



“Restoring Pride in Jordanian National Identity”: Framing the Jordanian National Identity by the National Committee of Retired Army Veterans

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Abstract

This article tackles the issue of the separation between the Jordanian and Palestinian national identities as stated by a group of Jordanian retired military servicemen who named themselves “the National Committee of Retired Army Veterans”. This group has introduced to the Jordanian public a radical conservative discourse that denounces the in-ground reality that Jordan has become an alternative homeland for Palestinian refugees; so the nationality rights of Jordanians of Palestinian origin shall be removed to support their return to the West Bank. Following a historical approach to discourse analysis, the article studies the distribution of a set of *topoi*, themes or motifs, which are approached by the frequent reference to Jordanian national identity. The discussion is based on a qualitative analysis of a corpus of 29 statement by the Committee and the contexts in which the keywords *identity*, *agenda*, *naturalization*, *settlement*, *quotas*, *disengagement*, and *the alternative homeland* occur. The article concludes that the Committee’s radical conservative discourse is mostly based by foregrounding the *topoi* of *threat*, *conspiracy*, and their role as a *guardian* of national identity.

Key words: National identity; Jordan; Palestine; Discourse analysis; Topoi

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INTRODUCTION

In the early spring 2010, the public opinion in Jordan was traumatized by a statement issued by a group of Jordanian retired veterans with the name “the National Committee of Retired Army Veterans”. In this first of several statements, the “Committee” exhorted the government to “constitutionalize” the regulations (“*ta3leemat*”) of the 1988 Resolution of the Disengagement of Jordan’s from the West Bank and put them in law (Retired Army, 2010). Alongside, the Committee demanded that all Palestinians in Jordan be denied and stripped of the full Jordanian citizenship acquired when the Kingdom annexed the West Bank after the Six-Days War in 1967. For those who are “unable to return” to Palestine, the statement declares that they remain “Jordanians until the implementation of the UN Resolution no. 194 which calls for their return to their homes”.¹ This scheme is the highlight of a long manifesto that aims, according to its writers, to warn against the never-ending Zionist’s scheme for liquidating the Palestinian problem at the expense of Jordan (Lukacs, 2000, p.316).

The National Committee of Retired Army Veterans (henceforth NCRAV) was not the first voice to warn against the scheme of “the Jordanian solution” for the problem of the Palestinian refugees (“*laje’een*”). The different events which hit the region since the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948 have always resulted in commotions which afflicted Jordan. The flux of Palestinian refugees from the West Bank cross the River Jordan to the East Bank has drastically affected

¹ The Resolution dictates that “refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbours should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property which, under principles of international law or equity, should be made good by the Governments or authorities responsible.”

the demographic fabric of the Jordanian state. In the following decades, the number of Palestinians in Jordan has dramatically increased to reach about 4.5 million (Minority Rights Group International, 2008). Half of them, at least, are naturalised and permanently settled in the East Bank (Jordan) with no remaining administrative ties to Palestine. The second half, especially those who came to Jordan on the aftermath of the Six Days War in 1967, are considered “displaced refugees” (“*nazeHeen*”) with Jordanian citizenship and provided with *Yellow Identity Cards* to point to the fact that they possess an Israeli residence permit to entitle them to return to the West Bank. The rest involves about quarter of a million refugees without Jordanian citizenship. They were categorized into two categories, those who are issued with a *Green Identity Card* to indicate their origins in the West Bank, and those who are issued a *Blue Identity Card* to indicate their origins in Gaza strip (Human Rights Watch, 2010). However, the most recent forms of international pressure push towards more concrete Jordanian solution. This is mostly manifested via the strategic diplomatic initiatives which aim to the abortion of the idea of an independent Palestinian state in favour of a resolution of comprehensive and permanent peace. In addition, the continuous tangible pressure on the inhabitants of the West Bank pushes to their forced migration to Jordan. What arouses the concerns of the NCRAV most is the emergence of an organized and politically motivated campaign of propaganda that aims at establishing a *consociational* political system in Jordan. This system will inevitably lead to the settlement of more Palestinian refugees in Jordan until establishing them as a demographic majority. Then, the Jordanian state will be facing concentrated pressure to naturalise (“*tajnis*”) all Palestinians settled within its borders. This scheme is understood and propagated by the NCRAV as an existential threat to the Jordanian national identity as it would in effect put into action the scheme of establishing an alternative Palestinian homeland in the East Bank and the dissolve of the Jordanian state and its distinctive identity (Mahdi, 1997). And this is plainly materialised, according to the NCRAV, by the coming out of a tapered monopoly within the circles of decision making in Jordan that works on preventing the Jordanian people from determining their own fate and defending Jordan and its supreme national interests. Consequently, the NCRAV sees that Jordan disengagement from the West Bank in 1988 was a decisive turning point for maintaining Jordan’s national identity; and it is vital for the political system to implement this resolution by ending all legal and administrative aspects of Jordan’s unification with the West Bank by bestowing constitutional legitimate status on this decision. By such radical measures, among a few other ones aiming to promote political reform and development, the NCRAV argues that the “pride of Jordanian national identity” will be *restored*.

My primary analytical focus in this article is the development of such radically conservative (right-wing) mainstream in Jordan as presented by the retired army veterans. I argue here that the discourse of the retired army veterans on Jordanian identity can be linguistically located within the discourse on national identity within the span of “right-wing” genre. Herein, the critical linguistic study of the discourse of the NCRAV on the socio-political situation in Jordan reveals the thematic *topoi* (traditional themes or motifs) of such “radicalist” and “conservativist” genre. The linguistic analysis here is based on the gathering of a small corpus of 29 statements by the NCRAV issued in the last five years. I present representative exemplary extracts from the corpus for the critical linguistic analysis. These exemplar extracts are characterised by the salience of “Jordanian identity” theme, and they can be regarded as exemplary of “right-wing” genre. In addition, these extracts echo the epochal distinctiveness of the current socio-political situation of Jordan as they emerged at critical stages and historical turns. These events, and the discourse formed by them, have, directly or indirectly, contributed to make significant changes in reshaping the understanding of the nature of political discourse in Jordan; especially that of national identity.

1. TOPOI OF JORDAN’S RADICAL AND CONSERVATIVE NATIONALISM

Jordan has been witnessing a tidal wave of conservative and radical nationalism since *Hamas* (*aka* Islamic Resistance Movement) won the Palestinian legislative elections on 25 January 2006 (Terrill, 2010, p.96). Since then, the conservative and radical nationalism in Jordan has urged the embracing of a discourse on more local politics and economy, and less foreign relations under the slogan “Jordan First” (Al-Oudat & Alshboul, 2010). Although this discourse did not go at the beginning further than the mere rhetoric of catchphrases and slogans, the echo of this discourse triggers fears from the initiation of actual political practices in the long run. However, in many occasions, such a discourse has overwhelmingly linked rhetoric to social practices. Addressing their supporters and their rivals, pro-nationalism developed a consistent conservative discourse that represents their self-image and radical ideological stance. The aim of this stance is to envisage their radical vision on the distribution of power and authority within the Jordanian society between the pro-nationalism and their supporters; and marginalizing their rivals and critics; especially if those later ones are not affiliated to pure “aborigine” Trans-Jordanian tribes (The Economist, 2014). Thus, for radical pro-nationalism, national identity has primacy over citizenship; and, citizens who are not aborigine Trans-Jordanians, especially of Palestinian origin, are accepted

as part of the national community as long as they suppress all signs of non-Jordanian, especially Palestinian, identity (Nanes, 2008, p.86). Jordanian nationalists, then, are defined and redefined continuously through their verbal actions and social practices which aim to consolidate their position on the ground and gain legitimacy and potential popularity. This objective is introduced to the public by means of the pro-nationalism’s *self-identification* and *self constitution* strategies which are presented by communicative actions.

Conservative nationalism mainstream is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon in Jordan, and it stretches back to the early twentieth century, and in the aftermaths of the Great Arab Revolt in 1916 CE. For decades, this mainstream is produced and practiced by the Jordanian bureaucracy, its machinery and propaganda, its allies in public and civil society institutions and media, and to a large extent, the Jordanian people themselves (Anderson, 2009). The earliest versions of this mainstream produced a discourse that was intrinsically nationalist in its concern of restoring and establishing and consolidating the long-rooted Arabic heritage of the states liberated from the Ottomans. In the aftermath of the Arab-Israeli War in 1948, Jordanian nationalism oriented its concern towards the anti-Zionist sentiment which defies the establishment of a Zionist state in Palestine at the expense of Jordan. This nationalist sentiment has been predominantly concerned also with the authority and sovereignty of the Hashemite rule. Its early discourse accentuated the necessity of protecting the internal front from disorder and external conspiracies associated with the Arab-Israeli conflict. Such *anti-conspiracy* discourse has intensified despite the absence of substantial colonial or imperialist elements which trigger the traditional iterations of nationalism. This conservative discourse encouraged the reestablishment of the paternalistic authoritarian practices by the state for the sake of finding a fair and permanent solution to the conflict. This wave of nationalism then gave way for a more sustainable and prominent, anti-occupation and anti-Israel, PanArabism discourse that supported the rights of Palestinians in Jordan to return to their homeland (Sela, 2002, pp.160-166, “Arab Unity”).

Jordanian nationalism has witnessed a drastic turn by the Late King Hussein’s declaration of Jordan’s administrative and political disengagement (“*fak al-irTebaat*”) from the West Bank on 31 July 1988. This step has been considered a breakup with a binding relationship that unified and assimilated both the Jordanian and Palestinian identities after the annex of the West Bank territories to the Hashemite Kingdom in 1950. Furthermore, this decision freed Jordan from the historical responsibilities as a representative of the Palestinians in the occupied lands and the exile to the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO). Since then, Jordanian nationalism abandoned the anti-Israel dimension towards a more radical sentiment that regards Jordanians of

Palestinian origin who live in Jordan as aliens and not citizens. This sentiment continued until a peace treaty between Jordan and Israel was signed in 1994; declaring the normalization of the official relationships between the two states.

The wave of Jordanian nationalism which followed the peace treaty did not pursue a similar track like what it used to be before the era of official normalization of the relationships with Israel. This new wave introduced a discourse that combines resentment of any attempt of normalization of the relationships with Israel with an expressing the public disappointment because of the failure in finding a fair and permanent solution to the problem of Palestinian refugees in Jordan (Al-Azza & Al-Orzza, 2015, p.viii). This failure has been exploited in Jordan to justify any attempt to achieve a concrete progress towards political reform. Here, the local peaceful, and in few times violent, opposition to reform calls by political parties and movements is constantly justified in terms of standing against alleged foreign schemes which aim at dividing Jordan and entangle it into chaos. In this regards, the topoi of *threat* and *conspiracy* became essential components of the discourse of radical and conservative nationalism. Few anti-radical-reform wings in the regime have criticized in their discourse the accelerated pace towards reform under the assumption that this will trigger, or revive, profound, prolonged, and multifaceted social splits on the national level (Barari, 2013). Some politicians were overt about how bad things will be if *constitutional monarchy*, for instance, and electing *parliamentary governments* (in its western form) are promptly reinforced in Jordan. Additionally, pro-regime writers have echoed this argument by stressing the need to give democracy some (longer) time until the Arab-Israeli conflict is solved and Palestinian refugees are back to their homeland in Palestine. Accordingly, it becomes conventional to Jordanian nationalists to heavily rely on foregrounding the edge-of-crisis premises in their radical discourse. This argument accentuates that the Jordanian state is the target of existential threat due to political and economic challenges. The former is related to protecting the Jordanian identity and state against foreign schemes and plotting, and the latter ones are attributed to the government failure to find sustainable solutions and alternatives to the shortage of strategic economic resources. This failure is mostly manifested by periodical increase of fuel and electricity prices, high unemployment, depleted foreign reserves, increase in the national debt, and corruption. In addition, Jordan nationalists constantly warn against Jordan’s engagement in any regional conflict. These edge-of-crisis premises provided the radical and conservative nationalists with a strong justification to lessen the expectations of achieving concrete reform or even in fighting corruption. Thus, the state’s main priority, according to them, is the fortification of the internal front and maintaining the

social peace and stability against the backdrop of regional commotion in neighboring countries. Interestingly, at any attempt to change the *status quo*, the slogan “*ne3mat al’amn wal’amaan*” (“the grace of security and safety”) is raised in juxtaposition with the situation in the “Arab Spring” countries which fall victims to various forms of catastrophic and apocalyptic civil strife because they demanded freedom and social justice.

The threat and conspiracy *topos* also expediently lends itself well to conspiracy and suspicious agenda. Conservative nationalism goes in-line with the state’s official propaganda when portraying Jordan as a *HiSn* (“fortress”) that stands against the chaos induced by foreign plotting and conspiracies. These conspiracies took the form of instigating domestic conflicts, rather than military aggression, by international and social media, rumors, radicalist terrorist discourse, and in many cases, the naivety and lack of professionalism of the state’s propaganda. In this regard, the “Arab Spring” is perceived as merely civil strives and sectarian wars which are the result of some Western (predominantly American)–Zionist conspiracy that aims to the breakdown of Arab states. The perceived conspiracy is put in plain words that *Sunni* Islamist and *Jihadist* groups and the Iran-backed militant *Shiite* groups are instruments in instigating and perpetrating these internal conflicts; thus Jordan should never be an arena for their activities in any sort. This conspiracy discourse was remarkably helpful, to some extent, in arousing the awareness of Jordanian citizens of the overwhelming chaos across the region and which may reach Jordan. Thus, radical instrumental measures are tolerated and deemed essential to suppress any appearing tendency towards chaos.

2. A DISCOURSE APPROACH ON NATIONAL IDENTITY

My argument here is that the “right-wing” genre would constitute an enduring discourse where army veteran as opinion-leading, or decision-making, figures in a long-lasting debate have drawn on the authority and legitimacy dynamics of their social contexts to discourage the sentiment towards the complete assimilation of the several components of society into one integrated, and not conflicting, mass. Such discourse aims to strengthen the opinion-leading figures’ authority, legitimacy, and legacy and weakening that of opposing parties by foregrounding, for instance, the sorts of the foreseen threats, plotting, and conspiracies which can threaten the unstable balance of society, as they argue, and under the flag of the opinion-leaders’, and opinion-makers’, ideological beliefs. To highlight the implications of the NCRAV radical and conservative “right-wing” discourse, I take a discourse–historical approach that attempts “to integrate systematically all available background information in

the analysis and interpretation of the many layers of a spoken or written text” (Wodak & Meyer, 2001). My aim specifically is to show how the language of the NCRAV functions to achieve the ultimate goal of incitement to establish and protect the distinctive Jordanian national identity, and how it has been attuned generically over the last five years. Although the major themes of the NCRAV texts have not changed; still, there are few generic features which undergone some change over time as stated by the NCRAV. In their statements, the NCRAV follows a stretched-over-time mainstream that has constantly promoted the peculiarity and distinctiveness of the Jordanian identity. To situate NCRAV continuous reference to Jordanian identity in its macro-historical context, I first identify the generic features of “national identity” texts from the prescriptive stance of the NCRAV as opinion-leaders in Jordan.

As the NCRAV is a proponent of the argument of the distinctive Jordanian national identity, its discourse of identity is structured in terms of opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of influence as manifested in its language. This language aims to express, constitutes, and most importantly, legitimizes their predisposal to the separation between the Jordanian identity and the other national identities; especially, the Palestinian one. Herein, the theoretical basis of my analysis regarding the nature of *legitimation* is based on works from the linguistic fields of social and critical analysis of discourse; especially those of Teun Van Dijk (1997), Martin Rojo and Van Dijk (1997), Van Leeuwen and Wodak (1999) and Van Leeuwen (2007, 2008) among others. For instance, Van Dijk (1997, p.256) emphasizes that legitimation is associated with the speech act of defending oneself. This, in turn, is attained by the speaker’s highlighting of “appropriateness conditions” by providing sound and reasonable grounds or even acceptable motivations for the action either before or after its achievement especially if the action is controversial at the time being and has been or could be criticized by others. Here, Martin-Rojo and Van Dijk regard legitimation as “attributing acceptability to social actors, actions and social relations within the normative order” (Martin-Rojo & Van Dijk, 1997, p.560). And they add that this act of attributing takes place in contexts of “controversial actions, accusations, doubts, critique or conflict over groups relations, domination and leadership” (Ibid.). In this regard, the critical analysis of the NCRAV discourses is meant to reveal the relations between notions such as *discourse*, *discursive practices*, and *legitimation strategies* in order to recognize the linguistic realization of the embedded social constructions manifested through the ideology of the discourse(s) as they are understood in the text. Accordingly, the current research greatly relies on the basic assumptions of frameworks of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in order to show how the NCRAV constructs social reality and shape public opinion

to legitimize their persistent incline towards defining and ascertaining a distinctive Jordanian national identity.

In the case of Jordanian national identity and the stance of the NCRAV, legitimization is provoked by the later to justify their call for achieving the comprehensive peace between the Arabs and Israel but not at the expense of a justified and permanent solution to the Palestinians’ rights in their homeland. Such legitimization has two-folds: top-top and top-down. In the first instance, the opinion-maker party, represented by the NCRAV, legitimates its actions to its equal partners like political parties and public media, and in the second, which is more important to the scope of this article, is downward. Here, the opinion-leader, again represented by the NCRAV, legitimates its actions downward to the ordinary Jordanian citizen, and may be to the Palestinian as well, by “using norms and values that are ostensible in the specific culture” (Van Dijk, 1997, p.255). In such a situation, the NCRAV was walking the tightrope in order to obtain the support of the Jordanian public on the one hand and that of the decision-makers on the higher levels of the state on the other. In both cases, the NCRAV stance should be consistently compatible with the cultural and traditional norms and values of the two parties. Meanwhile, the NCRAV benefits from their self-image of the army as a typical institution of a modern state whose noble task is of defending the nation and the state from its enemies, and that the army is also the school for the fostering of national feeling and patriotic education that boost the one’s own esteem of national identity.

To situate the NCRAV’s position of the Jordanian national identity in its macro-historical context, I here identify with the analysis below the generic features of the discourse of national identity. My main concern is oriented towards the most perennial aspects this discourse as reflected in our texts, involves: (i) legitimizing through foregrounding the soundness of the NCRAV; (ii) an appeal to the political and historical importance of the context where NCRAV situated their discourse of Jordanian national identity; (iii) the construction of the image of the existential threat to Jordanian national identity; and (iv) an appeal for unification behind the NCRAV as a legitimate *watch-dog* movement to those plots which threaten the national identity. Accordingly, the NCRAV stance towards defining and ascertaining a distinctive Jordanian identity is discursively prompted by means of several legitimization strategies. The most perennial of these involve four legitimization strategies based on the work of Van Leeuwen (2007), and this involves: (a) an appeal that is based on the *authority* of the NCRAV; (b) an appeal to the moral *evaluation* of having a distinctive national identity; (c) *Mythopoesis* which involves the legitimization of the separation of Jordanian identity from other ones and as conveyed through different social and political *topoi*, or *motifs*, whose outcome praise the legitimate actions and disparage the non-legitimate ones; and finally (d) *Rationalisation* that involves legitimization

“by reference to the goals, the uses and the effects of institutionalized social action” (Ibid.). I elaborate the last two strategies by adding a fifth strategy that constitutes the emergence of a set of appeals which based on the *constructive values* of Jordanian national identity (such as *history*, *destiny*, and *common good* among others).

As with all the 29 texts I examined, they all represent several attempts at an extreme hortatory goal with the ultimate goal is to get people to support the argument of the NCRAV and their stance towards defining and ascertaining a distinctive Jordanian identity for the benefit of all people of Jordan and Palestine. Here, I identify how the strategies presented above appear in these texts in generic and historically outline. The main aim of such outline is to show how these strategies function with the help of other linguistic means to achieve the NCRAV’s aim of persuasion.

3. DATA AND ANALYSIS

The basic assumption of the research problem is that the discourse of the NCRAV on Jordanian national identity hides or expresses its ideological and attitudinal positions in subtle and mild forms (Van Dijk, 1995). Herein, my general objective is to investigate the discursive themes, linguistic structures and legitimization strategies of the NCRAV on defining, distinguishing, and ascertaining a distinctive Jordanian national identity to arrive at NCRAV’s ideological and attitudinal positions and its consequent contribution to the sustainable social stability in Jordan, and to guarantee the return of the Palestinian refugees in Jordan to their homeland. The research questions are formed to mark out the appropriate answers for the two general questions

- How does the discourse of the NCRAV on national identity discursively construct socio-political understanding, reality, and expectation of the Jordanian and Palestinian peoples to their distinctive identities?
- What discursive practices used by the NCRAV in order to construct the meaning of Jordanian national identity?

In this regard, the discourse under investigation is that of the NCRAV. It is compiled from all their public statements, addresses, declarations, and announcements which have been published on the electronic journal *Ammonnews* (www.ammnnews.net). The Website involves an accessible archive which involves up-to-date collections of the NCRAV activities their first statement in May 2010. Thus, the corpus includes the texts covering the period between May 2010 and December 2015. These texts have been first collected and then transformed into a machine-readable form (Rich Text Format*.rtf); this helps making them ready for the corpus analytical procedures. As a result, a small corpus consists of 29 texts (making about 10,000 words) was compiled from all these texts and they are distributed as follows (Table 1):

Table 1
The Size of the NCRAV Corpus

Statement No.	Date of the statement	Number of words
1	01/05/2010	883
2	08/07/2010	231
3	17/07/2010	499
4	03/08/2010	364
5	08/09/2010	429
6	19/09/2010	442
7	09/11/2010	512
8	11/02/2011	748
9	05/03/2011	246
10	18/10/2011	254
11	06/12/2011	176
12	09/01/2012	240
13	17/01/2012	200
14	19/01/2012	253
15	21/01/2012	409
16	09/02/2012	601
17	13/02/2012	116
18	13/03/2012	272
19	22/10/2012	240
20	11/11/2012	419
21	25/08/2013	236
22	31/08/2013	383
23	27/02/2014	144
24	23/06/2014	221
25	15/09/2014	284
26	17/06/2015	321
27	15/07/2015	221
28	14/09/2015	341
29	07/12/2015	321
29	Total	10006 words

The initial quantitative corpus-based analysis involves using *WordSmith 5.0 Tools* to identify the contexts in which the keyword “identity” (in Arabic “*huweya*”) appears. Although, the software interface of *WordSmith 5.0 Tools* allows the search for exact words (e.g. “identity”) or phrases (e.g. *Jordanian identity* (“*alhuweya al’urduneyah*”)), lemmas (e.g. *protect* (“*yaHmy*”), *protects* (“*yaHmy*”), *protected* (“*maHmy*”), *protection* (“*Hemaya*”)), parts of speech or any combination of those in English, the research tools does not perform such tasks efficiently when dealing with a non-unicode orthographic systems as that of Arabic. For this reason, I relied on my qualitative analysis on *Nvivo 10* which can handle the Arabic text satisfactorily. Herein, *Nvivo 10* allowed the search for surrounding words (collocates) within a 4-word

pre or post the keyword under investigation. The qualitative analysis of all instances where the keywords contextually related to the theme “national identity” (i.e. lemmas and collocations) in the corpus is conducted using *Nvivo 10*.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In Arabic, the term *huweyah* (identity) is derived from the masculine singular personal pronoun *huwa* (he). The word *huweya* then is a composite of a repetition of the pronoun *huwa* and the attributive suffix *-ya* (See *Alma’aani Arabic Dictionary Online: “huweyah*”). The connotation of the term *huweyah* involves the meaning of “unification with self”. The word *identity* is used to describe the concept of a person and the expression of his individuality and his relationship with groups. In relation to nationalism and affiliation, the identity is consistent with the requirements of some legal and political affiliation and thought, such as the law of citizenship for instance. This sort of identity is based on substantial and conceptual common grounds such as the geographic location, the historical memory, and the unified collective culture. In addition, it reflects what a citizenship can verily offer to the individual in terms of equality and rights. Thus, *national identity* is regarded as a collective product of a group of people that is resulted through their socialization, their shared system of beliefs (ideologies), their common values, and their established assumptions and expectations as they transmit between the members of this group (Smith, 1991, p.8).

Generally, the group’s national symbols, its traditions, memories (especially those of national experiences) and its achievements are considered a materialisation of the collective elements of national identity. What is most crucial about these collective elements is that they are deeply rooted in the group’s (or the nation’s) history. This proposition entails that the people tend to incorporate national identity to their own individual personal identity on the basis of the level of their individual exposure to this history; especially through their in-group socialisation. Accordingly, the collective elements of national identity could constitute the most vital parts of the “individual’s definition of the self and how they view the world and their own place in it” (Kelman, 1997, p.171).

The diachronic analysis of the corpus of NCRAV’s discourse shows that between May 2010 and December 2015, the NCRAV mentioned and discussed “national identity” 47 times in 24 out of their total 29 statements. This mentioning and discussing involves the reference to a set of fundamental themes which are intrinsically related to Jordanian national identity according to the NCRAV. One can perceive that these themes are discursively represented through keywords as: *identity*, *agenda*, *naturalization*, *settlement*, *quotas*, *disengagement*, and *the alternative homeland*. These keywords (and their relevant lemmas) are diachronically represented in the NCRAV corpus in relation to years in the following table:

Table 2
A Diachronic Distribution of the National Identity Keywords in the NCRAV Corpus

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total
Total no. of statements	7	4	9	2	3	4	29
Keyword (and its lemmas)							
Identity	11	0	0	0	0	2	13
Agenda	5	1	2	0	0	3	11
Naturalization	3	0	3	0	0	0	6
Settlement	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Quotas	4	0	0	0	0	0	4
Disengagement	7	0	0	0	0	1	8
The alternative homeland	3	0	1	0	0	0	4
Total	34	1	6	0	0	6	47

The table above shows that the reference to national identity does not follow a systematic pattern through time; especially in the first year 2010 which shows a remarkable boom in referring to issue of “national identity” by the NCRAV when compared to the following years. This remarkable observation will be tackled and justified

through the following discussion of the themes related to national identity as illustrated in the table above, and these are *identity*, *agenda*, *naturalization*, *settlement*, *quotas*, *disengagement*, and *the alternative homeland*. Table 3 illustrates the frequencies of reference to these keywords (and lemmas) in the corpus and their collocations:

Table 3
The Frequencies of Reference to the National Identity Keywords (and Lemmas) and Their Most Frequent Collocations in the NCRAV Corpus

Keyword (and its lemmas)	Frequency	Collocations
<i>huweyah</i> (“ <i>identity</i> ”)	13 x	Recognition of..., protect.... (5x), national, Jordanian, Palestinian, obliterate....(2x), predominate..., victim of...,
<i>adjenda</i> (“ <i>agenda</i> ”)	11 x	National, nation’s, Israeli, Zionist, special (2x), suspicious, subservient governments
<i>altajnis</i> (“ <i>naturalization</i> ”)	6 x	Campaign to..., Palestinian refugees, Palestinian citizens, plain pressures, Wadi Araba agreement (Israel–Jordan peace treaty), not-recognised
<i>altawTeen</i> (“ <i>settlement</i> ”)	1 x	Zionist conspiracy supporters
<i>almuHaSaSah</i> (“ <i>quotas</i> ”)	4 x	Impose what is called..., demands of..., American and Zionist support, submission to pressure, alternative homeland, political rights, political bureaucratic offices, Israeli agendas
<i>Fak al-’irTebaat</i> (“ <i>disengagement from the West Bank</i> ”)	8 x	Enact, resolution, constitutionalise, a trust, protects, honest sons, national identity
<i>al-WaTan al-badeel</i> (“ <i>the alternative homeland</i> ”)	4 x	Leads to.... , goes to....., confront...., establishing.....
Total	47 x	

4.1 Protecting the Identity

The NCRAV discourse takes the issue of national identity (“*alhuweyah alWaTaneyah*”) as the primary concern of its argument and stance. This discourse emphasizes the uniqueness of the Jordanian national identity and its distinctiveness from any other identity; namely the Palestinian. The NCRAV’s argument regards any attempt

to assimilate the two identities into one as a threat to the two identities. Thus, we see that these statements are loaded with lexes related to the topoi of conspiracies and threats which collocate with the theme of identity such as *recognition of*, *protect*, *national*, *Jordanian*, *Palestinian*, *obliterate*, *predominate*, *victim of*. These collocations, among many others, occur in conjunction with the

keywords *identity* in the corpus as the following extracts illustrate (my translation from the original Arabic text):

- 1) All categories of the Jordanian nation which have supported and interacted with the call of the veterans (NCRV) and valued its outcomes for the sake of protecting the **Jordanian national identity**. (NCRV's Statement on 8.7.2010)
- 2) Considering the **Jordanian national identity** as a distinctive - and chief - headline of the Jordanian state. (NCRV's Statement on 3.8.2010)
- 3) Protecting the **national identity** of the striving Arab Palestinian nation. (NCRV's Statement on 3.8.2010)
- 4) Since the obliteration of this **identity** serves Zionism and its tools. (NCRV's Statement on 3.8.2010)
- 5) We will not allow anyone to predominate the Palestinian identity or bullying our brothers who are among us and in our hospitality. (NCRV's Statement on 3.8.2010)
- 6) The implementation of the resolution of Disengagement from the West Bank which protects the two identities: the Jordanian, and its sister, the Palestinian. (NCRV's Statement on 8.9.2010)
- 7) The Zionist agendas and its tools which lead to grave menaces whose victim are both the Jordanian and the Palestinian **identities** evenly. (NCRV's Statement on 19.9.2010)
- 8) It was a road map to a comprehensive and integrated reformative program that aims to protect Jordan, the nation and the **identity**, and to defend the leadership. (NCRV's Statement on 17.6.2015)

A close look to the extracts above shows that the NCRV echoes their own experience with warfare to foreground the issue of defending and protecting ("yaHmy") the national identity from a threat. The nature of this threat is mostly understood through its constant association with Zionism. This threat, according to NCRV, is working on consolidating the current status of Jordan as a host country for the Palestinian refugees who are unable to return to their homeland. Thus, their own identity will no longer be associated with Palestine, but it will be assimilated to the host's identity. However, as it is argued that the Palestinian component of the Jordanian population outnumbers that of (aborigine) east Jordanian citizen, then it is the Jordanian national identity that is under the risk of its assimilation and obliteration ("Tams") (El-Abed, 2014: 86). This issue is accentuated by the repeated reference to the Jordanian and the Palestinian identities as *two* distinct identities ("huweyatayn") as in extract no. 6 above. And that the status of the Palestinian refugees in Jordan is likened to nothing more than that of the *guests* ("Dayf") and their host as in extracts No.5 and No.7. This discourse of *guesthood* significantly coincides with that

of the separation between the two identities (See El-Abed, 2014). Although the NCRV lessens the weight of this controversial argument by regarding the two identities sisters ("shaqeeqah") in extract No.6, and that both of them are victims ("DaHeyah") of the same conspiracies and plotting in extract No.7, this stance was not welcomed by the public opinion as it may disturb the social peace in Jordan and raises a lot of concerns regarding to role of Jordan in protecting the holy sites in the West Bank.

The NCRV's argument in the extracts above, and in most other places in their discourse, shows that they raise the issue of protecting the national identity to present themselves as the *guardian* of this identity. The topoi of the existential common threat and (Zionist) conspiracy consolidate their legitimacy despite their radical and conservative argument. The most remarkable aspect of this argument is the constant warning that the Jordanian state is under existential threat if the Jordanian identity is not protected by its separation from the Palestinian one. For this reason, the NCRV appeals to the unification behind their conservative stance for the sake of protecting the state and maintain its strength. This position implies that having a strong Jordanian state guarantees defending the rights of Palestinian refugees in preserving their own identity and their return to their homeland.

4.2 The "Suspicious Agenda"

The word *adjenda* (pronounced /ə'dʒendə/ in Arabic and means "agenda") is a term that is used to refer to the list of subjects that people will discuss at a meeting (Cambridge Dictionary). The term is broadly used in political language to refer to the issues and policies laid out by ideological or socio-political groups. In addition, it refers to the topics under discussion by a governmental executive, or a cabinet in government with the aim is to influence the public opinion about contemporary political news and debate.

The term *adjenda* is predominantly used in Jordanian political language in a negative sense that implies the hidden motives of the groups which are shaped by their ideological orientation especially if the term collocates with the word "foreign" to make the compound "foreign agenda". Herein, the coined depreciatory term is meant to underline the group's benefits of external incorporeal and substantial support from foreign bodies to serve their invested "conspiratorial" plans.

In the NCRV corpus, *adjenda* appears in 8 places collocating with two sorts of "referents": positively evaluated and negatively evaluated. With the positively evaluated referents, the NCRV targets those with "national" agenda who value their country and work on serving its best interests; thus we see that *adjenda* here collocates with the lexes *national* and *nation's*. This category is contrasted to the second negatively evaluated referents whose agenda coincide and match that of the country's adversaries. In this last case, the

keyword *adjenda* collocates with the negatively evaluated lexes *Israeli, Zionist, special, suspicious, subservient governments*. This dichotomy between the two types of referents which collocates with *adjenda* is illustrated in the following extracts from the corpus (my translation):

- 9) To preserve the precious Palestinian soil and stop the Israeli agendas and those who are adopting them. (NCRAV’s Statement on 8.7.2010)
- 10) Forming a nationalist cabinet of professional and honest figures who bear national agendas and defined program (NCRAV’s Statement on 3.8.2010)
- 11) A tailored and spurious parliament that executes the agendas of the subservient governments... (NCRAV’s Statement on 19.9.2010)
- 12) The incidental allocation of advanced bureaucratic offices in the Jordanian state to some unheard of figures or to those who bear suspicious agendas. (NCRAV’s Statement on 15.7.2015)

The extracts above demonstrate that the NCRAV uses the term *adjenda* to generically situate the different partakers of decision making circles in the Jordanian state and classify them according to their intentions. The NCRAV does not explicitly refer to the identity of those partakers even once they are positively evaluated. Instead, it generically accentuates their actions and deeds as depicted by the underlined verbs in the extracts above. The nature of these agendas and its implications are constantly fore-grounded by its association with the alleged foreign plans to designate Jordan as the alternative homeland for the Palestinian refugees; as in extract No.9. This position is emphasised by the repeated association between these hidden agendas and the Israeli practices against the Palestinians (extracts No.9 and 12) and its stubborn position towards peace process and its refusal of the return of Palestinian refugees in Jordan and all around the world to their homeland. These practices and measures are perceived as an existential threat to Jordan and its national identity as a host country with its own individual identity that should be separated from the Palestinian one.

Accordingly, the NCRAV is marketing itself to the Jordanian public as the “guardian” of the country’s interests against its foreign adversaries’ agendas and those Jordanian groups who bear and adopt these agendas. This position strengthens the image of the NCRAV as a leading public figure whose authority and legitimacy depend on their ability to foresee the threats which these hidden agendas bring against Jordan. Herein, the NCRAV emphasizes its role as a guardian of the Jordanian national identity against all the *adjenda* that aim to assimilate this identity into the Palestinian one. This image of the

NCRAV as the “guardian of national identity” appeals for the necessity of the Jordanians, and Palestinian-origin Jordanians, unification behind the NCRAV as a legitimate “watch-dog” body against threatening the Jordanian and Palestinian identities.

4.3 Submission to Naturalization, Settlement, and Quotas

Naturalization is the act of making someone a legal citizen of a country that they were not born in (Cambridge Dictionary). While this process of naturalization is subject to laws and regulations. The subject of Naturalization (*altajnis*) occupies great portion of the NCRAV’s argument on the threat to Jordanian national identity. Although naturalization has targeted deferent groups of foreign-born settlers in Jordan who spent a significant portion of life in the country and invested in it (*Nationality Law No.6 of Jordan (1954, 1987 Amendment) – 3: Naturalization*), the NCRAV argues that naturalization in Jordan does not seem to follow definite formal parameters that plainly state how someone may qualify for naturalization. What is more, the NCRAV constantly accuses the government of using massive naturalization of Palestinian settlers as a substantial evidence of its submission to the foreign pressure that regards Jordan as the alternative *homeland* for Palestinian refugees in what is known as *altawTeen* (“settlement”).

The policies of *altajnis* and *altawTeen* in Jordan are deemed by the NCRAV, and few conservative political movements and parties, to lead to further submission to international and foreign pressure to give the newly-naturalized citizens equal civil and political rights as those of the originally Jordanian citizens such as public education and health, the participation in the political life, and joining civil service and the army, and even occupying sovereign bureaucratic offices in the state. These last concerns are accentuated by the NCRAV as a real concern to the Jordanian national identity as it consolidates the alleged policy of *quotas (almuHaSaSah)* between the different components of the Jordanian society on the basis of their origin. Accordingly, the discourse of the NCRAV continually warns against these three practices and policies (*altajnis, altawTeen, almuHaSaSah*), and it considers them as a substantial threat to national identity and the sovereignty of the state. This can be plainly perceived in the corpus as the distribution of these keywords systematically collocates with a large number of lexes such as: *campaign to..., Palestinian refugees, Palestinian citizens, plain pressures, Wadi Araba agreement (Israel–Jordan peace treaty), not-recognised, Zionist conspiracy supporters, Impose what is called..., demands of..., American and Zionist support, submission to pressure, alternative homeland, political rights, political bureaucratic offices, Israeli agendas...*etc. this large variation in the lexes can be illustrated in the extracts below:

- 13) ... [they] launched a campaign against the Kingdom to **naturalize** more Palestinian refugees. (NCRAV's Statement on 1.5.2010)
- 14) The Kingdom is under plain pressure to **naturalize** everyone and endowing them a **quota** in the political system that equals their percentage. (NCRAV's Statement on 1.5.2010)
- 15) ... and the Prime Minister is verily implementing Article (8) of Wadi Araba (Israel-Jordan peace treaty) which dictates the **naturalization** of all Palestinians in Jordan. (NCRAV's Statement on 9.1.2012)
- 16) Just to point that the Committee (NCRAV) does not recognize any process of **naturalization** performed after 1988, and it considers these procedures invalid. (NCRAV's Statement on 9.1.2012)
- 17) The Zionist conspiracy is most serious because it has inseminating supporters within our country and who are overtly calling for the implementation of **settlement** and **quota** system. Even more, these supporters are relying to reach their goals on the Americans and the Zionists. (NCRAV's Statement on 1.5.2010)
- 18) The Jordanian governmental policies reveal considerable leniency to the American pressure and the Zionist provocation and its local supporters. And it has verily started a **quota** system that leads to the alternative homeland for the political, administrative, and sovereignty levels. (NCRAV's Statement on 1.5.2010)

The extracts above illustrate the NCRAV's concern about the future of Jordanian national identity because of the internal and external "pressure" (*Dughotat*) which leads to the Jordanian choice as a solution to the problem of the Palestinian refugees. The NCRAV introduces in these extracts the topoi of foreign nations as a *threat* to the state, and it accentuates how the process of naturalizing Palestinian refugees in Jordan has characterized four parties: The Kingdom, the Palestinian refugees, foreign countries and groups and those Jordanians who support this practice, and the NCRAV. The first party, the Kingdom, is depicted as a *victim* of multifaceted conspiracies (*mu'amarat*) which aim to deconstruct its identity for the new scheme of Jordan as the alternative homeland for all the Palestinians; this is plainly perceived in extracts No. 13, 14, and 18. On the other hand, the Palestinian refugees are represented neither positively nor negatively in this regard. The language of the NCRAV regards them as the party, who does not act but acted upon; thus, they share the *victim* topoi with that of the Kingdom; as in extract No.15. Foreign countries and groups and those Jordanians who support naturalizing more Palestinian refugees are negatively depicted as the *conspirators* against the state and its identity. Remarkably, the NCRAV

here explicitly refers to the name of these conspirators (Americans, Israeli, and Zionists) making them the primary agentive force that endeavors to accelerate the pace of naturalization; and this is plainly perceived in extracts No.17 and 18. Such a position can be perceived as an *antagonistic* discourses that tries to associate one's own stance and their opposition to others' identities because of their sense of threat of exclusion (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985). Meanwhile, the Jordanian governments are deemed passive against these conspiracies to the extent that they actually facilitate them by implementing an unannounced *quota* system ("*almuHaSaSah*") to assimilate naturalized refugees in the country's political life under the influence of foreign pressure, or conspiracies. However, the fourth party (the NCRAV) regards itself here as the only public and nationalist authority to stand against these conspiracies and they bestow themselves the power to recognize (or not recognize) this practice on behalf of Jordanian citizens; as it is perceived in extract No.16.

Herein, the NCRAV's discourse regarding *altajnis* ("naturalization"), *altawTeen* ("settlement"), and *almuHaSaSah* ("quotas") reflects their ideological stance that divides people into two categories: The conspirators against Jordanian identity and the Kingdom on the one hand, and the guardians and victims of those conspirators on the other. This *them/us* ideological stance legitimizes the argument of the NCRAV on the separation between the two identities: the Jordanian and the Palestinian. This argument is fore-grounded by the NCRAV on the basis of emphasizing the NCRAV's topoi of the existential threat against the two identities and by showing their definite concern about the survival of both Jordanian, and Palestinian, national identities as two separate identities.

4.4 To Put the Resolution Into Law

One of the most raised issues in discourse of the NCRAV is their persistent demand of the execution and enactment of the Resolution and regulations (*ta3leemat*) of the Disengagement of all aspects of legal and administrative ties with the West Bank. This persistent demand triggered most of the public argument and debate because of its implications. The NCRAV's stance and interpretation of the Resolution (and regulations) are that the occupied territories in Palestine and the people who live there are no longer affiliated to the Jordanian sovereignty. This calls then for the obligation of redefining the relationship between the Jordanian state and the people who live in the occupied territories in terms of the *separation* between the two identities. In this regard, we see that the keyword (phrase) *disengagement from the West Bank* collocates in the corpus with the lexes: *enact, resolution, constitutionalise, to put in law, a trust, protects, honest sons, national identity*; all of which accentuate the argument of the separation between the Jordanian and Palestinian identities. This argument is elaborated in the discourse of the NCRAV in the following extracts:

- 19) The resolution of **Disengagement** from the West Bank in 1988, and that originally came as a response to the Palestinian Liberation Organization’s request and the Arab Summit in 1974, was a crucial and elaborate decision in the Jordanian political system. (NCRAV’s Statement on 1.5.2010)
- 20) We consider the resolution of **Disengagement** from the West Bank announced by Late King Hussein a trust in the souls of the honest sons of the two peoples, and the time comes to enact it and organize the relationship between the two peoples. (NCRAV’s Statement on 3.8.2010)
- 21) And to return to the constitution of 1952 and the implementation of the resolution of **Disengagement** from the West Bank which protects the two identities: the Jordanian, and its sister, the Palestinian. (NCRAV’s Statement on 8.9.2010)

The argument of the NCRAV’s demands as illustrated from the extracts above accentuates two positions: the first is the inevitability of the separation between the Jordanian and Palestinian national identities, and the soundness of the people who support this proposition. The first position is presented from the constant juxtaposition between the Jordanian and Palestinian as two identities (“*huweyateen*”) which distinguish *two peoples* (“*sha3baeen*”) tied with the bond of brotherhood (“*shaqeeqa*”); as this is evoked in extracts No.20 and 21. This crucial resolution was necessary to *protect* (“*yaHmy*”) the two vulnerable identities from foreign conspiracies which aim to assimilate them into one. The second position is presented by labeling those who support the NCRAV’s position as the *honest sons* (“*alshurafaa’ men abnaa*”) of the two peoples who inherited this *trust* (“*manah*”) from the Late King Hussein.

Accordingly, the Resolution is employed here to ideologically categorize people in terms of their acceptance or rejection of it in terms of *honesty* versus *conspiracy* scheme on the one hand, and in term of *loyalty* versus *disloyalty* to the legacy of the late monarch. Herein, the NCRAV legitimizes here its stance towards the Resolution of the Disengagement through foregrounding the soundness as the party to be entrusted to pursue the legacy of the late King and his wishes and as the honest guardians of the Jordanian national identity and its status as a state of law and institutions. In addition, the reference to the Late King Hussein in this argumentative issue aims to appeal the historical memories of the Jordanian people about the legacy of their most beloved monarch.

4.5 We Are Not the Alternative Homeland

The discourse of the NCRAV considers *the alternative homeland* (“*al-WaTan al-badeel*”) scheme as an existential threat to the Jordanian scheme and identity.

The Committee’s concern stems from the several practices and procedures on the ground which several governments implement in the last years. The NCRAV constantly refers to alleged foreign conspiracies and pressure which favor the Jordanian choice as the best solution to the problem of the Palestinian refugees (Barari, 2013). At this point, we see that the keyword (phrase) *the alternative homeland* collocates in the corpus with the lexes: *leads to, goes to, confront, establishing*. In this, one can notice how the discourse of the NCRAV repeatedly refers to these schemes and plans, and they associate them to different internal and external factors; the following extracts illustrate:

- 22) The Kingdom is under material pressure to naturalize everyone and endowing them a quota in the political system that equals their percentage. And this will inevitably lead to the **alternative homeland**. (NCRAV’s Statement on 1.5.2010)
- 23) The weakness in confronting the plans to the **alternative homeland** is attributed to the emergence and the consolidation of power centres and ruling families. (NCRAV’s Statement on 1.5.2010)
- 24) And agreeing with the Israeli scheme that is constantly announced by the leaders in Israel, that their final target is to establish the **alternative homeland** in Jordan. (NCRAV’s Statement on 9.1.2012)

The discourse of the NCRAV emphasizes that the “path” towards the alternative homeland is paved by foreign conspiracies and pressure. The metaphoric image of path implies the ideas of planning and persistence to achieve a desirable destination. The Committee elaborates the image by accusing the governments’ failure in *confronting* (“*mujabaha*”) the course of these conspiracies and plans; as in extract No.23. The Committee here relies on the conspiracy and common threat topoi to warn the Jordanian people of their future. The threat is intensified by assigning this scheme to Israel and Zionism; which are allegedly considered as a source of evil; as in extract No.24. This argument strengthens the position of the NCRAV and legitimizes its fundamentalist demand of the separation between the Jordanian and Palestinian identities since the alternative homeland scheme will inevitably obliterate the former’s national identity and the latter’s actual homeland. Herein, the NCRAV relies on the construction of the image of the existential threat to the Jordanian and Palestinian national identities, and it appeals for the two peoples’ unification behind them as a legitimate popular movement that takes the place of the weak (“*Da3eef*”), and implicitly conspiring, government in *confronting* (“*mujabaha*”) the course of these conspiracies and plans.

The data presented above reveals the NCRAV's stance towards defining and ascertaining a distinctive Jordanian identity. This stance is discursively accentuated by relying on several *legitimization strategies* (See Van Leeuwen, 2007). It is perceived, for instance, that the NCRAV tries to present itself an *authority* which dictates regulations, monitor the government's actions and policies, and participates in decision making. Additionally, the NCRAV constantly relies on appealing to the moral *evaluation* of having a distinctive national identity that is separate from the Palestinian one for the primary sake of protecting the refugees' own identity and right in their homeland. In many instances, the NCRAV legitimizes their radical stance of the separation of the Jordanian identity from the Palestinian through *mythopoesis*, or the different social and political *topoi*, or *motifs*, whose outcome praise the legitimate actions and disparage the non-legitimate ones. This is mostly perceived in their reliance on the *threat* and *conspiracy* topoi and their role as the *guards* of the national identity. Herein, the NCRAV establishes the *Rationalisation* of their radical conservative discourse by reference to their ultimate goals which are to protect the Jordanian, and Palestinian, national identities. All these legitimization strategies are reflected in the discourse of the NCRAV on the basis of their affiliation to the Jordanian society and state, and this allows them to appeal the common social *constructive values* of Jordanian and Palestinian national identities such as the shared history, the common destiny, and the common good.

CONCLUSION

On 26 October 1994, Jordan took a bold step by being the second Arab country to endorse and sign a peace treaty with Israel. This locally unpopular event was advanced by Jordanian officials because a "comprehensive peace between Jordan, Israel and other Arab countries is Jordan's ultimate goal" (Al-Majali, 1994). This treaty was not received enthusiastically in Jordan and the Arab world. Despite the long-standing sentiment and attitude of the time that peace process with Israel would be inevitable as the late King Hussein was consistent in "pursuit an informal, strategic peace with Israel" (Bar, 2006, p.1), the majority of Jordanian people and political parties and movements agree that Israel should be considered as a "Zionist enemy" and not as a sovereign state (Kikkawa, 2012, p.67). However, and as implicated from the agreement, both Jordan and Israel have made significant progress toward implementing mutual "normalized" economic and cultural relationships at the official level. Although these relationships have been materialized through cooperation projects, such as in tourism, agriculture, and civil aviation (Nahar & Abu Humaidan, 2013, p.67), the public sentiment towards the treaty remains skeptical and unenthusiastic as the bilateral relationship between the two peoples have never

shown any significant progress on the socio-political, educational, or economic levels. For the majority of Jordanians, the normalization of relationships with Israel is recognized as a serious threat to the Jordanian state and its identity because it has not led to a fair and permanent solution to the problem of Palestinian refugees in Jordan.

In their public statements in the last five years, the NCRAV introduced a discourse that accentuates the severity of the Israeli measures, and its international support and back, on the Jordanian national identity. Despite the fact that these measures are carried out in the occupied territories, the implications of these measures are affecting Jordan equally. In Jordan, some voices articulated that facilitating *altajnis* ("naturalization"), *altawTeen* ("settlement"), and *almuHaSaSah* ("quotas") of Palestinian refugees in Jordan may be considered as supportive measures to their strive and misery, the NCRAV decisively rejects these measures, and it introduces a radical conservative discourse that reflects their ideological stance, in this discourse, they radically divide people into two categories: the conspirators against Jordanian identity and the Kingdom on the one hand, and the guardians and victims of those conspirators on the other. What is more, the NCRAV elaborates their dichotomy by referring to the Resolution of Disengagement as a decisive factor (or an ordeal) to label people in their soundness and loyalty to the Jordanian state. Accepting legislating and implementing the regulations of the Disengagement or not accepting them would ideologically categorize people as *honest* or *conspirators* on the one hand, and as *loyal* or *disloyal* to the state and to the legacy of the Late King Hussein on the other. Herein, the NCRAV legitimizes their radical argument through foregrounding their soundness as the party to be entrusted to pursue this legacy and as the honest guardians of the Jordanian national identity. This *self-defending speech act* (Van Dijk, 1997, p.256) legitimizes the NCRAV ideology by reliance on providing sound and reasonable grounds or even acceptable motivations for their radical conservative discourse. Herein, the NCRAV highlights the "appropriateness conditions" despite that their discourse in the separation of the two identities is controversial at the time being and has been or could be criticized by others. Such legitimization strategy has worked on two levels: the *top-top* and the *top-down*. In the first, the NCRAV perceives itself *authoritative* and legitimates its actions and radical conservative stance to its peers such as public media, political parties, or even civil and public institutions. This is mostly seen in its declaration that it "does not recognize any process of naturalization performed after 1988, and it considers these procedures invalid." (NCRAV's Statement on 9.1.2012). In the second top-down level, the NCRAV legitimates its actions to the ordinary Jordanian citizen, and the Palestinian refugees using norms and values that are ostensible and which take into consideration their

desires, wishes, and hopes such as welfare, equality, social justice, and the refugees’ return to the homeland.

It might be recognized intricate to determine to what extent the discourse of the NCRAV has been successful in realizing their rhetoric and radical conservative stance on national identity. In its discourse, the NCRAV shows a willingness to take drastic measures on the ground to protect Jordanian national identity if necessary. However, one can easily see the decline of the significance and reception of the NCRAV’s statements and discourse. For instance, one of the key opponents of the NCRAV radical stance was a former prime minister and also the former Director of Central Intelligence and of the National Committee for Human Rights who launched in May 2010 a counter-manifesto signed by thousands of Jordanians of different spectra and origins calling for national unity and putting an end to the peace agreement with Israel (David, 2010). What is more remarkable is that the governmental measures on the ground are still promoting and facilitating *altajnis* (“naturalization”), *altawTeen* (“settlement”), and *almuHaSaSah* (“quotas”) of the descendants of Palestinian refugees in Jordan by giving them more civil rights. Additionally, the Jordanian public opinion is still bound to focus on their economic concerns in welfare, public services, and social justice rather than the “fruitless” debate on political issues.

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