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RESEARCH ARTICLE

SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF A PRE-MODERN NATION IN MOROCCO

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Abstract

This study investigates school textbooks with a focus on a pre-modern nation construction in Morocco. It seeks to detect the cultural symbols via which the pre-modern nation is formed. Using a deductive approach, social studies textbooks of middle school are analyzed. Drawing on the Ethno-Symbolist conceptual framework to nation formation which is developed by Anthony Smith, this study highlights the significant role of textbooks in nation-building. It suggests that the textbooks construct a pre-modern nation of Morocco out of an Arab-Muslim cultural repertoire. The research recommends changes to the content of the textbooks to adopt a multi-cultural approach, which would accommodate cultural funds of Amazigh and Jewish ethnic groups in the national narratives.

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Introduction:-

As they are made out of different ethnic, religious, cultural, and linguistic groups, post-colonial African states encounter the challenge of forming a homogenous nation. The role of education proved to be central to nation-building as the nationalist leaders resorted to the educational system. They adopted a homogenizing strategy to construct a coherent national project (Bereketeab, 2020). Similarly, Morocco is facing the challenge of constructing the nation out of a multi-ethnic society. Recently, the country has witnessed a significant political change that took place as a result of the pro-democracy movements that swept the Middle East and North Africa region in 2011.

The newly adopted constitution recognized for the first time the multi-cultural nature of the nation, as opposed to the previous ones that opted for a mono-cultural national project based on an Arab-Muslim identity. The states national narratives' influence on the content of textbooks, as educational instruments, is research-backed at the international level (Chai, 2014). This article would highlight whether the multi-cultural spirit of the constitution is reflected in school textbooks of social studies.

This study investigates how a pre-modern Moroccan nation is constructed in the school textbooks of middle school social studies. The purpose is to detect the cultural symbols upon which the pre-modern nation of Morocco is built, based on the content of the school textbooks. The following research questions are therefore developed:

1. How is the pre-modern nation of Morocco formed?
2. What are the cultural symbols via which the pre-modern nation of Morocco is formed?

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In what follows, the theoretical framework of the study will be provided. This includes the ethno-symbolist approach to nation formation, as developed by Anthony Smith (2009). A review of literature regarding the content of the textbooks in Morocco will be provided. Then, the adopted method will be explained. The findings of the study and a discussion will be given. Finally, the article ends with a conclusion and recommendations.

Theoretical Framework

This study draws on the cultural approach of Ethno-symbolism to nation formation, as developed by Smith (2009). In the field of nationalism studies, there are three main approaches to nation formation: The modernists, the primordialists and the Ethno-symbolists (Özkırmlı, 2010, pp. 6-7). As opposed to the modernists, who believe that nation emerged only in the eighteenth century, Ethno-symbolists allow for the appearance of nations centuries earlier. Given the fact that the content of the school textbooks under the study refers to the establishment of the first Moroccan state in the 8th century, the Ethno-symbolist theoretical framework can best describe the case of a pre-modern nation in Morocco (Mehrouch et al., 2014, p8).

Smith (2009) defines a nation as:

a named and self-defining human community whose members cultivate shared memories, symbols, myths, traditions, and values, inhabit and are attached to historic territories or “homelands”, create and disseminate a distinctive public culture, and observe shared customs and standardized laws. (p. 29)

He, therefore, acknowledges the emergence of nations in the pre-modern era. Based on his definition, Smith suggests five social processes which a given community would undergo to be forged into a nation. These include the processes of self-definition, myth and memory cultivation, territorialization, creating a distinctive public culture, and creating shared customs and standardized laws (Smith, 2009, p. 49).

The process of self-definition would be achieved through the creation of a myth of ancestry, which he considers as one of the main components of self-collective definition. The myth of election helps achieve the process of myth and memory cultivation. It serves in relating the community to both its history and destiny. It also attaches it to its God and fate. Smith distinguishes covenantal and missionary election. The first is about the covenant between the deity and the ethnic, whose members adhere to God’s commandments. The second takes place when God chooses particular people or kingdoms to undertake a task or a mission. The process of territorialization takes place mainly through the sanctification of a homeland. Language and religion are listed as the main components via which the process of creating a distinct public culture takes place. Observing common customs and laws fall under the process of creating shared customs and standardized laws.

Smith believes that nations are created over long durée, and that they have ethnic origins. He suggested that a potential nation would go through three main phases, from ethnic to pre-modern nation to a modern nation (Sturm, 2006, p.28). This article is mainly concerned with the pre-modern era, and employs the aforementioned processes to a potential nation formation.

Literature Review:-

Theories and approaches in the field of nationalism studies insist on the decisive role of education in the process of nation-building. In a lecture at the Sorbonne on March 11, 1882, Renan considers the past and the present as crucial factors to the genesis of nations. This includes forgetting the internal conflict of the past and having an actual will to unite as one nation (A.Zemmer, 1939, pp. 186-205). Though he did not refer to education per se, it is schools, textbooks that can help form such collective memory. For Gellner, education served well cultural standardization, which was conducive to the transition from agrarian societies to nations (Gellner, 1987, pp. 24-34). Smith stresses the important role played by educational institutions in the creation of national narratives that distinguish members of the nation from foreigners (Gellner, 1987, pp. 83-84). Anderson who defines a nation as an imagined community believes that print-capitalism had impact on the rise of nations in the sense that it made it possible for people from different geographical parts to see themselves as a unified national community (Anderson, 2006, p.188). Given that books are products of print-capitalism, school textbooks may also have a significant role in the creation of nations based on Anderson’s concept of ‘*Imagined Communities*’.

Research around the world revealed the nexus between school textbooks and nation construction. Nasser (2004) argues that textbooks of history in Jordan use exclusion strategy, via excluding Palestinians, to build a Jordanian national identity. Primary school textbooks in Bulgaria portray the country as an ethnically homogenous Bulgarian

and Orthodox Christian nation while marginalizing Turkish and Romanian ethnic minorities (Katsarska,2007). Zadeh (2012) states that middle school history textbooks make Islamic religion ‘the single most prominent element’ of the Iranian national identity. Chai (2014) found that history textbooks of 6th, 7th, and 8th grades regard Buddhism and Burmese ethnic groups as the main elements of the national identity while stressing the unity of different races under the umbrella of one nation.

There have been some research studies that analyzed school textbooks in Morocco concerning national narratives. Perhaps, the work of Idrissi (2015) is the most comprehensive one. He investigated three generations of history textbooks, which are categorized based on the educational reforms that took place in Morocco in the years 1970, 1987, and 2002. The first generation is characterized by an Arabization of national identity while the past of Arabs is ascribed to the Amazigh population. The latter ethnic group is given an Arab origin by highlighting similarities between Berber dialects and ancient Egyptian and Ethiopian languages. The second generation does not include ancient history, and it avoids ascribing an Arab origin to the Berbers. The third generation is characterized by non-Arab perception of Islamic history.

Maye-Saidi (2018) analyzed primary, middle and high school textbooks, and she found that the discourse of national identity does not adopt a pan-Arabism stance. The history of the Amazigh people is incorporated both in the pre-Islamic and post-Islamic eras. They are depicted as defenders of the country as they resisted the Romans, and they help create the first Moroccan Islamic state in the collective memory of the nationalists. Faoubar (2014) chose to analyze French textbooks of middle school, and his findings seem to be different. The discourse of national identity is found to be weak as opposed to that of personal identity. The textbooks do not offer a clear image of an Islamic religious identity, but he interestingly pointed out that Arabic language textbooks deal with national identity while Islamic education one regards Muslim religious identity as the basis for all other types of identities.

Methodology: -

This study investigates second year social studies school textbooks of middle school in Morocco to answer two main research questions:

- 1.How is the pre-modern nation of Morocco formed?
- 2.What are the cultural symbols via which the pre-modern nation of Morocco is formed?

The textbooks under study include *Annajah Fi Al Ijtimaiyte*, *Faddaa Al Ijtimaiyate*, and *Manar Al Ijtimaiyate*. They are written by Mehrouch et al. (2014), Meatella et al. (2015), and Ederbouche et al. (2017) respectively. The school textbooks are used all over the country, and they are approved by the ministry of education in Morocco. They are selected as a sample of this study because they cover the pre-modern era of the nation. The analysis draws on the Ethno-symbolist approach to nation formation, based on the work of Smith (2009). The data is analyzed qualitatively, and to a lesser extent quantitatively, to highlight cultural symbols and their equivalent processes that contribute to nation formation.

Table 1:- The processes of nation formation and their respective cultural symbols, as adapted from (Smith,2009).

The processes of nation formation	Cultural symbols
Self-definition	Myth of ancestry
Myth and memory cultivation	Myth of election
Territorialization	Sacred homeland
Creating a distinct public culture	Religion
Creating shared customs and laws	Common customs and standardized laws

This study assumes that the myth of ancestry and the myth of the election are not necessarily fictive in the proper sense of the word because ancestry ties to prophet Muhammed and the pledge of allegiance are perceived to be real by Muslims. Any reference to ‘myths’ is therefore meant to be understood in the light of this assumption.

Findings and Discussion:-

The Process of Self-Definition

This study suggests that the textbooks narrate the existence of genealogical ties to prophet Muhammed, which is similar to what Smith (2009) refers to as the ‘myth of ancestry’. This would result in self-defining the pre-modern Morocco as an Arabo-Islamic nation. Smith (2009) regards the myth of ancestry as one of the key elements of a self-

collective definition of nations. In school textbooks, an ethnic-genealogical myth appears throughout lessons of history, which are mainly devoted to various dynasties that happened to rule the country, though partly in some cases, since the 8th century. However, such a myth of ancestry is stressed among the upper strata.

Table 2:- Existence of a myth of ancestry in the social studies of middle school.

Dynasties	Existence of myth of ancestry
Idrissid (788-990 AC)	It is stressed
Almoravids (1042-1147 AC)	It does not exist
Almohads (1125-1270 AC)	It ambivalently exists
Merinids (1213-1465 AC)	It does not exist
Saadis (1517-1659 AC)	It is stressed
Alaouite (since 1666 AC)	It is stressed

The ruling elites of various dynasties are said to be descendants of the prophet Muhammed but highly stressed in the case of the Idrissid and the Alaouit dynasties. Two of the three social studies textbooks mention blood ties of Idriss I to the prophet Muhammed. According to Mehrouch et al. (2014, p 9), he is 'Idriss Ben Abdellah Ben Hassan Ben Alhassan Ben Ali Ben Abi Talib (who is the son-in-law of the prophet Muhammed). For Ederbouche et al. (2017, p.8), he is 'one of the grandsons of Ali Ben Abi Talib'.

The Saadis are also narrated to have prophetic genealogical ties. Mehrouch et al. (2014, p.25) define them as '*Ashraf* who belongs to the prophetic house', the term *Ashraf* means they had blood ties to the prophet Muhammed. Similarly, Meatella et al.(2015, p..21) call them *Shurafa* whose origin is Alhijaz, aka Arabia. The story of Hassan Ben Alkacem as the grandfather of Alaouite is narrated in the textbooks. A document tells his story as he was brought by Sejelmasa people from Alhijaz, Arabia, seeking blessing from someone who had blood ties to the prophet, *AnnasabAsharif*, which refers to a 'noble family name'. He is defined by the textbook as the grandfather of Alaouites (Ederbouche et al.(2017, p.28). His prophetic genealogical ties is further stressed in a text stating he is from 'the offspring of Fatima, the daughter of prophet Muahmmmed'. Mehrouch et al. (2014, p.28). Alaouites are also stated by Meatella et al.(2015, p.26) to be offspring of Ali Bin Abi Talib while stressing that the latter is the prophet's cousin.

This reveals that the textbooks ascribe the three aforementioned ruling families a common myth of ancestry that attach them to prophet Muhammed, who is ethnically an Arab. In the Islamic traditions, his blood ties are extended to the prophet Ishmael, who is famously known as the father of Arabs. This suggests that the myth of ancestry of an Arab ethnics is reincarnated to be the main tool for the collective self-definition of a pre-modern Moroccan nation. While a common ancestry tie is narrated, especially in the first dynasty and the last one, it is almost absent in the other dynasties.

Almoravids and Merinids both are not ascribed to a myth of common ancestry. The rulers of the two dynasties are narrated to be of Amazigh origin, lacking any sort of sacred prophetic ties. Almohads's leader is an exception, though belonging to a Berber tribe, he is narrated that he has is genealogically related to Hassan Bin Ali Bin Abi Talib, who is the grandson of the prophet Muhammed Meatella et al. (2015,p.14). However, two textbooks would shed doubt on this claim, when both of them stressed that Muhammed Ibn Tumert claimed to be the Mehdi, who is defined as a person who is believed he would come in the Last days to fight corruption on earth(Mehrouch et al., 2014, p.13), (Ederbouche et al., 2017,p14). This would make Ibn Tumert with no credibility, and any reference to his nobility is likely to be perceived as unreal.

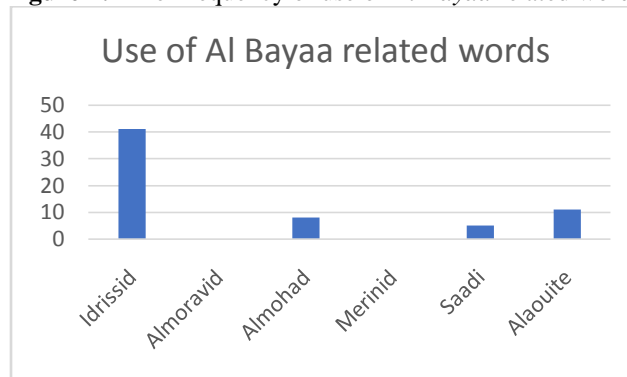
It follows that a myth of ancestry is narrated in the textbooks, and it is mentioned mainly among leaders of dynasties of Arab origin. The Idrissid, Saadis, and Alaouites are all narrated to be *Ashraf*, being originally from Arabia with sacred prophetic family ties. There is a sense of continuity of the pre-modern nation over a long period, as such ancestry ties are stressed in the first and the last dynasties. An Arab-Muslim Myth of ancestry becomes a permanent cultural feature that symbolizes the nation's genesis, and its persistence over long durée. Most importantly, this cultural resource would self-define Morocco as an Arab-Muslim nation. This is because there is what Smith calls the fusion of religion with ethnicity. Arabia, or *Alhijaz* as the textbooks call it, from which the upper strata of the aforementioned dynasties originated is ethnically Arab, while Islam is what made them *Ashraf* based on their prophetic blood ties.

The process of myth and memory cultivation

This study suggests that the pledge of allegiance, as narrated by the textbooks, embodies a myth of election, which Smith (2009) believes to be conducive in the process of myth and memory cultivation, which is necessary for the genesis of nations. He makes, however, a distinction between covenantal and missionary election myths. While the former refers to the covenant between a deity and an ethnies, whose members obey God's commandments, the latter is about God's choice of particular people or kingdoms to do a task or engage in a mission, and to convert the infidels. The definitions of the pledge of allegiance provided by the textbooks indicate that they cultivate a sort of a missionary election myth. Al Bayaa or pledge of allegiance is defined by Ederbouche et al.(2017, p.8) as an '*Islamic concept which goes back to the era of the prophet Muhammad. It is based on a contract between pledge makers and the one to whom it is paid*'. This only mentions that there is some sort of Islamic covenant but the remaining textbooks further explain the nature of the aforementioned contract. Both Mehrouch et al. (2014, p.7) and Meatella et al.(2015, p.7) designate the pledge of allegiance as an appointment of a Sultan, Khalifa, or a king by the Muslims so that he would manage their public affairs based on Islamic teachings. Given that Al Bayaa is founded on religious doctrine, one would assume that it includes the task or a mission of implementing Islamic law. It follows that Al Bayaa as narrated by the textbooks can be regarded as a sort of a myth of missionary election as defined by Smith (2009).

A close reading of the textbooks reveals that Al Bayaa is omnipresent throughout the era of pre-modern Morocco. Its appearance marks the genesis of a pre-modern Moroccan nation, which would persist with the help of various states as the textbooks refer to the main dynasties that ruled Morocco. The Idrissid state is referred to as the first Islamic state in Morocco, which was independent of the East. Its founder is regarded to be the first person who brought the concept of *Al Bayaa* to the country, a concept which then became a permanent cultural feature that characterizes the birth and persistence of a pre-modern Moroccan nation. This is crystallized through the narration of a pledge of allegiance as the foundation of the major dynasties.

Figure 1:- The Frequency of use of *Al Bayaa* related words.

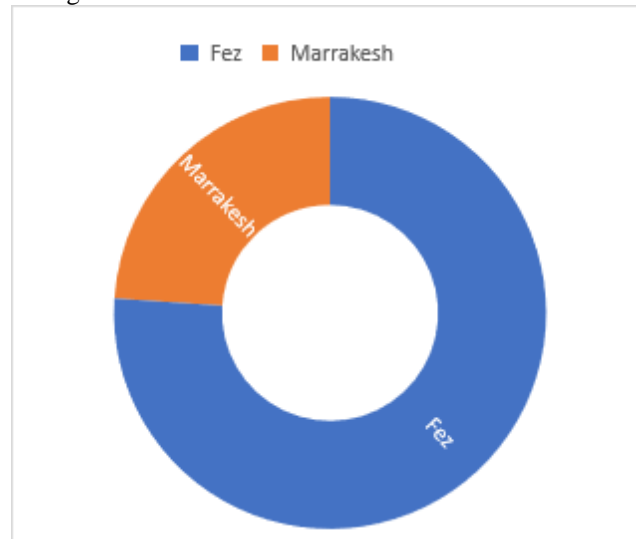


The frequency of using Al Bayaa related words seems to be higher in the case of the Idrissid state and the Alaouite one. This is significant in the sense that it indicates the continuity of the nation during the pre-modern era, from the Idrissids to the Alaouites. The stress on the pledge of allegiance during the first dynasty can be explained by the need to highlight the birth of the nation, and how two different ethnies, mainly Arab and Amazigh groups, came to be united based on the religious concept of Al Bayaa. This national unity would persist, as the concept continues to be narrated during the Alaouite era. It follows that a missionary election myth is cultivated throughout the pre-modern era of Moroccan nation.

The process of territorialization

This study suggests that the textbooks' national narratives made of Fez a sacred city through which a pre-modern Moroccan nation is territorialized. According to Smith (2009), one of the major indications of the process of territorialization of a given nation is the existence of a sacred homeland. The textbooks of social studies seem to stress the importance of the city, compared with other cities such as Marrakesh. It is sanctified through narrating the story of building the city by a noble person as Idriss II, and also by highlighting the holiness of its religious center of Al Qarawiyn.

Figure 2:- The Frequency of using the names of Fez and Marrakesh in the historical narratives of the textbooks.



The city of Fez dominates the narratives of the textbooks when compared with the city of Marrakesh. Both cities are historical cities, and they had been taken as the capital of different dynasties. This shows the stress on Fez as the most important city in the national narratives of the textbooks. This dominant presence is also seen through devoting a full chapter to the creation of Fez and its design back then in the Idrissid era. No other city is given such historical interest. The sanctification of Fez would make it central to the creation of the pre-modern nation, concerning the process of territorialization.

The textbooks' narratives seem to depict Fez as the sacred homeland of the nation by highlighting the nobility of its founder. The city was founded by the son of Idriss I, who is already introduced as a Sherif, meaning he has blood ties with prophet Muhammed. Idriss II would be referred to as 'Imam Idriss', making him a religious leader of the nation. He would also be given the title of 'Maoula', as opposed to Almoravid leader Yusuf Ibn Tachfine, the founder of Marrakesh (Meatella et al. 2015, pp.8-9). Idriss II is therefore backed with a sacred ethno-religious legitimacy, making the city of Fez a place of activities of saint-hood.

The textbooks appear to have selected Alqarawiyn mosque, which is located in Fez, as a religious center of the nation. It is depicted as the oldest college in the world while stressing that it is older than Al Azhar university in Egypt (Mehrouch et al., 2014, p.11). This can be explained by the need to set boundaries between pre-modern Morocco, as a separate independent nation, and the rest of the Islamic world. With no similar example, the textbooks narrate the foundation of Al Qarawiyn by Fatima Al Fihriya. She is significantly depicted as a pious woman who donated her money for building Al Qarawiyn mosque, and the construction works are mentioned to have started during the holy Muslim month of Ramadan (Ederbouche et al., 2017, p11). This is a sacred portrayal of both the mosque and its founder.

The process of creating a distinctive public culture

This study suggests that Islam is cultivated in the textbooks, which is a step towards generating a typical public culture of the pre-modern nation of Morocco. According to Smith (2009, p. 51), religion can 'furnish the basis and symbolism for a distinctive public culture' of nations. The findings reveal that two public rituals are detected during the pre-modern era. Based on the content of the textbooks, Friday prayer and pledge of allegiance form the main elements of a distinctive public culture, especially during the Idrissid dynasty.

The weekly Friday prayer serves as one of the most important symbols of a distinctive public culture of the pre-modern Moroccan nation. Based on the Islamic teachings, Muslims are supposed to hold Friday prayer or Salat Aljumuaah. The Arabic name of Friday is significant in that it means congregation, which is an indication of gathering people together during the prayer and most importantly during the Imam's sermon that is addressed before the prayer. At the establishment of the Idrissid dynasty, the founder Idrissid I was selected by the Berber tribe of Aouraba to be the Imam, who would, among other things, give Friday sermons. This means, gathering of the

community weekly and essentially providing sacred union that would bind both Idriss I, as a symbol of the nation and his subjects.

Pledge of Allegiance also serves as another cultural symbol of a distinctive public culture of the pre-modern Moroccan nation. It does not only provide a myth of missionary election for the textbooks' national narratives, but also a public ritual that is held occasionally whenever there is a change in power at the head of the state. As it is demonstrated, the pledge of allegiance is persistently narrated during pre-modern Morocco. At the establishment of the Idrissid dynasty, the founder Idrissid I was selected by the Berber tribe of Aouraba. At the establishment of the Saadi dynasty, scholars of Mesmuda and leaders of Sus tribes gathered in 1510 AD with Muhamed Assaadi in Tidsi, where allegiance is paid to him (Najah). Also, upon the founding of Almohad dynasty, Ibn Tumert requested Mesmuda people to pledge allegiance to him, and they did. Those moments pre-suppose a communion that took place based on the ritual of Bayaa, which is conducted through a contract that binds the rulers and their people. This is another image of a distinctive public culture that characterizes the pre-modern national community of Morocco as portrayed in textbooks.

The process of creating shared customs and standardized laws

This study suggests that the textbooks represent both religion and the state as the guardians of shared customs and standardized laws. The process of creating shared customs and standardized laws, in Smith's approach, is another significant step towards nation formation. Once accomplished, such a process does not only single out members of a given national community but it also builds unity and fraternity among them. For customs and laws to be commonly observed by all the nation's individuals, there should be guardians who would ensure their enactment; states usually secure such common observance but in some cases that are characterized by statelessness, it is a religious institution that would be both the source and the protector of customs and laws. In the case of the pre-modern Moroccan nation, based on textbooks, both the state and the religious institution appear to play the role of safeguarding a unified set of rules and customs.

It is evident from the very beginning that textbooks' national narratives label dynasties that are reported to have ruled Morocco, though sometimes partially, as 'state' or *Addawla*. The Idrissid rule of the country is depicted as the emergence of the first Moroccan state in the eighth century. Almoravids, Almohades, Merinids, Saadis, and Alaouites are labeled as Moroccan states, and they formed a historical continuity of Moroccan state, while it is significant to note that Bourguouata dynasty, for instance, is not ascribed such status, even though it was established before the Idrissid dynasty and lasted centuries longer. According to Smith, a state can be defined as a set of autonomous institutions exercising a monopoly of coercion and extraction in a given territory. The importance of states, then, lies in their ability to ensure observance of shared customs and standardized laws among the population and consequently forge a nation, once all the other social processes are met. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, it is the concept of Bayaa that seems to be a recurrent symbol throughout the history of Moroccan nation, and it is through this sort of social contract between the appointee king and his people that the states incorporate customs and standardize laws. Pledge of allegiance or Bayaa is defined as follow:

An agreement with the king who is appointed with the consent of Muslims based on the obligation to obey him, in return for his implementation of Islam and defense of the country and guaranteeing justice. (Mehrouche et al, 2014:9)

In this way, individuals are supposed to abide by the rules that would be implemented by the king, and those rules are framed in the teachings of Islam, which includes Shariia Law. It follows that the dynasties whose ruling system is based on *Bayaa* are consequently states that impose a unified set of customs and laws based on the Islamic doctrine, which is accepted by the subjects as we mentioned earlier.

Another account provides further example of state-imposed laws and customs on the community's individuals. There is a reference to Yusuf Ben Tashfine who is reported to be a trustworthy man as he never established neither the tax of 'Kharaj' nor that of 'Maks' on the territory under his rule, except those ordered by God (Ederbouche et al., 2017, p. 14). The two aforementioned taxes are defined for the students on the same page as a tax on land and a 'tax which is imposed on goods at the entrance of cities and markets' respectively. Though the taxes according to the account were not enforced by the Almoravid leader, it is implied that those that are religiously accepted are enforced, mainly *Zakat*, *Jizya*, and *Kharaj*. The tax of *Zakat*, alms-giving, for instance, is significant in the sense that it does not only set boundaries of a Muslim community but also reveals fraternity among Moroccans during the pre-modern era.

It follows that the religious institution of Islam plays a vital role in creating standardized rules and shared customs during the period of a pre-modern Moroccan nation, through endowing the rulers with sacred laws to enforce the law.

There are, however, other cases where state leaders had to make their decisions, which are supported by Muslim scholars. In the case of the Alaouite dynasty, Mly Suleiman, who ruled the country from 1792 to 1822, imposed restrictions on his subjects by prohibiting them from engaging in commercial activities in what a historical account of the textbooks call 'Annasara' or Christians, alluding to Europeans (Ederbouche et al., 2017, p. 36). Also, the Fukaha issued a *Fatwa*, a ruling which is based on Islamic doctrine, that further strengthens the Sultan's power to enforce the law on the whole community (Mehrouch et al., 2014, p.33).

Conclusion:-

This article has been an attempt to analyze social studies textbooks of middle school in Morocco to find out how the pre-modern Morocco nation is constructed as well as the cultural symbols around which it is built. The analysis has revealed that the textbooks formed the nation of Morocco during the pre-modern era over a long duree based on a dominant Arab-Muslim cultural resources. The main processes suggested by Smith (2009) are detected, which includes self-definition, myth and memory cultivation, territorialization, creating a distinctive public culture, and creating customs and standardized law. The aforementioned processes took place through the employment of several cultural symbols such as Arab ancestry ties to the prophet Muhammad, pledge of allegiance or *Al Bayaa*, Fez as the sacred homeland, and Islamic religion. The pre-modern nation is built based on an Arabi-Muslim cultural repertoire. This best illustrates an ethno-religious character of pre-modern Morocco as an Arab-Muslim nation.

Given the ongoing efforts of Moroccan state to promote pluralism of the national identity, as it is stated in the last constitutional reforms of 2011, it is recommended that the content of the textbooks undergo further changes that would adopt a multi-cultural approach, which accommodates cultural symbols of Amazigh and Jewish ethnic groups. Further research can address modern nation construction in Morocco, based on school textbooks.

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