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THE ROLE OF METAPHORS IN SHAPING POLITICAL RHETORIC: AN ANALYSIS OF KING HASSAN II'S SPEECHES IN MOROCCO

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Abstract:

This study explores the strategic use of metaphors in the speeches of King Hassan II of Morocco, focusing on their role in constructing political legitimacy and fostering a cohesive national identity during the critical post-independence era. The research aims to uncover how metaphorical language was employed by King Hassan II to address political challenges, consolidate his authority, and connect with a diverse populace by evoking shared cultural, religious, and historical narratives.

A qualitative content analysis was conducted on a corpus of King Hassan II's speeches delivered between 1961 and 1999. These speeches were selected based on their thematic relevance to political legitimacy and nation-building. Conceptual metaphor theory served as the analytical framework, allowing for the identification and categorization of recurring metaphorical themes. The findings reveal that King Hassan II frequently employed three dominant categories of metaphors. Familial metaphors, which positioned him as the "father" of the nation, fostering a sense of unity and shared responsibility among citizens, religious metaphors, which drew upon Morocco's Islamic heritage to frame his authority as divinely ordained and morally guided and journey metaphors, which presented Morocco as a nation on a purposeful path toward progress and modernization, with the king as its guide. These metaphorical frameworks were not only pivotal in reinforcing King Hassan II's political legitimacy but also in shaping a collective national identity that resonated across Morocco's socio-political spectrum.

This study highlights the significant role of metaphorical language in political communication, offering insights into the broader relationship between discourse, power, and identity in Arab political contexts.

Keywords: Metaphors, Political Rhetoric, National Identity, Political Legitimacy, Discourse Analysis, Conceptual Metaphor Theory, Arab Political Communication

I. Introduction

Metaphors are more than rhetorical flourishes; they are essential tools of cognition and communication, shaping how individuals perceive and respond to the world. In political discourse, metaphors serve as powerful devices for constructing meaning, legitimizing authority, and mobilizing collective action. George Lakoff and Mark Johnson's seminal work *Metaphors We Live By* (1980) underscores the idea that metaphors influence thought and action by framing complex realities in relatable terms. This insight has been particularly influential in analysing political rhetoric, where leaders use metaphorical language to align their agendas with societal values and aspirations.

In the Arab world, political leaders often draw on cultural, historical, and religious motifs to craft persuasive narratives. These narratives play a critical role in uniting diverse populations and addressing challenges such as post-colonial state-building, social cohesion, and political legitimacy. Scholars have highlighted the centrality of rhetorical strategies in Arab leadership, emphasizing the interplay between traditional values and modern governance. However, few studies have focused specifically on the metaphorical frameworks employed by individual leaders in the region.

In the context of Morocco, King Hassan II (1929–1999) stands out as a master orator whose speeches combined eloquence with strategic intent. Ascending to the throne in 1961 during a period of significant political and social transformation, King Hassan II faced the dual challenges of consolidating his authority and fostering a unified national identity. His speeches, delivered across various occasions, were imbued with metaphorical language that resonated deeply with Morocco's historical and cultural ethos.

Existing literature on King Hassan II's rhetoric highlights his ability to navigate Morocco's diverse sociopolitical landscape by invoking shared values and historical continuity. Scholars have explored his use of religious references, his appeals to Morocco's ancestral heritage, and his framing of modernization as a national mission. Yet, there is a gap in the scholarship regarding the specific role of metaphors in his speeches. How did these metaphors function to legitimize his rule and articulate a cohesive vision of Moroccan identity?

This study aims to address this gap by examining the metaphorical language in King Hassan.

II's speeches, focusing on its role in constructing political legitimacy and shaping national identity. By employing conceptual metaphor theory and qualitative content analysis, this research seeks to uncover the underlying metaphorical frameworks that defined his rhetoric and their impact on Morocco's socio-political narrative.

II. Research question and methodology

Political rhetoric often relies on the strategic use of language to achieve specific goals, such as legitimizing authority or fostering a sense of collective identity. King Hassan II of Morocco, recognized for his eloquent and impactful speeches, used metaphors extensively to address the challenges of post-independence governance and nation-building. This study seeks to answer the central research question: **How did King Hassan II use metaphors in his speeches to construct political legitimacy and shape national identity in Morocco?**

To address this question, a qualitative research design was employed, grounded in conceptual metaphor theory (CMT) as articulated by Lakoff and Johnson. CMT provides a framework for understanding how metaphors shape thought and action by linking abstract concepts to familiar, concrete experiences.

The study involved the following methodological steps:

1. **Corpus selection:** A collection of King Hassan II's speeches, delivered between 1961 and 1999, was compiled for analysis. These speeches were selected based on their thematic relevance to political legitimacy and nation-building. The corpus includes speeches delivered on national occasions, international platforms, and key moments in Moroccan history.
2. **Data analysis:** The speeches were subjected to qualitative content analysis to identify metaphorical language. The analysis focused on identifying recurring metaphorical themes and their conceptual underpinnings. Specifically, metaphors were categorized into three dominant domains: familial metaphors (e.g., "father of the nation"), religious metaphors (e.g., "shepherd of the faithful"), and journey metaphors (e.g., "path to progress").
3. **Interpretative framework:** Each metaphor was analysed within its historical and cultural context to uncover its rhetorical function. For example, familial metaphors

reinforced the king's image as a unifying patriarch, while religious metaphors drew on Morocco's Islamic heritage to frame his rule as divinely sanctioned.

4. **Validity and reliability:** Triangulation techniques were employed to enhance the credibility of the findings. Insights from metaphor analysis were cross-referenced with existing scholarly literature on Moroccan political rhetoric and King Hassan II's speeches. Additionally, peer review of the metaphor identification process ensured analytical rigor.

Through this methodological approach, the study aims to illuminate the role of metaphors in shaping King Hassan II's political rhetoric, highlighting their significance in constructing a cohesive national identity and legitimizing his authority.

III. Literature review: The role of metaphors in political discourse and nation building

The use of metaphor in political discourse has long been recognized as a powerful tool for constructing and conveying ideologies, shaping public opinion, and fostering a sense of collective identity. Metaphors, as cognitive tools that help individuals make sense of complex and abstract concepts, are integral to political communication, particularly in post-colonial contexts where national identity and legitimacy are in the process of formation. This literature review explores key scholarly works on metaphor theory and its application to political rhetoric, with a particular focus on the role of metaphors in the speeches of King Hassan II of Morocco.

1. Conceptual metaphor theory:

The foundation for the study of metaphors in political discourse is provided by conceptual metaphor theory (CMT), primarily developed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980). According to CMT, metaphors are not merely stylistic devices, but fundamental to human thought, structuring how individuals understand the world. Political leaders often utilize metaphors to articulate visions of power, authority, and nationhood. In the context of King Hassan II's speeches, CMT serves as a lens through which metaphorical constructs can be analysed, revealing how metaphors function to consolidate political legitimacy and foster a cohesive national identity. The concept of metaphor as a cognitive tool aligns with the idea that leaders employ metaphors strategically to engage with their audiences and address societal challenges.

2. Metaphors in political legitimacy and authority:

A substantial body of research has examined how metaphors contribute to the construction of political legitimacy and the authority of political leaders. According to Laclau (1996), political legitimacy is often constructed through discursive strategies that frame the leader as the embodiment of national values and aspirations. Metaphors play a critical role in this process by providing symbolic representations of power that resonate with the cultural and historical narratives of the nation. For example, familial metaphors, such as the leader as “father of the nation,” are widely used to establish a paternalistic relationship between the ruler and the citizens, suggesting a sense of care, responsibility, and authority. In the case of King Hassan II, this metaphorical construct served to position him as the central figure in Morocco’s postindependence political landscape, guiding the nation through its challenges and fostering unity among a diverse population.

3. Metaphors in nation-building and identity construction:

Nation-building is a complex process that involves creating a shared sense of identity and belonging among citizens. Metaphors are central to this process, as they help to frame national narratives and construct a vision of the nation’s future. Scholars such as Smith (1991) and Anderson (2006) have emphasized the role of cultural symbols, including metaphors, in fostering a collective national identity. In the case of Morocco, King Hassan II’s speeches employed metaphors that invoked the nation’s Islamic heritage, positioning the king’s authority as divinely ordained and morally guided. Religious metaphors, such as references to the king as the protector of Islam, were instrumental in linking his political legitimacy with the sacred, reinforcing his moral authority in the eyes of the Moroccan people.

Journey metaphors also played a significant role in shaping Morocco’s national identity. By framing the nation’s path as a journey toward progress and modernization, King Hassan II evoked a sense of purpose and direction for the Moroccan people. This metaphorical representation resonated with citizens’ aspirations for a better future and presented the king as the guiding force steering the nation toward development and prosperity. In this context, journey metaphors are not merely rhetorical flourishes but strategic tools for reinforcing the narrative of national progress and unity.

4. Metaphors in Arab political contexts:

The use of metaphors in political discourse has been widely studied in Western contexts; however, there is a growing body of literature exploring their role in Arab political settings. Scholars such as Al-Sheikh (2010) and Shaheen (2015) have highlighted the significance of metaphors in Arab political rhetoric, particularly in the works of leaders like Gamal Abdel Nasser and Saddam Hussein. These leaders employed metaphors to project a sense of unity and national pride while simultaneously consolidating their authority. In the case of King Hassan II, his use of metaphorical language can be understood as part of a broader tradition of metaphorical rhetoric in Arab politics, where language becomes a tool for shaping both political power and national identity.

Summary

The literature on metaphors in political discourse highlights their critical role in shaping political legitimacy, national identity, and collective aspirations. In the context of King Hassan II's speeches, metaphors served as essential tools for constructing a cohesive narrative of the nation, framing his authority in terms of familial, religious, and journey metaphors. By employing these metaphorical frameworks, King Hassan II was able to navigate the complexities of post-independence Morocco, consolidating his political legitimacy and fostering a unified national identity. This study contributes to the broader understanding of the relationship between metaphor, power, and identity in Arab political contexts, demonstrating the enduring significance of metaphorical language in political communication.

IV. Theoretical framework: Metaphor, power, and political legitimacy

To analyse the use of metaphors in the speeches of King Hassan II and their role in shaping political legitimacy and national identity, it is essential to draw upon a range of theoretical perspectives. This section outlines the key theories that inform the analysis, focusing on conceptual metaphor theory, discursive legitimacy, and nation-building theory, as well as their application to the study of political rhetoric.

5. Conceptual metaphor theory (CMT):

Conceptual metaphor theory, pioneered by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson in *Metaphors We Live By* (1980), posits that metaphors are not merely linguistic devices but fundamental elements of human cognition. According to CMT, metaphors shape

how individuals perceive and understand abstract concepts by mapping familiar, concrete experiences onto more abstract, complex ideas. In political discourse, metaphors are used to structure ideas about power, identity, authority, and the state.

Lakoff and Johnson's work suggests that metaphors are part of our everyday thought processes and influence how we understand political, social, and cultural issues. For example, by framing a political leader as the "father of the nation," a metaphorical mapping occurs where leadership is understood in familial terms, reflecting authority, care, and protection. In the case of King Hassan II, the use of metaphors such as familial, religious, and journey metaphors can be seen as a means of constructing and reinforcing his political legitimacy by aligning his rule with widely accepted cultural and moral frameworks.

CMT provides a robust analytical lens to uncover how metaphors function to organize the political discourse of King Hassan II and to connect abstract political concepts—such as governance, authority, and national progress—with more tangible, familiar images that resonate with the population.

6. Discursive legitimacy theory:

The concept of political legitimacy is central to understanding how metaphors contribute to political power. According to theories of discursive legitimacy, political power is not simply derived from legal or institutional sources but is constructed through language and discourse. The work of Ernesto Laclau (1996) and Jacques Derrida (1976) emphasizes that legitimacy is a discursive construct, built through the strategic use of language, symbols, and metaphors that resonate with societal values and beliefs.

Laclau's theory of *hegemony* suggests that political legitimacy is achieved when a leader successfully links their authority with the desires and identities of the people, creating a broad and cohesive political coalition. In this sense, metaphors become a tool for the leader to articulate a vision of national identity and progress that aligns with the collective aspirations of the population. For King Hassan II, the use of familial metaphors, for example, positioned him as the protector and father of the nation, a figure who embodied the ideals of unity, care, and responsibility. By invoking these metaphors, King Hassan II solidified his authority and enhanced his political legitimacy in the eyes of the Moroccan people, positioning himself as both a moral and political leader.

Through this theoretical lens, metaphors can be seen as essential in the construction of political legitimacy, as they help translate abstract ideas of governance and power into relatable, emotionally resonant concepts that support the ruler's claims to authority.

7. Nation-building and identity construction theory:

Nation-building is an essential aspect of post-colonial governance, particularly in the period following independence, when new states must forge a collective identity among diverse populations. Benedict Anderson's concept of "imagined communities" (1983) is crucial to understanding how metaphors function in the creation of national identity. According to Anderson, nations are not simply geographical entities but are constructed through shared narratives, symbols, and ideologies that bind individuals together in a collective imagination.

In the context of post-independence Morocco, King Hassan II's speeches contributed to the formation of a cohesive national identity by evoking cultural, religious, and historical symbols. Nation-building metaphors, such as the portrayal of the nation as a journey, allowed the Moroccan public to envision themselves as part of a larger national narrative—one that was moving toward modernization, unity, and progress. The journey metaphor, in particular, presented the nation as a dynamic entity, evolving over time and requiring collective effort and leadership to reach its destination.

This theory underscores the role of metaphors in shaping not only political legitimacy but also collective identity. Metaphors are critical in nation-building as they provide a shared framework for understanding the nation's history, values, and aspirations. By framing himself as the guide on this journey, King Hassan II positioned himself as both a leader and a symbol of the nation's collective hopes and ambitions, reinforcing his role in shaping Morocco's identity in the postcolonial period.

8. The role of religion in political discourse:

In societies with a strong religious identity, the relationship between religion and politics is often intertwined, with metaphors drawn from religious language used to legitimize political power. Michel Foucault's (1977) ideas on the relationship between power and knowledge are relevant here, as they suggest that political power often derives from control over ideological constructs, including religion. In the case of King Hassan II, religious metaphors served to connect his authority to the divine, framing him as not only a political leader but also a moral and spiritual guide. This framing aligns with the

concept of *divine kingship*, where the monarch is seen as a sacred figure whose authority is sanctioned by a higher power.

The use of religious metaphors was crucial in consolidating King Hassan II's authority in a nation where Islam was central to both personal and collective identity. By invoking religious imagery and metaphors, King Hassan II was able to reinforce his political legitimacy while also appealing to the cultural and spiritual sensibilities of the Moroccan people.

Summary

The theories outlined above, conceptual metaphor theory, discursive legitimacy theory, nation building and identity construction theory, and the role of religion in political discourse, provide a robust framework for understanding the strategic use of metaphors in the speeches of King Hassan II. These metaphors were not simply linguistic embellishments but essential components of his broader political strategy. By utilizing metaphors that resonated with shared cultural, religious, and historical narratives, King Hassan II was able to construct a vision of Morocco that fostered national unity, reinforced his authority, and positioned him as the rightful leader in the post-independence era. These theoretical perspectives offer valuable insights into the power of metaphor in political discourse, particularly in the context of nation-building and legitimacy in Arab political settings.

V. Findings: The strategic use of metaphors in King Hassan II's speeches

The qualitative content analysis of King Hassan II's speeches, spanning from 1961 to 1999, revealed three dominant categories of metaphors: familial, religious, and journey metaphors, each playing a critical role in reinforcing his political legitimacy and fostering a cohesive national identity. The findings demonstrate how these metaphorical frameworks were intricately woven into the speeches to address political challenges, consolidate authority, and resonate with the Moroccan populace. These metaphors not only functioned as rhetorical devices but also as strategic tools to articulate a vision for the nation, drawing on shared cultural, religious, and historical narratives to solidify his governance.

Table 1: Distribution of metaphor categories by speech theme

Theme	Familial metaphors	Religious metaphors	Journey metaphors
Nation-building	4	2	3
Political Legitimacy	6	5	2
Social Unity	3	4	5
Economic Progress	2	1	4

Table 1 presents the distribution of familial, religious, and journey metaphors across four key speech themes: nation-building, political legitimacy, social unity, and economic progress. The data reveals distinct patterns in metaphor usage aligned with the specific goals and contexts of each theme:

- **Nation-building:** Familial metaphors (4 occurrences) were the most frequent, emphasizing unity and collective responsibility. Religious metaphors (2) and journey metaphors (3) were used to a lesser extent, suggesting that while the king's role was presented as paternal, the metaphorical focus was also on progress and divine guidance.
- **Political legitimacy:** Familial metaphors (6) again feature prominently, reinforcing the king's role as the nation's "father." Religious metaphors (5) also had significant usage, aligning the king's legitimacy with divine authority. Journey metaphors (2) were less frequent, indicating a more focused narrative on authority and religious endorsement in this theme.
- **Social unity:** Here, journey metaphors (5) were the most dominant, likely reflecting the king's vision of a unified nation moving toward common goals. Familial (3) and religious metaphors (4) supported the notion of collective responsibility, but the emphasis shifted more toward the concept of progress and development, reinforcing the collective journey of the nation.
- **Economic progress:** Journey metaphors (4) were again the most frequently used, highlighting the nation's path toward modernization. Familial (2) and religious metaphors (1) were less prominent, indicating that while the king sought to inspire confidence, the focus was primarily on the nation's progression and future trajectory.

Table 2: Comparison of metaphor usage in different political contexts

Political context	Familial metaphors	Religious metaphors	Journey metaphors
National crisis	5	7	3
National celebrations	8	2	5
International diplomacy	3	5	4

Table 2: compares the usage of metaphors across three distinct political contexts: national crisis, national celebrations, and international diplomacy. The data highlights how metaphor choices are strategically adapted to suit the political climate:

- **National crisis:** Familial metaphors (5) were most frequently used, underscoring the king's protective, paternal role during a crisis. Religious metaphors (7) were also notably prominent, positioning the king's authority as divinely ordained and morally guided. Journey metaphors (3) played a secondary role, suggesting that while the king framed the crisis as a challenge, the solution was framed in terms of divine guidance and leadership.
- **National celebrations:** Familial metaphors (8) dominated, reinforcing the theme of national unity under the king's leadership. This aligns with the celebratory nature of the context, where the king's role as a "father" figure was central to framing the success of the nation. Journey metaphors (5) were also significant, emphasizing the progress the nation had made. Religious metaphors (2) were less frequent, indicating that while the king's legitimacy was acknowledged, the focus shifted more toward celebrating achievements.
- **International diplomacy:** Familial metaphors (3) were used less frequently, reflecting the more formal and pragmatic nature of international relations. Religious metaphors (5) carried weight in reinforcing the king's moral authority on the global stage. Journey metaphors (4) were moderately used, symbolizing Morocco's strategic path in global politics, but not as central as in other contexts.

Synthesis overview

When synthesizing both graphs, it becomes evident that King Hassan II employed metaphorical language strategically, adjusting his use of familial, religious, and journey metaphors depending on the political context and thematic focus of each speech.

- **Familial metaphors** were consistently used in themes related to unity and legitimacy, particularly during times of national crisis or celebration. They emphasized the king's paternal role in guiding the nation.
- **Religious metaphors** were most prominent in contexts of political legitimacy and national crisis, reinforcing the divine right and moral authority of the king. This metaphor type also surfaced during national celebrations and international diplomacy, underscoring the king's elevated status.
- **Journey metaphors** were most frequently associated with themes of economic progress and social unity, aligning the metaphor of a collective path forward with aspirations of modernization and national development.

This strategic deployment of metaphors not only helped to solidify King Hassan II's political legitimacy but also played a crucial role in shaping the collective identity of the Moroccan nation during critical historical moments. The variations in metaphor usage reflect the shifting political and social priorities in Morocco, where the king adapted his rhetoric to address the specific needs of the time.

9. Familial metaphors: The father of the nation

One of the most prominent metaphorical frameworks identified in King Hassan II's speeches was the use of familial metaphors, positioning the king as the "father" of the nation. This metaphor is deeply ingrained in political rhetoric across many cultures, symbolizing authority, protection, and care. In King Hassan II's case, this metaphor served multiple purposes:

- **Unity and shared responsibility:** By framing himself as the father, the king cultivated a sense of unity and collective responsibility among the citizens. In a country with diverse ethnic, regional, and cultural groups, the metaphor of fatherhood created an image of a benevolent figure who sought the well-being of all Moroccans, transcending divisions. The king was portrayed as the central figure guiding the nation through its trials, much like a father would guide his family through challenges.

- **Paternalistic leadership:** The father metaphor also reinforced the paternalistic nature of King Hassan II's leadership style, evoking a sense of moral authority. It suggested that the king, like a father, was responsible for protecting his people and ensuring their future prosperity, particularly in the context of post-independence nation-building.
- **Symbol of Authority and Stability:** As the father figure, King Hassan II also embodied a sense of stability and continuity, essential for a nation emerging from colonialism. The metaphor reinforced his role as the central, unifying figure in Moroccan politics, suggesting that the nation could only achieve stability and progress through his leadership.

10. Religious metaphors: Divine authority and moral guidance

The second major category of metaphors identified in the analysis was religious metaphors, which linked King Hassan II's authority to Morocco's Islamic heritage. These metaphors served to strengthen the king's political legitimacy by framing his rule as divinely sanctioned, thereby elevating his status beyond mere political leader to a sacred figure with moral authority.

- **Divinely ordained leadership:** King Hassan II frequently employed religious metaphors to portray his leadership as divinely ordained. References to God's will and the king as a protector of Islam were central to his rhetoric. These religious metaphors were particularly powerful in a society where Islam was integral to both personal and national identity, linking the king's rule to the will of God, and thereby positioning his authority as unquestionable and legitimate.
- **Moral and spiritual guidance:** Religious metaphors also positioned the king as the moral guide for the nation, tasked with leading Morocco not only in political matters but also in maintaining religious and ethical values. By invoking religious imagery, the king reinforced his role as the guardian of Moroccan traditions and values, which were closely tied to Islam. This not only bolstered his authority but also presented him as a moral leader who could steer the nation through turbulent times with divine wisdom.
- **Symbol of national identity:** These religious metaphors also served to solidify a collective national identity grounded in Islam. By aligning his leadership with religious values, King

Hassan II reinforced the idea that Morocco's identity was inseparable from its Islamic roots, uniting the population under a shared sense of cultural and religious belonging.

11. Journey metaphors: The nation on a path to progress

The third key category of metaphors identified in King Hassan II's speeches was **journey metaphors**, which depicted Morocco as a nation on a collective journey toward progress and modernization, with the king positioned as the guiding figure leading the nation toward a better future. This metaphor was instrumental in framing the national project in terms of purpose and direction.

- **National progress and modernization:** The journey metaphor was often used to convey the idea that Morocco, as a newly independent nation, was moving forward on a path of development and modernity. King Hassan II portrayed himself as the leader guiding Morocco along this path, with the goal of achieving economic development, political stability, and social harmony. The metaphor of a journey helped to provide the Moroccan people with a sense of shared purpose and direction in a rapidly changing world.
- **Nation building and collective effort:** The journey metaphor also emphasized that progress was a collective effort, requiring the participation and commitment of all Moroccans. The king, as the guide, not only charted the course but also encouraged citizens to contribute to the nation's development. This metaphor reinforced the idea that national success was dependent on the unity and hard work of the entire population.
- **Hope and aspiration:** By framing Morocco's path as a journey, King Hassan II tapped into a sense of hope and aspiration, positioning the nation as one that could overcome its challenges and move toward a brighter future. This metaphor resonated deeply with a population eager for stability and prosperity after years of colonial rule.

12. Synthesis of findings

The findings suggest that King Hassan II's strategic use of metaphors was a key element of his political discourse, allowing him to address multiple dimensions of governance and nation building. The familial metaphors created a sense of unity and moral authority, positioning the king as a paternalistic figure who cared for his people. The

religious metaphors solidified his legitimacy by linking his authority to divine will, framing him as both a political and moral leader. Finally, the journey metaphors provided a framework for understanding Morocco's post-independence development as a collective effort toward progress, with the king as the nation's guide.

These metaphorical frameworks worked synergistically to strengthen King Hassan II's political legitimacy, unify the Moroccan population, and foster a collective national identity rooted in shared cultural, religious, and historical narratives. The metaphors were not just rhetorical tools; they were integral to King Hassan II's broader strategy of governance, enabling him to connect with his people on an emotional level and articulate a vision for Morocco's future. Through these metaphors, King Hassan II not only solidified his authority but also helped shape the trajectory of Morocco's nation-building process during a critical period in its history.

VI. Discussion: The Role of metaphors in King Hassan II's political discourse

The findings of this study underscore the critical role that metaphorical language played in King Hassan II's political rhetoric, particularly in constructing political legitimacy, fostering national unity, and shaping collective identity in post-independence Morocco. The study identifies three primary categories of metaphors: familial, religious, and journey metaphors, that were strategically deployed by the king to address key political challenges and promote a shared vision of the nation. This discussion will contextualize these findings, drawing connections between the metaphors used by King Hassan II and the broader political, cultural, and historical contexts of Morocco during his reign.

13. Familial metaphors: Establishing unity and legitimacy

The use of familial metaphors, particularly the metaphor of the king as the "father" of the nation, is not unique to King Hassan II's rhetoric; it has been widely used by political leaders throughout history. However, in the context of post-independence Morocco, this metaphor was particularly powerful. Following independence in 1956, Morocco was a nation in the process of rebuilding and reestablishing its identity after years of colonial rule. The familial metaphor allowed King Hassan II to present himself as the central figure in this rebuilding process, reinforcing the notion of his leadership as integral to national unity.

The metaphor of fatherhood also emphasized a paternalistic approach to leadership. In societies with traditional hierarchies, the metaphor of the "father" figure is often

associated with a sense of care, protection, and moral authority. In the case of King Hassan II, this metaphor not only reinforced his authority but also created an emotional connection with the Moroccan people. As the father figure, he was seen as responsible for the well-being of the nation, guiding it through challenges such as economic difficulties, political instability, and social unrest. This metaphor aligned with broader political ideals of paternalism, common in many monarchies and autocratic regimes, where the leader is positioned as a benevolent authority figure who ensures the safety and prosperity of the nation.

Moreover, the use of the familial metaphor helped overcome the political challenges that arose from Morocco's cultural diversity. By invoking a common familial bond, the king was able to unify various ethnic, linguistic, and regional groups within the nation, emphasizing shared responsibility and solidarity. This metaphor served as a powerful tool for nation-building, helping to bridge divisions that might have otherwise fragmented the country in its early years of independence.

King Hassan II, (1961–1999), often used paternal expressions and presented himself as the “Father of the Nation” **اب الامة**

or the “Father of the Moroccans.” **اب المغاربة**

This wasn't limited to a single speech but uttered on numerous speeches especially during crises where his intervention in guiding the nation was of utmost importance. For example, the following occasions, he used such expressions include:

1. The green march events (1975): In his speeches about the march, he adopted the tone of a caring and protective father, addressing his “children,” **ابنائى** the Moroccan people, and urging them to be committed and disciplined.
2. Throne day speeches: He frequently inserted expressions such as: "My dear sons, my dear daughters, my loyal people: **ابنائى الاعزاء، بناتى العزيزات، شعبي الوفي**
3. Famous 1981 Speech After the Casablanca Riots: In this speech, he adopted a paternal tone, referring to his responsibility as a guardian responsible for the country's security, affirming that he was “the father who does not allow chaos in his home.” **الاب الذي لا يسمح بالفوضى في بيته**

14. Religious metaphors: Legitimacy and divine authority

The religious metaphors used by King Hassan II were central to his construction of political legitimacy. Morocco, as a predominantly Muslim country, has deep historical and cultural ties to Islam, which provided a potent source of political authority for the king. By framing his leadership as divinely sanctioned, King Hassan II not only appealed to the religious sensibilities of the Moroccan population but also positioned himself as the guardian of the nation's Islamic values.

Religious metaphors were a key component of the discourse surrounding divine kingship in

Morocco, where the monarch's authority was seen as emanating from both secular and spiritual domains. King Hassan II's use of religious language allowed him to reinforce his moral authority, presenting himself as not just a political ruler but as a spiritual guide who upheld Islamic law and traditions. This divine connection legitimized his rule, making it more difficult for opponents to challenge his authority without questioning religious and moral tenets.

The religious metaphors also contributed to King Hassan II's efforts to consolidate power during times of political turbulence. In the aftermath of the failed coup attempts in the 1970s and the political unrest of the late 20th century, the king's ability to invoke religious legitimacy provided a layer of protection from domestic dissent. By presenting himself as the protector of Islam and Morocco's religious heritage, he was able to tap into the deeply ingrained respect for religious authority in Moroccan society. This religious framing thus served both as a source of political stability and as a way to appeal to the moral conscience of the Moroccan people.

Furthermore, the religious metaphors reinforced the idea of continuity with Morocco's historical traditions. By positioning himself as a leader who was not only politically legitimate but also spiritually grounded, King Hassan II connected his rule to Morocco's centuries-old dynastic history and Islamic heritage, asserting a sense of permanence and continuity that was crucial during a period of nation-building.

One of the metaphors he used to reinforce his political and religious legitimacy as "Commander of the Faithful". These religious references appeared particularly in two main contexts using three main metaphors:

1. Religious legitimacy

He described himself as "God's shadow on earth."

"الأرض في الله ظل"

thus, proposing that the monarchy manifests the Will of God. Also, He claimed that "The king is the Imam of the Muslims and protector of the faith". Thus, assuming that the political leader is actually a religious leader.

"والدين الملة وحامي المسلمين إمام الملك"

3. Highlighting the centrality of the monarchy: He used the metaphor: "The throne is like the qibla; it cannot be turned away from" comparing it to prayer direction. monarchy like the direction of prayer in Islam.

"عنها يُرْتَحَل لا كالقِبلة العرش"

15. Journey metaphors: Vision of progress and modernity

The journey metaphor is perhaps the most forward-looking of the three categories analysed in this study. King Hassan II's use of the journey metaphor to describe Morocco's path toward progress and modernization resonated deeply with the aspirations of the Moroccan people during the post-independence era. This metaphor was particularly effective in framing the nation's development as a collective effort, with the king positioned as the guide who would lead Morocco to a better future.

In the context of the early post-colonial period, many newly independent nations were grappling with the complexities of modernization and development. King Hassan II's use of the journey metaphor allowed him to present his leadership as essential to achieving national progress. The metaphor of a purposeful path forward gave the population a sense of direction and hope, which was crucial in a nation still recovering from the effects of colonial rule. The journey metaphor also served to frame the political and economic challenges Morocco faced, such as poverty, underdevelopment, and social unrest, as temporary obstacles on a larger, meaningful path toward progress.

Additionally, the journey metaphor reinforced the notion that the king, as the leader and guide, was the one who could steer Morocco through the complex terrain of modernization. This portrayal of King Hassan II as both a visionary and a guiding force helped solidify his status as the central figure in Morocco's nation-building process. It positioned him not only as the father figure who ensured the nation's stability but also

as a dynamic and progressive leader who would lead the country toward a prosperous future.

The journey metaphor, however, also allowed for flexibility in political discourse. It could accommodate setbacks and challenges, framing them as part of a larger narrative of progress. This gave the king the ability to adapt his rhetoric over time, depending on the political climate, while maintaining a consistent message of national improvement and forward movement.

Two main metaphors emerge: development journey and democratic journey

- a. **Development journey:** King Hassan II used the metaphor of "the journey" or "the path" to highlight Morocco's journey toward development, highlighting the importance of continuity and patience required to achieve this purpose.

The Opening Speech of the Parliamentary Session of 1977–1978: The King mentioned the "landmarks of the road" toward development.

معالم الطريق.

This landmark consists of justice, good administration, good education, and equitable distribution of wealth. He used the expression "landmarks of the road" as a metaphor to clarify the pillars needed for society development.

Also, the opening Speech of the Legislative Year 1998–1999: The King mentioned that Morocco is "moving forward and carving its path"

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With regards to economic development which requires addressing global issues and challenges in the face of global economic challenges.

16. Broader implications: Metaphors and power in political discourse

The study's findings also have broader implications for understanding the relationship between metaphor, power, and political discourse in the Arab world and beyond. The strategic use of metaphor by King Hassan II reflects a broader pattern seen in many political regimes, where leaders use metaphorical language to frame their authority, address national crises, and unify the population. In the Arab political context, metaphors often serve as essential tools for leaders to navigate complex political environments, consolidate their legitimacy, and create shared national narratives.

Furthermore, the use of metaphor in King Hassan II's speeches highlights the importance of language in shaping political identity and authority. Metaphors are not merely decorative features of language; they are instrumental in constructing political realities. Through the careful deployment of familial, religious, and journey metaphors, King Hassan II was able to align his personal authority with national identity and cultural values, crafting a vision of Morocco that resonated with its people and solidified his place at the nation's helm.

In conclusion, the study reveals that the strategic use of metaphor in King Hassan II's speeches was a powerful tool in constructing political legitimacy, fostering national unity, and promoting a shared vision of Morocco's future. The familial, religious, and journey metaphors served distinct but complementary roles in reinforcing the king's authority and shaping the collective identity of the Moroccan people. By grounding his leadership in familiar cultural and religious narratives, King Hassan II was able to navigate the complexities of post-independence governance and strengthen his hold on power. The findings underscore the significance of metaphor in political communication, offering insights into how language can be wielded to shape power dynamics, foster unity, and construct national identities.

VII. Research implications and recommendations

17. Research implications

The findings of this study on the strategic use of metaphors in the speeches of King Hassan II have several important implications for political communication and the broader field of metaphor studies in political discourse, particularly in post-colonial and Arab political contexts. These implications contribute to both theoretical understandings and practical insights.

This study reinforces the significant role of metaphor in constructing political legitimacy. King Hassan II's use of familial, religious, and journey metaphors strategically enhanced his authority, presenting himself as a paternal figure, a divinely guided leader, and the visionary guiding Morocco's path to progress. The research shows that political legitimacy is often not solely constructed through formal institutions or legal frameworks but also through symbolic means that resonate deeply with cultural and religious values. For political leaders, metaphors provide a means to emotionally connect with citizens and align their rule with widely accepted social, cultural, and

religious norms. This has broader implications for understanding how leaders across the world use symbolic language to bolster their power.

The study contributes to the literature on nation-building by demonstrating how metaphors can serve as instruments in creating a cohesive national identity, particularly in post-colonial societies. King Hassan II's use of metaphors, especially the journey metaphor, positioned Morocco as a nation on a collective path to progress, creating a shared sense of purpose among citizens. This highlights the role of rhetoric in nation-building, as political leaders often need to frame national identity in ways that unite diverse populations with different ethnic, cultural, and religious backgrounds. The study illustrates that metaphors are not merely rhetorical flourishes but are essential tools for framing national narratives and constructing a collective sense of belonging.

King Hassan II's frequent invocation of religious metaphors to support his rule points to the important role religion plays in political discourse in Muslim-majority countries. The religious metaphors provided the king with a moral and divine justification for his authority, which in turn strengthened his political power. This aspect of the study adds to our understanding of how religious imagery can be strategically employed to create a sense of divine legitimacy, which can be particularly effective in societies where religion is closely linked to governance. For scholars of political discourse, the study highlights how religious metaphors can function not just to foster piety but also as powerful political tools.

The research underscores the importance of metaphors in shaping political identities. Through metaphors, King Hassan II was able to connect his personal authority to broader national and cultural narratives, strengthening both his political identity and the collective identity of the Moroccan people. This research expands on existing theories of political communication by demonstrating that metaphors are not only tools for persuasive speech but also for the construction of national identities and the shaping of collective political consciousness.

Recommendations for future research

Future research could explore the use of metaphors in the political discourse of other leaders, particularly those in post-colonial or transitioning democracies, to understand

whether similar metaphorical strategies are employed to gain legitimacy and unite disparate groups. Comparative studies across different political regimes, such as authoritarian, democratic, or transitional states, could provide deeper insights into how metaphor functions as a tool for both governance and resistance.

As political communication increasingly takes place through social media and digital platforms, it would be valuable to study how metaphors are used in these new formats. Social media enables rapid dissemination of ideas and often simplifies complex political narratives. Research could investigate how metaphors are adapted in modern political communication and how they function in shaping political identities, particularly among younger generations in Arab and post-colonial societies.

Further research could explore how metaphor influences policy-making and political strategies beyond public speeches. Metaphors in political discourse are often not just rhetorical devices but reflect broader ideologies and policies. Investigating how metaphors align with or influence specific policy agendas, such as economic development, social cohesion, or international relations, could offer new insights into the intersection of language, politics, and governance.

A future avenue of research could involve conducting a critical discourse analysis of opposition rhetoric in response to the metaphors used by King Hassan II. Understanding how political rivals, social movements, or opposition groups respond to these metaphors can provide a more nuanced understanding of metaphor's role in both consolidating power and challenging authority. By examining counter-narratives, researchers could shed light on how metaphorical language is contested and how it functions in political resistance.

While this study applied conceptual metaphor theory to analyse King Hassan II's speeches, future research could extend the framework by integrating other approaches to metaphor analysis, such as cognitive linguistics or socio-cultural approaches. By exploring metaphors in different socio-political and cultural contexts, scholars can refine our understanding of how metaphors shape political discourse and contribute to the construction of power, identity, and legitimacy.

Summary

This study has shown that metaphor is a powerful tool in political discourse, offering insights into the ways in which political leaders use symbolic language to consolidate power, shape national identity, and communicate their vision for the future. King Hassan II's strategic use of familial, religious, and journey metaphors demonstrates the significant role of rhetoric in reinforcing political legitimacy and fostering unity in post-independence Morocco. Future research in this area can expand upon these findings, exploring how metaphors are used in contemporary political discourse and further illuminating the relationship between language, power, and identity in political communication.

VIII. General conclusion

This study has examined the strategic use of metaphors in the political speeches of King Hassan II of Morocco, exploring how metaphorical language played a pivotal role in constructing political legitimacy, fostering national unity, and shaping the collective identity of the Moroccan people during the post-independence era. By analysing a corpus of King Hassan II's speeches from 1961 to 1999, this research has demonstrated that metaphors were not mere rhetorical flourishes but central to the monarch's governance strategy.

The findings of this study revealed that King Hassan II utilized three primary categories of metaphors: familial metaphors, religious metaphors, and journey metaphors. These metaphors served distinct but complementary purposes. Familial metaphors, positioning the king as the "father" of the nation, were instrumental in fostering a sense of unity and shared responsibility among Moroccan citizens. Religious metaphors grounded the king's authority in Morocco's Islamic heritage, legitimizing his rule as divinely ordained. Meanwhile, journey metaphors presented Morocco as a nation on a collective path to progress and modernization, with the king as its guide. These metaphorical frameworks were crucial in reinforcing King Hassan II's political authority and consolidating his leadership during times of political and social challenges.

The study has broader implications for the understanding of metaphor in political communication. It underscores how metaphors function as essential tools for political leaders to not only convey policy goals but also construct and maintain political power. By tapping into shared cultural, religious, and historical narratives, King Hassan II was

able to craft a cohesive national identity that resonated across Morocco's diverse population, thereby fostering a sense of solidarity and shared purpose.

Furthermore, the research highlights the significance of metaphor as a tool for nation-building in post-colonial contexts. The study contributes to a deeper understanding of how political leaders use language to navigate the complexities of identity formation and state-building in newly independent nations. In this way, the metaphors employed by King Hassan II were not just instruments of persuasion but also pivotal in shaping Morocco's evolving national consciousness.

In conclusion, this study has provided valuable insights into the intersection of language, power, and identity in political discourse. By analysing the metaphorical language of King Hassan II, it has illustrated the vital role that metaphor plays in political leadership, legitimacy, and national identity. Future research could further explore how metaphors continue to shape political communication, particularly in the digital age, and examine the ways in which metaphor influences the dynamics of political resistance and opposition. Ultimately, this study contributes to the broader understanding of how political discourse is constructed and the significant role that language plays in shaping the political and cultural landscapes of nations.

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