim at bridging this gap by transforming behavioural intention into goal-directed behaviour. Our analysis had indeed shown that the mutual relationship between the Foundation and the '*Ulema* (as presented by the inauguration speech) rests on religious, spiritual, and institutional principles. A closer examination of the three

[508] Term borrowed from Belghazi, Taieb. "Festivalization of Urban Space in Morocco." *Critique (Saint Paul, Minn.)*, vol. 15, no. 1, 2006, pp. 97–107.

segments of the passage in page 160 also reveals three forms of appeal used to create an incentive for '*Ulema* to act. These modes of persuasion can be identified as ethos, logos, and pathos - Aristotle's triad of argumentation.[509]

Ethos is the ethical appeal, establishing credibility by informing us of the persuader's identity and trustworthiness. The quote on page 160 begins with a flat description of the Foundation. However, the rhetorical form of the third and final segment of the triad indicates that the Foundation's function results from '*Ulema*'s responsibilities as communicated in Segment 1 and 2. The ethical appeal of the quote is reflected in the segment's trio: moderation, tolerance, and coexistence. These shared **values** and morals connect '*Ulema*'s mission to the Foundation's work, thus making the Foundation's work a reflection of '*Ulema*'s values. Similar to our findings in page 166, the ethical appeal indicates that collaboration between the '*Ulema* and the Foundation rests on **Islam** as an asset, **tolerance** as the dominant principle of its asset, and the **Institution** as an operator. According to Aristotle the orator brings attention to the discourse.[510] Given that the King of Morocco is the orator of the speech, he is the face of ethos and, therefore, of the Foundation. Aristotle's lens thus suggests that collaboration between the '*Ulema* and the Foundation is, in fact, a collaboration between the '*Ulema* and the King of Morocco.

Logos constructs the logical argument., expressed in Segment 1 of the triad and related to reason. The argument provided here is that '*Ulema*'s duty is incumbent upon them by the religion of Islam. The existing knowledge surrounding such 'duty' provides a rationale for '*Ulema*'s engagement with the Foundation. In doing so, the side of the argument relating to **duty** is meant to appeal to logic.

Pathos elicits strong emotional feelings from the audience (*i.e.,* '*Ulema* and the general public). The argument's emotional aspect resides in the call for correcting the 'false' "image of Islam" as stated in Segment 2 of the triad. This is because the 'image' reflects and communicates people's sense of who they are. The "real image of Islam" therefore relates to '*Ulema*'s projected religious identity. Their duty to communicate such an image is thus strongly associated with '*Ulema*'s notion of *Self* and, therefore, their **identity**. In other words, the speech suggests that pathos (*i.e.,* identity) is the emotional vehicle that helps the '*Ulema* carry their logos (*i.e.,* duty). Furthermore, the perceived value of the projected (real) image of Islam is also based on the elicited emotional reactions of the general audience. The image of

[509] Mshvenieradze, Tamar. "Logos Ethos and Pathos in Political Discourse." *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, vol. 3, no. 11, 2013, pp. 1939–1945.

[510] Freese, John Henry. "The "art" of rhetoric". *Loeb classical library*, 1926.

Islam is thus presented as a mediating variable for people's perceived value of Islam. This further highlights the link between the rhetorical devices employed in the speech and their impact on the audience. By utilising Aristotle's triad of argumentation, the speech effectively demonstrates how ethos, logos, and pathos interconnect to create a persuasive message that resonates with the *'Ulema* and the wider audience.

In summary, the inauguration speech employs various rhetorical devices and Aristotle's triad of argumentation to effectively communicate the mutually beneficial relationship between the *'Ulema* and the Foundation. The speech presents this collaboration as based on shared religious, spiritual, and institutional principles, with an emphasis on the promotion of moderation, tolerance, and coexistence. The use of ethos, logos, and pathos not only strengthens the persuasive nature of the speech but also emphasises the interconnectedness of the '*Ulema*, the Foundation, and the King of Morocco. By analysing the speech through an academic lens, we gain a deeper understanding of the importance of rhetorical devices and their role in conveying complex ideas. Our analysis illustrates the intricate interplay between language and persuasion, and the potential impact of rhetoric on shaping audience perceptions and actions. Through this examination, we can appreciate the power of carefully crafted messages to inspire collaboration and promote shared goals in the context of religious, spiritual, and institutional relationships.

How Modes of Persuasion Illuminate the Relationship Between the Foundation and 'Ulema's Attributes.

According to Frijda, group-level emotions facilitate behaviour.[511] This suggests that the Foundation's capacity in triggering goal-oriented behaviour relies on (1) generating appeal, and (2) translating said appeal into an asset. In the context of our case study, this approach implies that the generated appeal from Morocco's 'model of Islam' can harnessed to gain influence. Exploring the connections between the Foundation's, '*Ulema's*, and the King's attributes may, therefore, provide valuable insight into the ways by which the State operationalises its 'model of Islam.'

The linguistic device of three revealed that the Foundation's attributes comprise **faith**, **heritage**, and **spirituality**, while '*Ulema*'s attributes rest on **duty**, **identity**, and **values**. It was also argued that the connection between the Foundation and '*Ulema*'s attributes is based on common objectives of **order**, **unity**, and **meaning** and a shared drive for **exchange**, **collaboration**, and **cooperation**. Our analysis of the triad of argumentation, however,

[511] Frijda, Nico H. *The emotions*. Cambridge University Press, 1986.

indicated that collaboration also rests on the modes of persuasion designed to appeal to '*Ulema's* emotions (*i.e.*, **logos**, **pathos**, and **ethos**). The aim of these modes of persuasion is to trigger '*Ulema*'s motives, which in turn help reinforce their common drive. Given that these drives constitute the Foundation's communication networks, it could be argued that the modes of persuasion used to connect '*Ulema*'s and the Foundation's attributes are meant to emphasise the role of the Foundation's communication channels. In other words, collaboration between both entities (*i.e.*, the Foundation and the *'Ulema*) rests on the perceived strength of their links.

Based on our analysis, we can develop an ERDC (Entity-Relationship Diagram Components) figure to effectively illustrate the connections between the Foundation and *'Ulema*'s attributes, as facilitated by the modes of persuasion. This visual representation will help demonstrate the ways in which these persuasive techniques bridge the attributes of both entities, thereby contributing to the overall communication strategy.

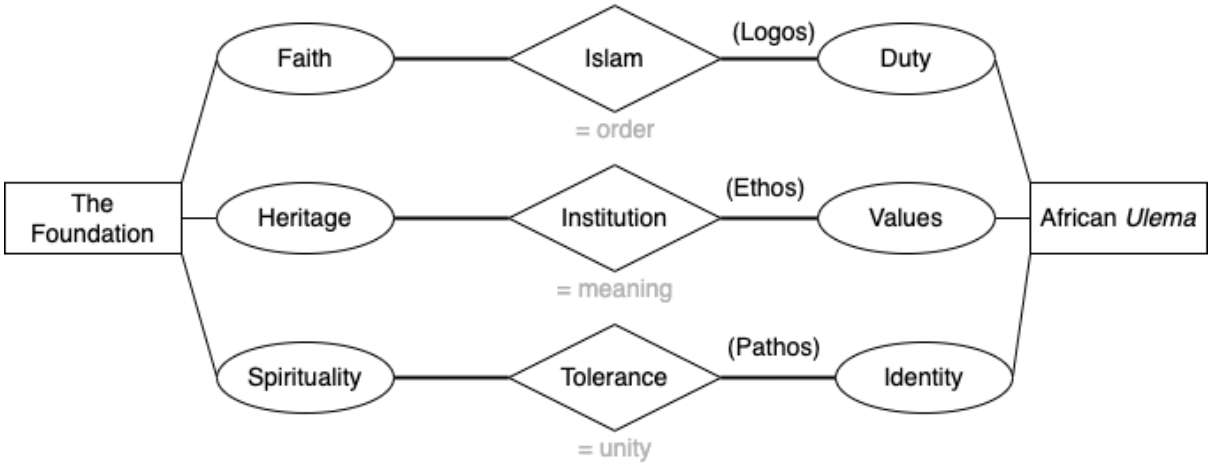


Figure 5.2 The Link Between the Foundation and *'Ulema*'s Attributes

Unveiling Morocco's Model of Islam: The Interplay of Inauguration Event, Orator, and Argumentative Discourse

Provided that the Foundation's role is to extend the *Bay'a* principle to other nations, it may be posited that the underlying mechanisms behind the Foundation's channels of communication involve managing the perceived value of Morocco's image. To comprehend how the Foundation aims to extend the *Bay'a* principle to other African countries, it is crucial to identify the key attributes used by the Foundation to connect with the '*Ulema*.

Our previous sections demonstrated how verbal and non-verbal cues were employed during the inauguration speech to convey value. Our findings also suggest that the circumstances of

the event, the orator, and the argumentative discourse offer a **three-dimensional representation** of Morocco's 'model of Islam'. The following explanation cover each aspect.

The venue

The venue's function has been shown to operate at the spatial level. Spatial indicators (*i.e.,* Fes and the Mosque) help carry meta-information intended to guide the audience's interpretation of the message, thereby becoming the means through which *meaning* is conveyed. Symbolism also plays a significant role in ensuring that a clear image and a unified message are delivered. The venue utilises spatial qualifiers as tangible indicators of Morocco's 'model of Islam'. Consequently, the *unifying* character of the projected image is presented as a feature of Morocco's 'model of Islam'. Moreover, the venue was used to key the audience into important notions such as nostalgia. The created narrative relies on the systematic arrangement of key information presented as constituent parts of Morocco's image. The. structural and organisational form of Fes and the Mosque help communicate a form of consistency and sense of *order* to the audience.

The orator

Our analysis indicated that intangibles communicated by the venue and the selected metaphors place the King at the centre of the conversation surrounding Morocco's 'model of Islam'.

Speakers often impart a sense of their own identity to their audience. The unifying aspect of the venue is intended to mirror the King's unifying persona. As a result, the symbolic value associated with the King projects a sense of *unity* and cohesion.

As the orator of the speech, the King creates the conditions of interpretation. His words define the contours of the venue's symbolic message interpretation. Given the role of spatial indicators in communicating a sense of consistency and order, it could be argued that the King's function as the orator of the speech imbues his figure with the consistent feature of this image, thereby establishing him as the source of regularity and *order*. In other words, the King's capacity as the speaker embodies the functional aspect of *order*.

It is now understood that the symbolic elements projected through the venue and the King's figure rest on **three shared principles**: *meaning*, *unity*, and *order*. However, as previously mentioned, the context of the event and the orator of the speech frame our understanding of Morocco's 'model of Islam'. The audience's experience of the model is also influenced by occupying the space and interacting with the image of the King.

The argumentative discourse

Although visual communication presents a shared experience of *the* message, it is ultimately words that enrich its interpretation and enhance our understanding of *the* message. Since words guide our interpretation of the projected image, it is the combination of non-verbal and verbal communication strategies that allows *meaning, unity*, and *order* to fully materialise.

Prompts that are conveyed in spoken language generate expectation of a response or action. This implicit form of interaction makes verbal cues a better indicator of intent. Consequently, the inauguration speech could provide insightful information into the intentions behind the communicated message. With this in mind, we can proceed to analyse the meaning embedded in Morocco's 'model of Islam' as presented in the speech.

Meaning: Morocco's 'model of Islam' as an (a)Temporal model of Complex Fabrics

Each segment related to the '*Ulema*'s mission can be divided into past, present, and future statements, as previously quoted:

> […] **(1)** to fulfil their duty, **(2)** to make known the real image of the tolerant religion of Islam and **(3)** to promote its values which are based on moderation, tolerance, and coexistence. […][512]
>
> (Numbering added for clarity)

The first segment relates to the '*Ulema*'s duty, which is based on an existing (past) knowledge - Islam. This lends further validity to the '*Ulema*'s mission stated in the second segment, which is "to make known the real image of the tolerant religion of Islam."[513] Here, "real image" implies a timeless truth whose relevance to the present is indicated by the need (duty) to communicate values associated to said image (segment 3).

The 'past, present and future' structure is also reflected in the outline of the second segment. The "real image" suggests adherence to the notion of 'one true representation', where signals of authenticity are shaped by the past. This segment also provides an indication of a negative image of Islam – one that needs correction. The answer to this problem is presented soon after, where the notion of tolerance is introduced for the first time in the speech.[514] This

[512] Maroc.ma. Full text of the King's speech at the "Inauguration Ceremony of Higher Council of Mohammed VI Foundation for African Ulema". www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/texte-integral-du-discours-royal-loccasion-de-la-ceremonie-dinstallation-du-conseil.
[My translation from the official Arabic & French version of the text]

[513] *Ibid.*

[514] The unit reads: "of the tolerant."

indicates that the "tolerant religion" is both rooted in the past and needed in the present, where practicing tolerance brings *us* to a peaceful future, one of *Islam* (peace).

The temporal model chosen to communicate '*Ulema*'s mission brings forward a sense of *coherence* and continuity to their efforts whilst simultaneously shedding light on the mission and its *purpose*. The *significance* of this mission is indicated in the last segment, where '*Ulema*'s duty is said to rest on their inherent values of "moderation, tolerance, and coexistence."[515] The argumentation behind '*Ulema*'s mission reveals that *coherence, purpose,* and *significance* constitute important facets of meaning. This idea is supported by Martela and Steger, whose conceptual analysis uncovers the role of this trichotomy in fostering meaning.[516]

Unity and Organisational Alignment

The *'Ulema*'s mission involves the work of the Foundation, and its potential effectiveness hinges on the *'Ulema's* commitment to fulfil their religious duty. In light of this interconnectedness, it is essential to examine the shared values that underpin their collaboration.

We previously argued that the '*Ulema'*s duty rests on the promotion of their values of moderation, tolerance, and coexistence. The argumentative discourse also indicated that the significance of meaning was placed on these values. Their importance to the Foundation's work was, in fact, indicated in the statement following '*Ulema*'s mission, as it reads:

> […] The aim [of the Foundation] is to ensure that these values are in service of security, stability, and development in Africa.[517]

The quote suggests that the Foundation and the '*Ulema* share a common goal of security, stability, and development. As a general guide to action, this common set of principles constitute the source of *unity* between both entities. On closer examination, three themes transpire from these principles: political, economic, and social. They reflect the domains of *unity* between the Foundation and the '*Ulema*. These domains suggest that the significance of their collaboration extends beyond their shared values. It also implies that '*Ulema*'s duty

[515] *Ibid.*

[516] Martela, Frank, and Steger, Michael F. "The Three Meanings of Meaning in Life: Distinguishing Coherence, Purpose, and Significance." *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, vol. 11, no. 5, 2016, pp. 531–545.

[517] Maroc.ma. Full text of the King's speech at the "Inauguration Ceremony of Higher Council of Mohammed VI Foundation for African Ulema". www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/texte-integral-du-discours-royal-loccasion-de-la-ceremonie-dinstallation-du-conseil.
[My translation from the official Arabic & French version of the text]

transcends the *Self* and is required to serve the *Ummah* by operating in domains that are common to us all.

In addition to fostering unity, these principles extend the perspective by reflecting internal processes (duty, values) outwardly, suggesting that security, stability, and development might be viewed as key indicators of achievement. It appears, therefore, that nurturing the importance of '*Ulema*'s values to fulfil their duty implies the Foundation's operational capacity in achieving their common goal. Furthermore, the extract indicates '*Ulema*'s values need to be conformed to the principles of security, stability, and development. Given that the Foundation's purpose rests on its ability to guarantee the fulfilment of '*Ulema'*s duty, it may be that the Foundation's intervention in this process involves management action to align the '*Ulema*'s values with the principles mentioned above.

In the business field, organisation alignment is the process of creating unity. It requires implementing strategies to ensure that its members share a common goal and vision. Such a strategy allows members to work together in order to achieve the organisation's success. The argumentative discourse, therefore, exposes one aspect of the Foundation's managerial capacity.

In summary, this section primarily examines the communication and implementation of Morocco's 'model of Islam' by exploring the interconnected roles of the Foundation, the *'Ulema*, and the King. It analyses the impact of the chosen venue, the orator, and the argumentative discourse in conveying a cohesive and unified message that encapsulates the principles and values inherent in this model. Moreover, the section delves into the Foundation's organisational alignment and management strategies, emphasising their significance in achieving its goals and promoting the *Bay'a* principle across other nations. To better understand the principals involved in this process, we have created Figure 5.3, which provides a clearer visual representation.

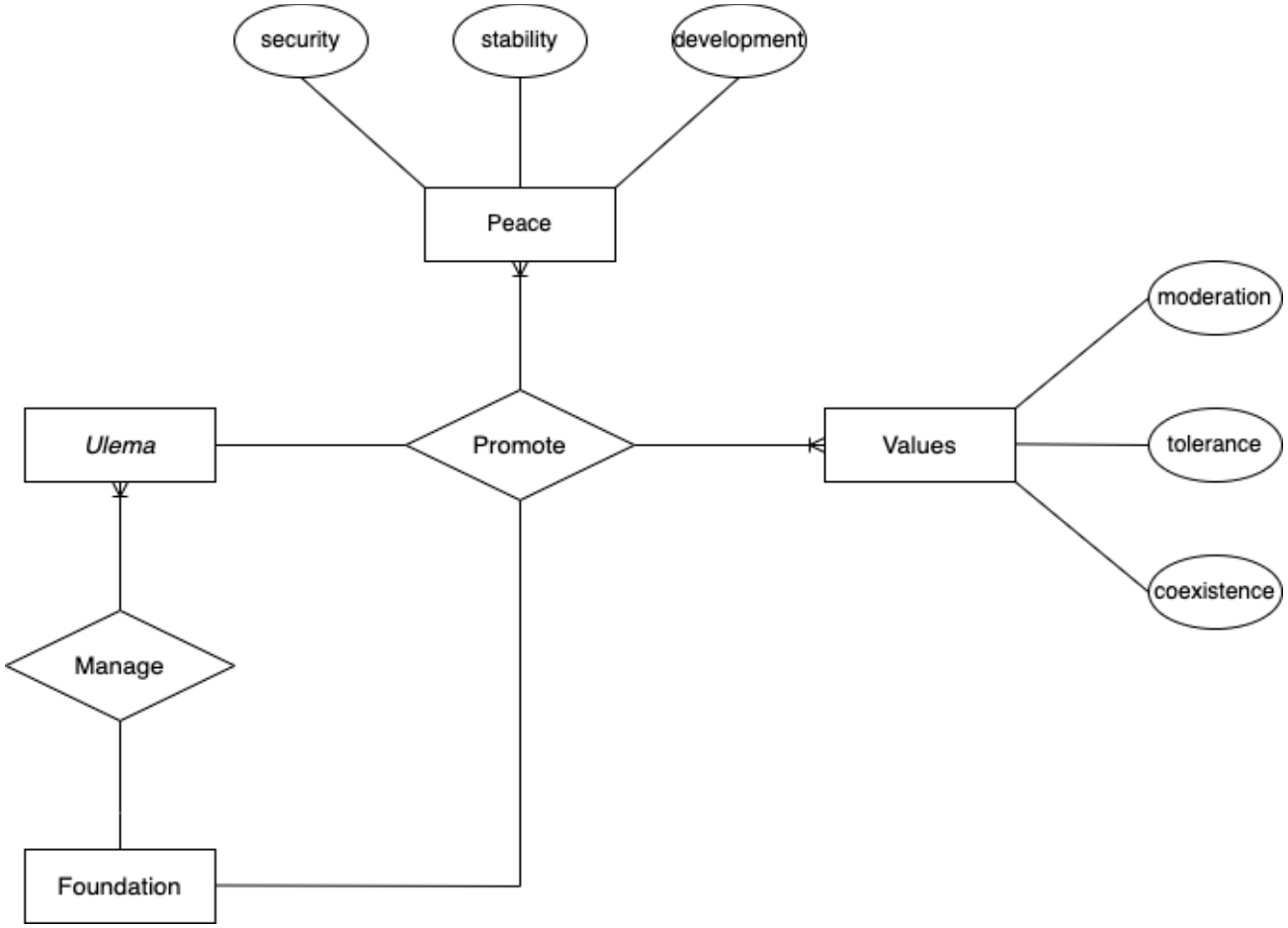


Figure 5.3 The Relationship Between the Foundation and the *'Ulema*

Modelling Intangibles: The Role of the Three-Party Relationship in Communicating the Value Relevance for Morocco's 'Model of Islam'

In their comprehensive study on brands' appeal, Johar and Sirgy identify two types of advertising appeal: value-expressive and utilitarian. The authors argue that these two forms of appeal inform distinct routes of persuasion, referred to as *self-congruity* and *functional congruity*.[518] The former (value expressive) is said to involve personality building as a symbolic form of appeal which Meenaghan describes as the "emotional/symbolic level."[519]

[518] Johar, J. S, and M. Joseph Sirgy. "Value-Expressive versus Utilitarian Advertising Appeals: When and Why to Use Which Appeal." *Journal of Advertising*, vol. 20, no. 3, 1991, pp. 23–33.

[519] Meenaghan, Tony. "The Role of Advertising in Brand Image Development." *The Journal of Product and Brand Management*, vol. 4, no. 4, 1995, p. 27.

The latter (utilitarian) is suggested to entail perceived tangible benefits of the product for the consumer.

Our analysis indicates that sacredness and nostalgia contribute to creating two forms of appeal: symbolic and utilitarian. The symbolic appeal of the Foundation pertains to the personality building of the King as *Commander of the Faithful*. Its functional appeal, however, is based on its ability to achieve tangible related to security, stability, and State, which are closely connected to the King's temporal role as Head of State.

Moving on to the *'Ulema*, their symbolic appeal resides in their duty, presented as a moral obligation. Their functional appeal, on the other hand, rests on the fulfilment of that duty. This is because duty assumes a form of action - its utilitarian function lies in faith, and its activation results in efforts to carry out the '*Ulema*'s Islamic requirements. According to our analysis, this role is externalised through representation and value practice. Both elements are linked to the image and values of Islam through the '*Ulema*'s self-representation. The operationalisation of duty, therefore, is aimed at maximising the expression of identity and values. This effect is mediated through a goal-directed system, which can be modelled based on the routes of persuasion used to highlight the symbolic and utilitarian forms of appeal of the '*Ulema*, the Foundation, and the King. We created an Entity Relationship Diagram (ERD) (Figure 5.4), which presents an overview of this Chapter's findings. Our ERD depicts the interconnections among the intangible concepts intended to convey the 'divine prompting' underpinning the *'Ulema*, the Foundation, and the King of Morocco. The three fundamental components of our ERD include entities, attributes, and relationships, each of which comprises specific elements, as listed below:

- **Entities:** The Foundation, African *'Ulema*, and the King
- **Attributes:**
    - Faith, Heritage, and Spirituality for the Foundation
    - Head of State (HS) and *Commander of the Faithful* (CF) for the King
    - Duty, Values, and Identity for the African *'Ulema*
- **Relationships:**
    - Islam, Institution, and Tolerance for both the African 'Ulema and the Foundation
    - Religious, Institutional, and Spiritual for the King (through his CF attribute) and the Foundation

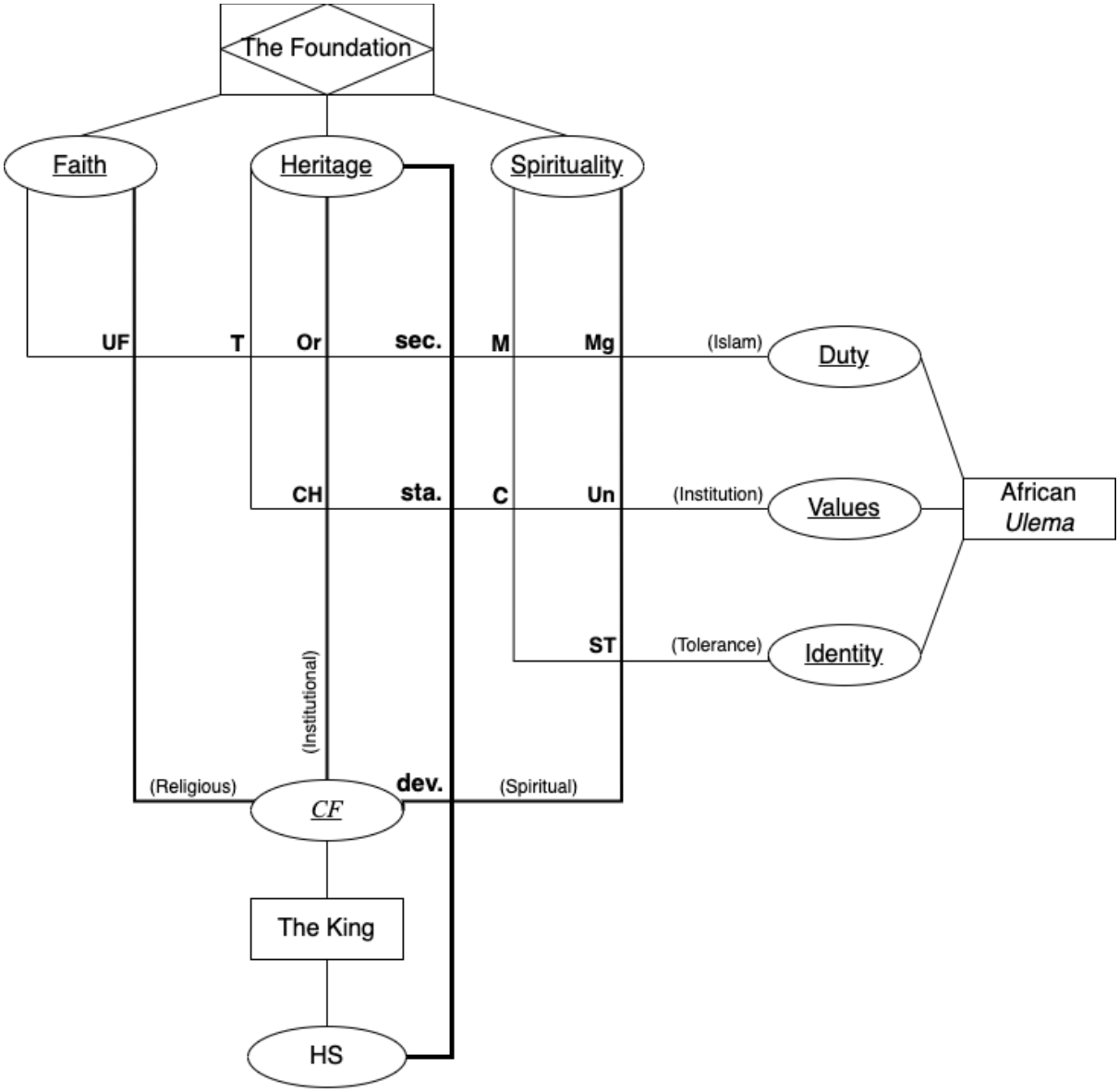


Figure 5.4 The Three-Party Relationship Between the King, The Foundation and The African *'Ulema* in Communicating The Value Relevance for Morocco's 'Model of Islam'

The tripartite relationship among the *'Ulema*, the Foundation, and the King comprises a complex communication process, anchored in the intersections between the attributes of each entity. To better understand the underlying mechanism, we provide a comprehensive explanation below.

(1)

The tripartite relationship involves a primary association between the '*Ulema* and the Foundation and a secondary connection involving the King, the Foundation, and the '*Ulema*. As previously argued, the primary relationship is grounded in the principles of **'Islam'**,

'institution', and **'tolerance'**. Using these principles, communication links are established to convey the attributes of each entity to their corresponding counterparts. This process enables the connection between both entities while concurrently solidifying their relationship. The link between the '*Ulema* and the Foundation also relies on the attributes they have in common. Since the communication links between both entities are attribute-specific, interaction among different communication channels implies a connection between the attributes they convey. Our analysis showed that the internal connection between '*Ulema*'s attributes is similarly mirrored by the Foundation's attributes. Understanding the mechanisms involved in connecting '*Ulema*'s internal attributes may, therefore, offer valuable insights into the principles of collaboration between the Foundation and the '*Ulema*.

Our analysis of the speech revealed a link between the '*Ulema*'s notion of *Self*, their values, and their duty. Identity assumes an external form – one that relates to the "real image of the tolerant religion of Islam."[520] The duty associated with this image involves the mediation and **moderation** of factors that hinder its quality. The '*Ulema*'s moderating role connects their duty to their identity, creating **meaning** through the purpose of moderation.

Conversely, the *'Ulema*'s values involve an internalised cognitive process that guides their duty. Our analysis showed that this guiding principle is epitomised in the notion of **tolerance**, which the inauguration speech presents as an intrinsic value of Islam. One could argue that the purpose of Tolerance creates a sense of **order**. Shared intrinsic values and identity-based principles enable a reciprocal relationship where coexistence becomes possible despite differences. The expression of *'Ulema*'s 'identity' and 'values' is based on the principle of **coexistence**, allowing the interconnection of these attributes and reinforcing them. The purpose of coexistence, therefore, creates **unity**.

As our analysis of the speech indicated, the quality of correlation between the Foundation and the '*Ulema* allows for mutual considerations in their interactions. Given that the internal process that facilitating a coherent expression of the '*Ulema*'s attributes is based on the same principles connecting the '*Ulema* to the Foundation, one could be argued that 'tolerance', 'moderation', and 'coexistence' enable a coherent expression of the Foundation's attributes. In Figure 5.4, this is demonstrated through the intersection points between the '*Ulema*'s and the Foundation's attributes. Furthermore, we previously contended that moderation, tolerance, and

[520] Maroc.ma. Full text of the King's speech at the "Inauguration Ceremony of Higher Council of Mohammed VI Foundation for African Ulema". www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/texte-integral-du-discours-royal-loccasion-de-la-ceremonie-dinstallation-du-conseil.
[My translation from the official Arabic & French version of the text]

coexistence constitute the shared motives of the '*Ulema*'s and the Foundation. These three motives can be presented as a singular core motive referred to as **MTC** (moderation, tolerance, and coexistence). The question then arises: how are these motives transformed into purpose?

The following table illustrates how the Foundation and '*Ulema*'s common principles of 'Islam', 'institution' and 'tolerance' facilitate the connection of their internal attributes while simultaneously uncovering their shared purpose.

Table 5.5 Entities' Internal Attributes and Common Purpose

Networks involved	**Common purpose**	**Internal attributes**	
		'Ulema	**Foundation**
Islam + Institution	**Tolerance**	Duty & values	Faith & heritage
Islam + Tolerance	**Moderation**	Duty & identity	Faith & spirituality
Tolerance + Institution	**Coexistence**	Values & identity	Heritage & spirituality

(2)

The secondary relationship within the aforementioned tripartite relationship encompasses all three entities, namely the Foundation, the *'Ulema*, and the King. Our analysis indeed revealed that **'religious'**, **'institutional'**, and **'spiritual'** connections bind the Foundation's attributes to the King's spiritual attribute of *Commander of the Faithful*. These connections are based on the same principles as the links connecting the Foundation to the *'Ulema*, which we identified as 'Islam', 'institution', and 'tolerance. Both types of connections seem to be grounded in similar domains, which can be defined as shared **values**, **vision**, and **mission**. A summary of these points is presented below:

Table 5.6 Principle of the Relationship Model

Principles of the Relationship Model		
The Foundation & the '*Ulema*	The Foundation & the King	The Foundation, the '*Ulema* & the King
Islam	Religion	Values
Institution	Institution	Vision
Tolerance	Spirituality	Mission

The overarching domains of both link-types are complemented by the symbolic value of the *Commander of the Faithful*. In the diagram (Figure 5.4), this is expressed through the interaction points between similar link-types connecting the Foundation to the *Commander of the Faithful*, and the Foundation to the '*Ulema*. Given the intangible nature of the associated value to these links, one could be argued that it is the King's image that helps communicate the shared principles mentioned above (*i.e.,* values, vision, mission). As previously mentioned, the inauguration speech states that the initiative behind the Foundation "reflects the depth of the spiritual ties that have always united the sub-Saharan African peoples to the King of Morocco, *Amir al muʾminīn,* peoples to whom We are linked by the unity of faith and rite and by the community of civilisational heritage."[521] The projected image of the *Commander of the faithful,* therefore, allows for the expression of the Foundation and the *'Ulema*'s overarching goals of **'unity of faith'**, **'civilisational heritage'** and **'spiritual ties'**. In other words, the strategic alignment of the entity's goals is communicated through the King's image. In Figure 5.4, these expressions are indicated by the intersection points between similar link-types. It could. Therefore, be argued that the principals involved in the tripartite relationship between the Foundation, the '*Ulema*, and the King help define their shared values of 'unity of faith', their vision of 'civilisational heritage, and their common mission of 'spiritual ties'. Given that these principles are meant to be projected through the image of the *Commander of the Faithful,* it could be argued that their utilitarian function rests on the operational function associated with said image. This is where the King's soft power comes into play.

According to Nye, a country's soft power lies on three types of resources: cultural, ideological, and institutional. Based on Nye's categorisation, it could be argued that the King's soft power rests on the 'unity of faith' as its ideological resource-type, 'civilisational heritage' as the institutional expression of this power, and 'spiritual ties' as the cultural manifestation of the King's soft power. It is, therefore, suggested that the operationalisation of the shared principles of 'unity of faith', 'civilisational heritage' and 'spiritual ties' are strongly linked to the King's soft power. These shared principles also help communicate the mutually beneficial aspect of the tripartite relationship between the Foundation, the '*Ulema,* and the King. This is further emphasised by the implied meaning(s) of the metaphors that were used in the speech (see Table 5.1, p. 161).

[521] Maroc.ma. Full text of the King's speech at the "Inauguration Ceremony of Higher Council of Mohammed VI Foundation for African Ulema". www.maroc.ma/fr/discours-royaux/texte-integral-du-discours-royal-loccasion-de-la-ceremonie-dinstallation-du-conseil.
[My translation from the official Arabic & French version of the text]

According to the inauguration speech, '*Ulema*'s promotion of moderation, tolerance, and coexistence allows the Foundation to work towards "security, stability, and development in Africa."[522] The Foundation and '*Ulema*'s common purpose are thus presented as the Foundation's key resource to achieve its goals. The networks that are involved in this process are the links connecting the Foundation's attributes to the *Commander of the faithful* and the links connecting the Foundation and '*Ulema*'s attributes to one another. The significance of these networks is communicated through the projected image of the *Commander of the faithful*.

Even though the tripartite relationship appears to rest on similar principles, a distinction exists between the links connecting the Foundation to (1) the '*Ulema* and (2) to the *Commander of the Faithful*. The reason for this is that link-types are based on the nature of the relationship between entities. The most obvious example of such difference lies in the fact that the Foundation depends on the King to exist, whereas the '*Ulema* do not depend on the other two entities to *be*. The link between the Foundation and the '*Ulema* is, therefore, solely based on the mutual records each entity shares with one another. This is what we previously referred to as mutuality. Moreover, the King's relationship to the '*Ulema* rests on the strength of the links connecting the Foundation to the '*Ulema* (primary relationship) and on the credibility level of the *Commander of the faithful.* The latter requires aligning the Foundation's intangible assets to the King's image. Here, we argue that this alignment necessitates the input factors of 'order', 'meaning' and 'unity'.

As indicated by Figure 5.3 and Figure 5.4**,** the Foundation and '*Ulema*'s common objectives of **'order'**, **'meaning'**, and **'unity'** involve the interaction between different network types. Their connection, however, rests on the bridging capacity of the *Commander of the Faithful,* whose image (and the values it carries) reflects their common purpose. To transform '*Ulema*'s purpose of tolerance, moderation, and coexistence from common attributes to assets requires a value proposition brought by the input factors of 'order', 'meaning' and 'unity'. This is because value proposition helps strengthen the links between the Foundation and the '*Ulema* while simultaneously presenting the *Commander of the faithful* as the outward expression (and therefore representation) of their common purpose. From there, it follows that the entities' common values, vision and mission rely on the King's soft power (as expressed by 'meaning', 'unity', and 'order') to render their core motive (MTC) to assets. In other words, asset transformation rests on the institutional and spiritual power of the King of Morocco, and their expression lies in 'civilisational heritage' and 'unity of rite'.

[522] *Ibid.*

Al Qaraouiyine Mosque exemplifies the connection between the King's soft power and the entities' common values, vision, and mission. As the *Commander of the Faithful*, the King of Morocco holds both institutional and spiritual power, which are essential for transforming the core motives of the *'Ulema*, the Foundation, and the King himself into assets. In this context, the *Al Qaraouiyine Mosque* represents 'civilisational heritage' and 'unity of rite', two key aspects that help to convey the King's soft power. The mosque serves as a symbol of Morocco's rich religious and cultural history, showcasing the nation's longstanding tradition of spiritual leadership and religious scholarship. As a result, the mosque embodies the civilisational heritage that the Foundation, the *'Ulema*, and the King collectively aim to promote and protect.

Moreover, the unity of rite, as exhibited in the mosque, demonstrates the shared religious practices and beliefs that bind the Moroccan people and the wider Islamic community. This unity of rite underpins the common mission of the *'Ulema*, the Foundation, and the King to preserve and promote moderate, tolerant, and coexisting forms of Islam. By reflecting these ideals in the *Al Qaraouiyine Mosque*, the King's soft power effectively strengthens the spiritual ties that connect the Foundation and the *'Ulema*.

Therefore, the *Al Qaraouiyine Mosque* serves as a tangible symbol of the King's soft power, embodying the civilisational heritage and unity of rite that underpin the common values, vision, and mission of the *'Ulema*, the Foundation, and the King. This connection reinforces the legitimacy and influence of the King's spiritual and institutional power, enabling the asset transformation necessary for achieving their collective goals. Furthermore, given that the purpose of moderation, tolerance and coexistence creates meaning, order, and unity, it could be argued that the Foundation and *'Ulema*'s MTC is transformed into a functional and valuable asset through the combination of these principles. By aligning themselves with the King's soft power, the Foundation and the *'Ulema* can successfully communicate their shared vision and achieve their common goals. In doing so, they foster a collaborative tripartite relationship that seeks to positively influence the region, advocating for peace, stability, and development.

(3)

The connection between the King's temporal power and the Foundation is anchored in the organisation's 'heritage' attribute, as the monarchy system is hereditary in nature. The King's temporal power imparts the executive function necessary for achieving 'security', 'stability' and 'development'. Consequently, the Foundation's Heritage underscores the very distinct attribute of the King as Head of State.

Given that intersections signify mutual action and reaction, the interaction among different attributes demonstrates the existence of correlation and synergy points exist between entities

(*i.e.,* '*Ulema,* Foundation, and the King). The overarching mechanisms of 'unity', 'order' and 'meaning' facilitate value co-creation, which aids in transforming capabilities ('unity of faith', 'civilisational heritage', 'spiritual ties') into tangible outcomes of 'security', 'stability' and 'development'. This process underscores the interdependence and cooperation between the three entities in pursuit of their shared objectives.

In conclusion, this discussion has shed light on the multifaceted communication process within the tripartite relationship among the *'Ulema,* the Foundation, and the King. By examining the interconnectedness established on the Foundation of intersections between each entity's attributes, we have identified the primary and secondary relationships as well as the shared principles, attributes, and values that underpin their relationships. Furthermore, we have explored the crucial role of the King's image and soft power in communicating these shared principles and transforming their common purpose into tangible outcomes.

This analysis has provided valuable insights into the mechanisms and principles that drive collaboration and interconnection among the entities, highlighting the importance of communication, shared values, and soft power in shaping relationships. These insights can be applied not only to the specific context of the 'Ulema, the Foundation, and the King but also to a broader understanding of collaboration and interconnectedness in various contexts.

Conclusion

In this discussion, we have explored the symbolic value attached to the *Al Qaraouiyine Mosque* and the city of Fes, the *Bay'a* principle, and the notion of sacrality, all of which contribute to the overall understanding of the relationship between the three entities: the King, the Foundation, and the *'Ulema*. These points also shape our understanding of Morocco's 'model of Islam' and its unique characteristics.

Al Qaraouiyine Mosque and the city of Fes hold significant symbolic value, as they represent the rich religious and cultural history of Morocco. Serving as a centre for Islamic scholarship and spiritual leadership, these sites embody the civilisational heritage and unity of rite that the Foundation, the *'Ulema*, and the King aim to promote and protect. Morocco's 'model of Islam' is grounded in these historical and spiritual dimensions, emphasising moderation, tolerance, and coexistence.

The *Bay'a* principle, which represents the reciprocity and mutual benefit between the entities, further strengthens the relationship between the King, the Foundation, and the *'Ulema*. This principle highlights the importance of cooperation, exchange, and coordination between these entities in achieving their shared goals. This collaborative approach is a key aspect of

Morocco's 'model of Islam', fostering unity and cooperation among different stakeholders in the religious sphere.

The concept of sacrality plays a vital role in understanding the dynamics of the tripartite relationship and Morocco's 'model of Islam'. The sacred nature of the mosque and its connection to the spiritual power of the King as the *Commander of the Faithful* help to reinforce the legitimacy and influence of the King's spiritual and institutional power. This emphasis on the spiritual authority of the King underlines the importance of preserving and promoting Morocco's religious identity and traditions in the context of the nation's 'model of Islam'.

In conclusion, the *Al Qaraouiyine Mosque,* and the city of Fes, along with the *Bay'a* principle and the notion of sacrality, contribute to a deeper understanding of the relationship between the King, the Foundation, and the *'Ulema*, as well as the unique characteristics of Morocco's 'model of Islam'. The symbolic value of these sites and the interconnected principles that govern their interactions enable the transformation of intangible assets into tangible outcomes, ultimately promoting the shared values, vision, and mission of these entities within the framework of Morocco's distinctive approach to Islam.

Conclusion

At the beginning of this thesis, we delved into the role of the Muslim religion in Morocco's nation-state identity by examining the 2011 Moroccan Constitution. Using a combination of qualitative content analysis, thematic analysis, and the NVivo software, the study sought to identify patterns and themes related to Morocco's projected identity. The focus was on the Preamble and 11 selected articles pertinent to the overarching theme of identity.

The initial stage of the analysis uncovered three primary themes: Kingdom, Nation, and Muslim Religion. Intriguingly, these themes align with Morocco's national motto, "God, The homeland, The King" (الله، الوطن، الملك). Subsequent word frequency queries revealed that the Muslim religion was not as prevalent as anticipated and seemed predominantly associated with the national dimension of Morocco's nation-state identity. The study further discovered interesting patterns in the integration of national and international aspects, emphasizing the importance of Morocco's international standing, particularly concerning its projected identity. Nevertheless, the word frequency analysis showed no common word related to the overall theme of religion when converging between the national and global units.

These findings challenge the Moroccan constitution's assertion in its preamble of the pre-eminence accorded to the Muslim religion in Morocco's national reference. The results showed that the national reference appears to be more prominent than the religious one in certain instances, suggesting that the Islamic component of Morocco's projected identity might not necessarily constitute the most prominent feature of the Kingdom's nation-state identity. Instead, it could serve as an instrument to maintain national sentiment and cohesion. The concept of "national sentiment" is defined as the common characteristics that bind people together within and between nations. According to the constitution's preamble, the place of religion in Morocco's national reference is consistent with the values of openness, moderation, tolerance, and dialogue for mutual understanding between cultures and civilisations. These values find their root in Islam, indicating that the bonding principle between the Moroccan people and the world is based on universal values that originate from the Islamic religion.

The study's findings suggest that the role of religion in maintaining national sentiment is more significant than its role in defining Morocco's nation-state identity. As a result, the pre-eminence of religion appears to primarily concern the nation, rather than the Kingdom. This distinction between the role of religion in the nation and the Kingdom adds an important layer

of complexity to our understanding of Morocco's nation-state identity. In addition, the analysis of word frequency queries revealed that the prominence of certain themes, such as unity, respect, and rights, varied depending on the codes involved. This observation underscores the need to consider the intricate interactions between religion, nation, and state when analysing Morocco's nation-state identity.

Overall, chapter 1 highlights the importance of understanding the nuances and complexities of the relationship between religion, nation, and state in the context of Morocco's nation-state identity as expressed in the 2011 constitution. For example, the constitution's emphasis on the King's role as the "*Commander of the Faithful*" and the recognition of Islam as the State religion illustrate the intricate ties between religious and political authority in Morocco. Additionally, the constitution acknowledges the Amazigh language and culture, which represents another important aspect of Morocco's national identity. The findings contribute to the broader discussion on the role of religion in nation-state identity and provide valuable insights into the unique characteristics of Morocco's political and cultural landscape, such as the coexistence of Islamic and secular values, the monarchy's historical legitimacy, and the nation's efforts to balance traditionalism and modernity. By examining these aspects, the research not only deepens our understanding of Morocco's particular case but also sheds light on the complex interplay between religion, culture, and politics in nation-state building processes more generally.

While Chapter 1 provides a general introduction to the concept of nation branding and its significance in contemporary international relations, Chapter 2 delves deeper into the theoretical underpinnings and components of nation branding, examining how it is practiced and achieved. It builds on the foundation laid in Chapter 1 by delving into the theoretical aspects of nation branding. It explores the key components of nation branding, such as the need for a consistent and coherent narrative, the differentiation between nation branding and nation building, and the various tools and tactics employed in nation branding campaigns. The chapter further discusses the role of public diplomacy and soft power in nation branding efforts, emphasising the significance of non-coercive means of influencing and shaping international perceptions.

We explored the strategic importance of Morocco's royal tour of Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire, and Gabon in 2013 and its implications for shaping group identity and development in Africa. The analysis has identified several key factors that demonstrate the significance of this tour, including the economic and political dimensions, the shared colonial heritage, the institutional landscape, and the spiritual connections through the Tijānīyyah Sufi order. Moreover, the

chapter has highlighted the critical role of identity framing in Morocco's diplomatic efforts and its ability to capitalise on its Arab, African, and Muslim components to position itself in the global scene. Morocco's membership in various international organisations such as the OIF, OIC, ECOWAS, and the UN further underscores its commitment to regional and global cooperation. These affiliations enable Morocco to engage in multilateral diplomacy and reinforce its strategic importance on the African continent and the global stage. Through its participation in these organisations, Morocco can collaborate on a range of issues, such as trade, security, and cultural exchange, fostering stronger relationships with other member states.

Identity framing plays a crucial role in Morocco's diplomatic strategy, as the nation effectively capitalises on its Arab, African, and Muslim components to strengthen its position in the international arena. By embracing and promoting its diverse heritage, Morocco has effectively established itself as a bridge between different cultures and regions, making it a valuable partner in various diplomatic contexts. This multifaceted identity allows Morocco to connect with different countries based on shared cultural, religious, and historical ties, as well as mutual economic and political interests. The King's tour in 2013 can be seen as a strategic effort to leverage various tangible and intangible networks to enhance Morocco's diplomatic position and influence in Africa. By emphasising the shared historical, cultural, and spiritual ties, as well as the mutual economic and political interests, Morocco has effectively positioned itself as a significant player in the African political and economic landscape. The spiritual connections through the *Tijānīyyah* Sufi order, in particular, underscore the importance of shared values and principles in fostering a sense of unity and solidarity among these countries.

In light of Morocco's diverse identity and its strategic affiliations with international organisations, the nation is well-positioned to play a crucial role in shaping group identity and development in Africa. The analysis presented in this chapter highlights the importance of understanding the complex interplay of factors that contribute to the formation of group identity and the ways in which nations use diplomacy and cultural connections to advance their strategic interests on the continent. As Morocco continues to navigate its membership and obligations within international organisations and enhance its diplomatic presence, its multifaceted identity will remain a key asset in forging strong connections and promoting development across Africa.

By linking the introductory concepts in Chapter 1 to the more detailed theoretical discussion in Chapter 2, the reader gains a well-rounded and comprehensive understanding of nation branding as a whole. The chapters complement each other, with Chapter 1 providing the necessary background and motivation for studying nation branding, and Chapter 2 delving into

the finer details and intricacies of the practice, ultimately creating a cohesive and integrated exploration of the topic.

While Chapter 2 focuses on the theoretical underpinnings and components of nation branding, Chapter 3 provides a case study of Morocco's nation branding strategy, illustrating how the concepts and components discussed in Chapter 2 are put into practice. This helps set the tone for a comprehensive analysis of the multifaceted dimensions of Morocco's nation branding strategy, with a particular focus on the interplay between heritage, identity, and diplomacy. Through an exploration of various speeches, events, and diplomatic initiatives, Chapter 3 has demonstrated the nation's efforts to establish a coherent brand identity that draws on its unique cultural, historical, and geographic assets. This has enabled Morocco to position itself as a mediator and bridge-builder between different regions, cultures, and political groups.

The chapter began by examining the role of nation branding in promoting stability, both domestically and internationally. It was argued that Morocco's emphasis on unity, peace, and stability in its constitution and foreign policy reflects the importance of these values in the nation's political agenda. The nation's commitment to stability is evident in the various regional environments in which it operates, and its nation brand has effectively linked these values to Morocco's image, further enhancing its currency stability.

The analysis of Morocco's global development strategy in Africa revealed the significance of economic factors and diplomatic actions in the continent to the nation's conception of stability. By leveraging its assets and promoting a sense of belonging, Morocco has been able to expand its influence and rise to the rank of regional leader. The nation's nation branding strategy, which encompasses various sectors, from sharing knowledge to combating terrorism, has been instrumental in enhancing the impact of its diplomatic initiatives.

One of the key aspects of Morocco's nation branding strategy is its State-sanctioned Islam, which serves as a unifying force and a cornerstone of its identity. By emphasising moderation and tolerance, both within the country and in its interactions with other nations, Morocco has been able to strengthen its brand and create positive associations that contribute to its overall image.

The chapter also discussed the role of heritage and identity as mediators of diplomatic relations. Morocco's utilisation of its unique cultural and historical heritage, along with its emphasis on shared values and commonalities, has fostered a sense of reciprocity and cooperation in its diplomatic engagements. By strategically using heritage diplomacy, Morocco has been able to enhance the value of its intangible assets and promote collaboration with other nations.

The chapter concluded by proposing a mental model for the personification of Morocco, which incorporates its geographic location as its body, its group affiliations as its identity, and its heritage as its memory. This personification demonstrates the nation's ability to connect with other countries on a deeper level, facilitating diplomatic relationships and cooperation.

In summary, Chapter 3 illuminated the complexity and effectiveness of Morocco's nation branding strategy in promoting stability, fostering diplomatic relations, and enhancing its position in the global arena. Through the skilful integration of tangible and intangible assets, Morocco has created a distinct and resonant brand identity that reflects its unique cultural, historical, and geographical characteristics. By leveraging these assets, Morocco has not only increased its diplomatic influence but also contributed to its overall economic development and stability. As the world becomes increasingly interconnected and interdependent, Morocco's nation branding strategy serves as a valuable case study for understanding the importance of heritage, identity, and diplomacy in shaping a nation's image and role on the global stage. By examining Morocco's nation branding strategy, Chapter 3 serves to validate and contextualise the theories and concepts discussed in Chapter 2. It showcases the intricacies of the nation branding process and highlights the importance of considering a nation's unique characteristics and assets when designing and implementing branding campaigns. Moreover, the case study illustrates the critical role of heritage, identity, and diplomacy in the success of nation branding efforts, emphasising the need for a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of these factors in the context of global politics and international relations.

Chapter 4 builds upon the findings of Chapter 3 by critically examining the complex interplay between global and local factors in shaping the perceptions of Morocco's 'model of Islam' as a global brand. This chapter explores the significance of balancing global and local brand elements to cater to unique consumer preferences in different markets. Additionally, it delves into the role of cultural identity, brand perceptions, and the country-of-origin effect in shaping consumers' preferences for local and global brands. In the chapter, we critically examined the complex interplay between global and local factors and the multiple identities held by consumers in the context of Morocco's 'model of Islam' as a global brand. The chapter has built upon the findings of Chapter 3, highlighting the importance of brand innovation and effective communication strategies in positioning the 'model of Islam' in the international arena, while remaining sensitive to the diverse cultural, religious, and national identities that influence consumer perceptions. Through the lens of various theoretical frameworks and case studies, the chapter has explored the significance of balancing global and local brand elements to cater to unique consumer preferences in different markets. The analysis has also delved into

the role of cultural identity, brand perceptions, and the country-of-origin effect in shaping consumers' preferences for local and global brands.

One of the central themes in the chapter has been the fluidity and dynamism of global consumer culture, which operates within a context of multiple, coexisting social identities. The chapter has argued that Morocco's 'model of Islam' as a global brand must adapt to this fluid dynamic to appeal to a wide range of audiences while maintaining its core values and heritage. Additionally, the chapter has critically assessed the role of diplomacy and nation branding in consolidating Morocco's spiritual influence on the international stage. By leveraging its cultural and historical resources, as well as its diaspora, Morocco can strengthen its nation brand and foster connections between global and local identities. However, it is crucial for Morocco to carefully manage its nation branding efforts to avoid any misinterpretation or miscommunication that could undermine its 'model of Islam'.

The link between Chapters 3 and 4 is evident in the exploration of Morocco's 'model of Islam' as a nation branding tool. This model serves as a counter-narrative to radical Islam, promoting community resilience and fostering inter-state and inter-regional cooperation. Chapter 3 examined how Morocco utilises its heritage and identity as mediators for diplomatic relations, while this chapter has delved deeper into understanding the impact of global and local factors on shaping the perceptions of Morocco's 'model of Islam' by domestic and international consumers.

In light of these discussions, it is essential to critically assess how Morocco engages in nation branding through its 'model of Islam'. While Morocco has made efforts to position its religious model globally, it is vital to consider the inherent complexities of the global consumer culture and the coexisting social identities of its target audience. Emphasising the role of the 'model of Islam' in Morocco's nation branding requires a delicate balance between showcasing the unique aspects of its religious model and accommodating the diverse identities of its consumers. In addressing both local and global elements attached to Morocco's 'model of Islam', the chapter underscores the importance of understanding the dynamic nature of identity and the fluidity of global consumer culture. Furthermore, it highlights the need for Morocco to continually adapt its branding strategies to maintain its relevance and appeal to diverse consumer bases.

In Chapter 5, the analysis shifts to the specific tripartite relationship between the *'Ulema*, the Foundation, and the King, delving into the intricacies of their interconnectedness and the mechanisms that drive their collaboration. This chapter builds upon the insights gained in Chapter 4, examining the shared principles, attributes, and values that underpin the

relationships between the three entities. In doing so, this chapter has contributed significantly to our understanding of the importance of communication, shared values, and soft power in shaping relationships within the broader context of the study. One key element that emerged from the analysis is Morocco's 'model of Islam', which forms the basis for the shared values, vision, and mission among the '*Ulema*, the Foundation, and the King. This model of Islam emphasises moderation, tolerance, and coexistence, and it underpins their collective efforts to promote peace, stability, and development within the region. The Moroccan 'model of Islam' is also an integral part of the nation's branding strategy, as it differentiates Morocco from other countries in the region and projects an image of religious harmony, stability, and progress.

The King's image and soft power, grounded in ideological, cultural, and institutional resources, play a critical role in communicating these shared principles and transforming their common purpose into tangible outcomes. The promotion of Morocco's 'model of Islam' through the King's image and soft power contributes to the nation branding strategy and strengthens the Morocco brand on the international stage.

Moreover, the chapter has highlighted the overarching mechanisms of 'unity', 'order', and 'meaning' that facilitate value co-creation, enabling the transformation of capabilities into tangible outcomes. This process underscores the interdependence and cooperation between the three entities, emphasising the importance of mutual support and alignment in achieving common goals.

Drawing on the insights and findings from previous chapters, it is evident that the themes explored in Chapter 5 are closely connected to the broader study. For instance, the importance of communication, as discussed in Chapter 2, is a crucial aspect of the tripartite relationship, enabling the efficient transmission of shared values and goals among the entities. The discussion of soft power and its impact on relationships in Chapter 3 finds resonance in the analysis of the King's soft power in Chapter 5, reinforcing the significance of ideological, cultural, and institutional resources in shaping collaborative efforts. Similarly, the exploration of the role of shared values in fostering interconnectedness in Chapter 4 is further developed in Chapter 5, as the shared principles, attributes, and values between the *'Ulema*, the Foundation, and the King are examined in detail. The connection between the entities and their ability to work together towards their common objectives is a testament to the importance of aligning values, vision, and mission.

In light of these connections, this chapter not only provided an in-depth understanding of the specific tripartite relationship but has also contributed to a broader comprehension of the dynamics of collaboration and interconnectedness in various contexts. The insights gained

from this analysis can be applied to the study of other relationships, emphasising the critical role of communication, shared values, and soft power in shaping effective and synergistic partnerships.

Chapter 5 made a significant contribution to our understanding of the tripartite relationship between the *'Ulema*, the Foundation, and the King, shedding light on the complex mechanisms that drive their collaboration and interconnectedness. By examining their shared principles, attributes, and values, as well as the critical role of the King's image and soft power in promoting Morocco's 'model of Islam' and shaping the nation branding and Morocco Brand, this chapter has offered valuable insights that can be applied to a broader understanding of relationships in various contexts.

To conclude, this study weaves together a comprehensive narrative, beginning with the historical and cultural context of Morocco, which lays the foundation for understanding the country's nation branding efforts and the Moroccan 'model of Islam'. These elements, in turn, inform the broader exploration of shared values and interconnectedness in various contexts, ultimately focusing on the specific relationships among the '*Ulema,* the Foundation, and the King.

The purpose of this study is not only to examine the role of shared values, vision, and mission in fostering collaboration and promoting interconnectedness but also to delve into the complex dynamics within the Moroccan context and beyond. By exploring the Moroccan 'model of Islam' and nation branding efforts, this study sheds light on the ways shared values shape relationships and partnerships. The added value of this research lies in its multifaceted approach, providing a thorough analysis of the intricate links between various elements, such as nation branding, the Moroccan 'model of Islam', and the relationships among key entities. This comprehensive understanding enables valuable insights to be applied to other contexts, both within Morocco and internationally.

One of the tangible implications of this study is the provision of a framework for understanding the role of shared values in fostering effective collaboration and partnerships. This framework can be applied to various contexts, allowing policymakers, scholars, and practitioners to gain insights into how nation branding and soft power contribute to promoting a country's values, vision, and mission, and enhancing its international influence. Furthermore, this study offers valuable insights into the Moroccan 'model of Islam' and its potential as a source of moderation, tolerance, and coexistence in addressing contemporary challenges, such as religious extremism and socio-political instability. This understanding leads to a strategic exploration of the tripartite relationship between the *'Ulema,* the Foundation, and the King,

highlighting its potential implications for promoting peace, stability, and development in Morocco and the broader region.

By weaving together these various elements, this study tells a compelling story of how shared values and interconnectedness shape the Moroccan context and beyond. By understanding these connections and their implications, the insights gained from this study can inform approaches to fostering collaboration, interconnectedness, and the achievement of shared objectives in various contexts, ultimately making a valuable contribution to the field.

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