

**The Guardians of Christianity vs. the Watchmen of European Christendom:
Persecution Narratives in American and Hungarian Christian Nationalism**

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Submitted to
Central European University
Department of Nationalism Studies

In partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts

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Word Count: 18251

Budapest, Hungary

2018

Abstract

In the growing tide of right-wing populism in Europe and North America, nationalism exists as an instrumental tool for demarcating spatial, cultural, ethnic and religious boundaries. In this operationalization of nationalist sentiments, elites have reinvented and framed common political discourses to advance a ‘unified’ understanding of what constitutes ‘us’ and ‘them’. This nationalist stronghold has permeated the discourses on immigration, foreign policy and even social welfare in the U.S. Similarly, Europe has seen nationalism take hold in the wake of the 2015 ‘refugee crisis’, with immigration narratives largely centered on the threat of Islam and the political and social instability thereafter of Europe. This thesis attempts to look at another narrative which has been instrumental for nationalist—more specifically religious-nationalist—claim making in European and American elite discourses, Christian persecution. Starting from a theoretical understanding of what constitutes nationalist and religious-nationalist discourse, this investigation demonstrates how Vice President Mike Pence and Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán respectively assert an understanding of national uniqueness in their crusade to defend Christianity and European Christendom.

Acknowledgements

I first would like to acknowledge my parents and my sister for their unwavering support of me throughout my academic career. My family has always pushed me to be different and think different, and that has become a cornerstone of who I am as a person. I would also like to thank my Uncle Greg who has supported me throughout my academic quest.

Next, I would like to acknowledge the countless friends in my life who have allowed me to bounce ideas off them (i.e. bore them to death with incessant rambling), including Cam Sharp, Julian Schneider, Noah Buyon, Connor Kusilek and Fiona McGuinty. I would also love to thank my friends who have made my two experiences living in Central Europe the best times of my life; thank you, Dominic Curtis, Kevin Herriman, Kevin Mills, Matthew Lollis, George Belidis, Yara Asmar, Macky, Alex Buyruk, Paul Schipul, Maria Altergot and Sarah Bowman! Finally, I would like to thank my professors who have pushed me along this path towards academia and have helped me to grow! A special thanks to Dr. Stephen Smith and the Winthrop Political Science Dept. as well as my thesis advisors at CEU, Dr. Miller, Dr. Pasieka and Dr. Wilson.

Most important, this thesis is dedicated to my late friend Mark Grosjean, whom passed away in the winter of this year. I had the amazing opportunity to study in Prague with Mark, and I was blown away by his intellect, drive and passion for life. Mark was, and is, and ever will be a better political scientist than myself. This thesis is for you Mark, I know you would have written it better!

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Introduction

A seminal point within the last fifty years of international relations, political discourse and supranational governance is addressing and combatting persecution at large. Yet the definition or concept of persecution is varied. Legal scholar Hugo Storey writes that when attempting to locate a definitive concept of persecution, “we [do] not find a definition universally agreed [upon] by legal experts, but we are met by a Greek chorus of commentators telling us in hushed and reverent tones that to define persecution would be sacrilegious.”¹ Moreover, persecution as an international issue has been largely developed within the scope of post-war International Refugee Law, gaining prominence with the 1951 and 1967 UNHCR publications of the *Handbook on Procedures and Criteria for Determining Refugee Status under the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees*.² This document gave rise to three forms of ‘harm’ that are commonly associated with persecution: (i) *Serious physical harm, loss of freedom and other basic human rights*, (ii) *discriminatory treatment*, and (iii) *a combination of numerous harms*.³

Yet in this development of persecution as a structured and broadly applied legal term, the normative standard for what persecution is, and ought to be considered, has been left untouched outside of academia.⁴ The consequence of such is a modern-day terminology which may be applied differently across situations. For example, in the research on and theories of Zionism,

¹ Hugo Storey, “What Constitutes Persecution? Towards a Working Definition,” *International Journal of Refugee Law* 26, no. 2 (June 1, 2014): 274, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ijrl/eeu017>.

² “Handbook on Procedures and Criteria for Determining Refugee Status under the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol Relating...,” 1951, 61.

³ José H. Fischel De Andrade, “On the Development of the Concept of ‘Persecution’ in International Refugee Law” 2 (2006): 124.

⁴ De Andrade, 123.

persecution could represent the concept of Jewish suffering under Nazism and Communism, thus taking on a more narrow and corporeal meaning tied closely to genocide.⁵ While in the efforts of American Evangelical interest groups, such as *Open Doors International*, the definition is less restrictive in action but more exclusive in terms of its victim—defined as “any hostility experienced as a result of one's identification as a Christian.”⁶

Widening the scope from the term persecution, similar discourses have been discussed in the study of diasporic nationalism and identity. Cohen (1997) identified a subset within diasporas known as the victim identity or victim diaspora. This identity, which Cohen connected to historic diasporas such as the Jewish, Irish and Palestinian diasporas, was constructed around the pervasive understanding that a group is a product of victimhood or, for this paper, persecution.⁷ As will be elaborated on later in this thesis, the narratives of elites from the U.S. and Hungary on Christian persecution employ an understanding of relative victimhood like that which Cohen writes on. Continuing, these identities, when abstracted generations from the primary source of exile or persecution, often manifest themselves in a form of nativism.⁸

The wide-ranging and malleable nature of the term and broader concept has been useful for its employment in nationalist and religious discourse. In the field of nationalism, persecution narratives are studied for their ability to invoke and reinforce claims to territory, national legitimacy, and in-group solidarity.⁹ The narrative of national persecution is often framed in

⁵ Ella Shohat, “Rupture and Return: Zionist Discourse and the Study of Arab Jews,” *Social Text* 21, no. 2 (June 16, 2003): 55–56.

⁶ “Christian Persecution Today,” *Open Doors USA* (blog), accessed April 18, 2018, <https://www.opendoorsusa.org/christian-persecution/>.

⁷ Robin Cohen, *Global Diasporas: An Introduction* (Taylor & Francis, 1997), 31.

⁸ Susanne Lachenicht and Kirsten Heinsohn, *Diaspora Identities: Exile, Nationalism and Cosmopolitanism in Past and Present* (Campus Verlag, 2009), 8.

⁹ For literature on the relationships between persecution, territorial claims, legitimacy and in-group solidarity, see Bieber, Florian. “Nationalist Mobilization and Stories of Serb Suffering: The Kosovo Myth from 600th Anniversary to the Present.” *Rethinking History* 6, no. 1 (April 2002): 95–110., on Serb identity.

either *restorative-nostalgic*¹⁰ terms, where nationals are perceived as burdened or persecuted in a manner that once did not ‘exist’ or it is indispensable to the construction of national history/identity—such as how religious persecution and escape from British monarchy drove American-Protestant identity.¹¹ Religious engagement with the discourse of persecution is connected deeply to the theological tradition of martyrdom.¹² Where persecution occurs, and will occur, a martyr for the ecclesiastical community is often gained. Additionally, religious groups use persecution, and the history of persecution, to strengthen claims to territory, legitimacy, and in-group solidarity much like that of nationalist discourse.

The study of persecution in contemporary political discourse largely identifies how political agents operationalize the fear of persecution in political agendas. Rose Capdevila and Jane Callaghan’s 2008 study on U.K. political discourse surrounding asylum seekers and immigration notes an increased attention paid to persecution—specifically religiously persecuted immigration candidates—in conservative party discourse.¹³ Likewise, the political discourse of Evangelical elites in the United States is recognized for holding religious liberty and the persecution of Christians as a primary concern.¹⁴ Martin (1999) notes that the religious right has long been pre-occupied with the persecution of Christians beyond the “10/40 Window”—a territorial signifier starting at North Africa and ending in the Middle East—and that under the

¹⁰ Svetlana Boym, “Nostalgia and Its Discontents,” *Hedgehog Review* 9, no. 2 (2007): 7.

¹¹ Samuel P. Huntington, *Who Are We?: The Challenges to America’s National Identity* (Simon and Schuster, 2004), 92.

¹² Zsombor Tóth, “Ad Martyras...Persecution, Exile and Martyrdom: Early Modern Martyrological Discourses as Invented Traditions,” 2014, 22.

¹³ Rose Capdevila and Jane E. M. Callaghan, “‘It’s Not Racist. It’s Common Sense’. A Critical Analysis of Political Discourse around Asylum and Immigration in the UK,” *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology* 18, no. 1 (January 2008): 22, <https://doi.org/10.1002/casp.904>.

¹⁴ Christian Smith, *Christian America?: What Evangelicals Really Want* (University of California Press, 2002).

Clinton administration congressional Republicans launched special studies focusing predominately on “the plight of Christians.”¹⁵

However, the academic recognition of religious persecution as a focal point of conservative ideology in the West fails to address a more deeper connection to nationalism. For example, how is persecution discussed in relation to national identity by religious-nationalist groups? How can we understand the application of ‘persecution’ as a process of “othering” in nationalist discourse?

Here, my research seeks to address a topic at the convergence of religious and nationalist discourse on “persecution.” More specifically, this investigation attempts to isolate and comprehend the issue of *Christian persecution* through the framework and discourse of religious or Christian nationalism. In doing this, the thesis looks at how political and religious elites from two nations who have prominently taken on Christian persecution in the international sphere (U.S. and Hungary), conceptualize and rhetorically engage with the nation and nationalism through their political discourse. Thus, the research in this thesis attempts to fill a gap in the study of persecution as it is operationalized and instrumentalized in political elite discourse.

The thesis recognizes that no two countries (and administrations) have taken on the topic of Christian persecution more actively in the past few years than the United States and Hungary. Cognizant of the commitment of the Orbán administration and the Trump administration in discussing Christian persecution, and employing a narrative of such, I have chosen two events on Christian persecution from each nation to study the discourse of political elites. The main case study of investigation is *The World Summit in Defense of Persecuted Christians* hosted by the

¹⁵ William Martin, “The Christian Right and American Foreign Policy,” *Foreign Policy*, no. 114 (1999): 76–77, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1149591>.

United States, and an auxiliary case for cross-national comparison is *The International Consultation on Christian Persecution*. The focus of this analysis will be on how elites from these two nations engage with nationalism and national identity in the narratives on Christian persecution at “Worldwide” or “International” conventions hosted in their nation.

Research Question and Methodology

In identifying the gap in academic literature and the ideal cases for examination, I pose the question: why are the political elites of the United States and Hungary making the issue of Christian persecution a seminal point in each of their agendas? This question is subsumed under a larger question: how is the concept of nationhood or nationalism seminal to the political discourse on Christian persecution? With regards to the choice of case study, I seek to investigate why and how these two events construct national identity when discussing Christian persecution. Through the course of the analysis I will demonstrate how the rhetoric of elites at both events invokes a sense of national uniqueness, referencing the resiliency and moral/cultural superiority of their respective nations regarding the worldly persecution of Christians. I posit that the discourse from both events signals a cultural incompatibility of the nation with world hegemony and attempts to define a cultural/ethnic/religious set of external actors who threaten the security of the nation.

To carry out this analysis, a thorough and exhaustive methodology must be applied to the discourses from this event. Thus, this study employs the Discourse Historical Approach (DHA) in the field of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Approaching political and religious discourse through the framework of the DHA allows for a comprehensive, “uncovering [of] ways in which social structure impinges on discourse patterns, relations, and models...and in treating these

relations as problematic.”¹⁶ This is done through the connection of social structures and claims with discursive strategies of *nomination*, *predication*, *argumentation*, *perspectivization* and *mitigation*, which together identify the topic of discussion (Christian persecution), situate and qualify it within a narrative, and justify the normative rightness of the position taken.¹⁷ Special attention in this analysis is paid to *nomination*, *predication*, and *argumentation*.

The DHA methodology puts forth a clear eight stage programme¹⁸ for the analysis of discourse, which as noted by Reisigl and Wodak, is best “realized in a big interdisciplinary project” with little constraints on time, personnel and finances.¹⁹ Since this project is not without constraints, I proceed with the eight step approach generally, elaborating on methods (1) *Activation and consultation of preceding theoretical knowledge*, (2) *Systematic collection of data and context information*, (4) *Specification of the research question and formulation of assumptions*, and (6) *Detailed case studies*.²⁰

Woven through and independent of the methodological application of the DHA will be a contextual approach, including analyses of empirical data on religiosity/religious ascription, press coverage of these events, and legislative agendas. This also entails a brief consultation of preceding theoretical knowledge on religious nationalism (Juergensmeyer 1993, 1996; Kinnvall 2004; Brubaker 2011), civilizationist ideology (Brubaker 2017), Christian nationalism (Hanebrink 2006; Perry & Whitehead 2015; Whitehead, Perry & Baker 2017), and American

¹⁶ Jan Blommaert and Chris Bulcaen, “Critical Discourse Analysis,” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 29 (2000): 449.

¹⁷ Martin Reisigl and Ruth Wodak, “The Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA),” *The Routledge Handbook of Critical Discourse Studies*, January 1, 2017, 95.

¹⁸ Consult Reisigl and Wodak, “The Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA),” p. 96 for the list of eight research steps.

¹⁹ Reisigl and Wodak, “The Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA),” 96.

²⁰ Reisigl and Wodak, 96.

evangelicalism (Smith 1998, 2002/4; Worthen 2013). The consultation allows for a discourse between the findings of this paper and a broader field of research on the subject.

Case Study Introductions

The two case studies of this thesis were chosen due to their proximity to my field of study, timeliness and interconnectivity. Both cases serve as primary examples of mobilization around the cause of Christian persecution and represent attempts by national communities to address an international issue. Additionally, the two cases provide an interesting comparison for how Christian persecution is discussed in nationalist and political discourse. Ultimately, given the dogmatic approach of each nation in addressing Christian persecution, this paper asks: why are Hungary and the United States ‘tackling’ the issue of Christian persecution and in what ways are they employing similar discourses?

To answer these research questions for each case individually and comparatively, I identified a “data set” to serve as the basis for the empirical analysis. During data selection, consideration was given to (i) *specific political units*, (ii) *specific social and political actors*, and (iii) *specific fields of political action*.²¹ The political units were the ‘language communities’ of the nation-state, international community and the individual. These ‘language communities’ are studied for the ways in which they interact with discourse around Christian persecution—i.e. “the [insert nation here] should focus more on the persecution of Christians” or “the [International community] has allowed Christian persecution to continue.” Beyond the construction of political units and language communities, data were collected that connected social or political actors with the defense of persecuted Christians. This could range from

²¹ This scope for data collection was adopted from the systematic data collection methodology of Wodak and Reisigl (2008).

dialogue on actors who perpetuate persecution, are persecuted, or defend against persecution.

Finally, the data presented in this paper includes different forms of political action from speeches to declarations and political promotion. This is an important step to demonstrating a continuity of political claims across the fields of action.

The empirical analysis looks at the keynote addresses of leading political elites at both events—Vice President Mike Pence and Prime Minister Viktor Orbán—as well as the subsequent declarations produced at each event. Moreover, in the case of the World Summit in Defense of Persecuted Christians, which is largely sponsored by non-governmental, religious elites, I provide a brief analysis of the leading religious elite discourse of Rev. Franklin Graham. The purpose of this is to provide context for how religious elites frame and envisage the role of political elites in supporting an ecclesiastical-national community.

The original aim of this analysis was to include a broader and wide-reaching analysis of multiple actors at each event. However, throughout the course of data collection neither the *Billy Graham Evangelical Association* (BGEA) nor the Hungarian government were cooperative or forthcoming with transcripts and coverage of the two events. This, ironically, in some way represents the paranoid and insecure nature of actors who fear outside or public encroachment as a degree of persecution.

Drawing from the “data set,” the empirical analysis of this paper demonstrates how these two cases employ similar nationalist rhetorical tropes and devices. The political elites from both the United States and Hungary posit a sense of national uniqueness and political obligation to an identified ‘in-group’. Additionally, each agent understands their respective national culture to be comprised of Christian values and history. Nonetheless, the empirical analysis of this paper demonstrates that this is the extent to which the two sets of discourse are similar.

The two political agents validate presumptions to how Christianity is envisaged within their respective nations. Vice President Pence engages with Christianity as a belief or value system, reflecting both his own religiosity and the relatively rich Christian landscape of the United States—roughly 70.6% identified as “Christian” and 25.4% identified as “Evangelical Protestant”.²² Different from Pence, Prime Minister Orbán engages with Christianity as a cultural signifier, interchangeable with nationality or ethnicity; this reflects Bernhard Weidinger’s thesis which identified Christianity’s position in the anti-immigration narratives of Central European (Austrian) political elites as a cultural tool.²³ Moreover, Christianity is applied through the discourse of Orbán as a loose synonym for *Christendom*. Hanebrink (2006) notes that the concept of Hungary as a bulwark for Western-Christian society or European Christendom, exists as a common identity through Hungarian discourse since Cardinal Pacelli’s 1938 validation of Hungary’s commitment to historic European Christendom.²⁴

Finally, this dissertation illustrates how the two discourses reflect different measures for addressing what each identify as Christian persecution. The case study of Pence and the U.S. political elite builds upon an existent understanding of U.S. Christian foreign policy and militaristic Christianity. In the case of Orbán and Hungary, discourses on action reflect an understanding of territorial and cultural defense, a *cordon sanitaire* for both Hungary and Europe from the ‘East’.

²² “Religious Landscape Study,” *Pew Research Center’s Religion & Public Life Project* (blog), May 11, 2015, <http://www.pewforum.org/religious-landscape-study/>.

²³ For more information on the distinction between Christianity as a cultural identifier in Central Europe and a religious ascription in America, see: Bernhard Weidinger, “Equal before God, and God Alone: Cultural Fundamentalism, (Anti-)Egalitarianism, and Christian Rhetoric in Nativist Discourse from Austria and the United States,” *Journal of Austrian-American History* 1, no. 1 (2017): 40–68, <https://doi.org/10.5325/jaustamerhist.1.1.0040>.

²⁴ Paul A. Hanebrink, *In Defense of Christian Hungary: Religion, Nationalism, and Antisemitism, 1890-1944* (Cornell University Press, 2006), 1.

Structurally, the American case was called a *summit*, invoking a democratic sense of gathering. Moreover, it was promoted as an international event on the global issue of Christian persecution, touting a robust worldly attendance from 600 delegates of over 130 countries, Hungary included.²⁵ It was also advertised as a nondenominational event, and had keynote addresses from Roman Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox clergy.²⁶ Nonetheless, despite its internationality, the event placed an important emphasis on the role of western nation-states (specifically the United States) in defending persecuted Christians abroad. This is evident through the sponsorship of the event by an American evangelical organization (the BGEA) and through the emphasis placed on U.S. organizations, elites and political action in the event.

Just as the primary case is an event organized around Christian persecution with an emphasis on American action and politics, the International Consultation on Christian Persecution (ICCP) presented a European counterpart, where Hungary positioned itself as the defense for persecuted Christians, or Christendom. Both events were the largest gatherings on Christian persecution and occurred within a year of each other—having a degree of crossover in scope and participants. The Hungarian case is quite interesting as it was recognized as a *consultation*, a common rhetorical signifier within Orbán politics for “public” or “democratic” events.²⁷ Through addressing issues in consultations the Hungarian government avoids legally binding referendums and applies a top-down approach to public opinion campaigns. The Hungarian government under Orbán has notably held consultations on matters such as civil

²⁵ “Fact Sheet: World Summit in Defense of Persecuted Christians - DeMoss - Thinking | PR,” accessed April 23, 2018, <https://demoss.com/newsrooms/bgea/background/world-summit-fact-sheet>.

²⁶ “Fact Sheet: World Summit in Defense of Persecuted Christians - DeMoss - Thinking | PR.”

²⁷ To read more about the Orban administrations employment of ‘consultations’ see “National Consultation – Hungarian Spectrum,” accessed April 24, 2018, <http://hungarianspectrum.org/tag/national-consultation/>. Or, see: Pap, András L. *Democratic Decline in Hungary: Law and Society in an Illiberal Democracy*. Routledge, 2017.

society and refugee reallocation to advance a ‘unified’ Hungarian perspective. In conclusion, this serves as an interesting point of comparison as it included many high profile Hungarian politicians, cross over in speakers, and a similar scope.

Theoretical Framework

This paper draws from the theoretical scholarship on religious nationalism and Christian nationalism. Yet, before touching on the polysemous definitions of religious nationalism, it is important to understand nationalism as a concept. Primary to this investigation is Anthony Smith’s definition of nationalism as an “*ideological movement for attaining and maintaining autonomy, unity and identity for a population which some of its members deem to constitute an actual or potential nation.*”²⁸ This definition best encompasses three key principles of nationalist ideology—autonomy, unity (solidarity), and identity—while emphasizing the political aspect of nationalism (the desire to constitute a nation).

Apart from Smith’s definition, Benedict Anderson provides a crucial development to the study of nationalism for this paper: *imagined communities*. To Anderson, nationalism, or more precisely the perception of the nation, is an imagined political community—imagined as both limited and sovereign.²⁹ The importance is that nationalism (as in Smith’s definition) is socially constructed and limited, meaning that boundaries and membership of the nation cannot be known to each member, but rather can be agreed upon through an imagined edifice of the nation. This leads to the need for a deeper investigation into the types of nationalism, in order to understand what informs the imagined aspect of the nation—i.e., what factors influence how a large

²⁸ Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism : Theory, Ideology, History*, Key Concepts (Cambridge : Polity, 2001), 9.

²⁹ Benedict Richard O’Gorman Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (Verso, 1991), 6.

community perceives group membership, shared identity, and spatial boundaries? For this piece, that informative social factor that drives group understandings of the nation is religion.

Mark Juergensmeyer wrote extensively on the subject of religious nationalism, defining religious nationalism as the combination of religious beliefs in divine law with the authority and modern notion of the nation-state.³⁰ In this definition, Juergensmeyer states that across sectarian divides, all religious nationalisms have four main principles: despair over ‘Secular Nationalism’, perception of politics in a religious way, identification of the enemy, and the inevitable confrontation with the enemy.³¹ This framework will serve as an underlying basis for identifying religious-nationalist claims, and closely connects to the discursive elements of populism mentioned in Wodak and Reisigl’s (2008) piece.

Building upon Juergensmeyer’s claims, the specific role of religion in driving or influencing nationalism is closely related to identity politics. Religious identity and ascription can serve as ‘organizational types’ for human categorization.³² Further, much like culture and language, it is notably important in reinforcing the nation’s identity through in-group and out-group differentiation.³³ Thus, referring back to Juergensmeyer’s work, the in-group (by religious homogeneity) is at odds ideologically, culturally, and spatially with the out-group—hence religious nationalism. This other, or out-group, constitutes different religious groups and secular institutions that are perceived to challenge in-group religious autonomy and authority. Accordingly, the empirical analysis ahead identifies religious nationalist discourse through

³⁰ Mark Juergensmeyer, “The Global Rise of Religious Nationalism,” *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 64, no. 3 (June 1, 2010): 262, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10357711003736436>.

³¹ Juergensmeyer, 470–72.

³² For more information on the concept of organizational types and the importance of in-group/out-group sociological alignment see: Barth, “Ethnic Groups and Boundaries,” 1969.

³³ Anna Triandafyllidou, “National Identity and the ‘Other,’” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 21, no. 4 (January 1, 1998): 597, <https://doi.org/10.1080/014198798329784>.

looking at how religion is employed as an organizational type for the nation, and how it is utilized for reinforcing the nation through in-group/out-group alignment.

The threat perception of an ‘out-group’ that drives religious nationalism is—according to Catarina Kinnvall (2004)—a product of a lack of “ontological security.” The notion of ontological security asserts that meaning to both life and self-identity is given through a sense of security in order and continuity.³⁴ In religious nationalism a dearth of security in identity or community reflects the need to invoke nativist discourse and actively participate in the discursive construction of the other—ultimately to identity the self.

Ruth Wodak and Salomi Boukala recognize the need for continuity in the predication of nationalist claims, touching indirectly on ontological security in the study of European nationalist discourse. Subsequently, ontological security in nationalist discourse is represented through the implied continuity, consistency and universality of claims to the nation, illustrating continuous boundaries in the construction of identity.³⁵

This last point is integral to the analysis of the thesis; working through the intersection of instrumentalist and constructivist thought, I posit that religious-nationalist identity is reflected in the discourse on Christian persecution through an understanding of national uniqueness in the primordialist conception of nationhood. The two speeches of analysis respectively invoke an understanding of the nation, its identity, and role, through an appeal to national history and *ethos*.

³⁴ Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age* (Stanford University Press, 1991), 36.

³⁵ Ruth Wodak and Salomi Boukala, “European Identities and the Revival of Nationalism in the European Union: A Discourse-Historical Approach,” *Journal of Language and Politics* 14, no. 1 (2015): 95.

By identifying religious nationalism as a consequence of a lack of ontological security, it is possible to draw connections between exclusivist claims to the nation and boundary alignment. Insofar as these groups feel threatened to their way of livelihood, they must have a nation or community to protect their continuity. The nation becomes the essential polity for religious organization and boundary alignment because it is often perceived to be coterminous with the religious community in scope, history, and membership—i.e., a *phantom homeland*.³⁶ Religious nationalist claims that are predicated on a dearth of ontological security target communities whose existence is perceived as inconsistent with, and non-continuous to, the nation-state.³⁷ Thus, the discourse is often civilizationist—posing a cultural dichotomy between “them” and “us,” the national and the non-national, where nationality is a product of religion and culture. As Wodak (2015) notes, the “us v. them” construction is a common conceptual and rhetorical trope in nationalist discourse.³⁸ This narrative is employed in situations where *home* is viewed as the essential category of security, often within right-wing or nationalist rhetoric in claims against immigration and globalization.³⁹

In the discourses on immigration, the instrumentalization of religion—specifically Christianity in Western Europe and North America—allows for mainstream politics and parties to engage with culturalist debates. By using Christianity as an identity marker, “Christian rhetoric increases—among certain audiences at least—the respectability of nativist politics, their

³⁶ For more information on the implied synonymy of nation and religion see: Boym, Svetlana. “Nostalgia and Its Discontents.” *Hedgehog Review* 9, no. 2 (2007), which discusses this relationship in the concept of restorative nostalgia. Or, for a discussion of this phenomenon in U.S. society, see: Huntington, *Who are we?*, 2004.

³⁷ Catarina Kinnvall, “Globalization and Religious Nationalism: Self, Identity, and the Search for Ontological Security,” *Political Psychology* 25, no. 5 (2004): 741–67.

³⁸ Ruth Wodak, “Language and Identity: The Politics of Nationalism,” in *The Politics of Fear: What Right-Wing Populist Discourses Mean* (55 City Road: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2015), 71, <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446270073>.

³⁹ Kinnvall, “Globalization and Religious Nationalism,” 747.

proponents' appeal, and the moral legitimacy ascribed to them.”⁴⁰ Thus, the marriage of religion and nationalism is seminal in bringing forth nativist claims, and ‘othering’ into mainstream political discourse, often through immigration narratives.

Moving from an understanding of religious nationalism as a means of ‘othering’ and rationalizing ontological security, I will briefly discuss the manner(s) in which religious-nationalism is envisaged and employed. Brubaker presents four approaches to understanding how the marriage of religion and nationalism is conceptualized: first, the treatment of religion and nationalism as analogous phenomenon; second, religion as an explanatory factor of nationalism (and vice-versa); third, religion as part or, a component of nationalism; and, finally a distinctive form of religious nationalism.⁴¹ Rather than attempting to elucidate each of these approaches, the analysis of this piece will engage with Christian nationalism as a concept that utilizes all four religious-nationalist approaches.

Focusing specifically on Christian nationalism as an analytical application useful to the hypothesis of this work, scholars have demonstrated that the marriage of Christianity and nationalism has proven expedient for the demarcation of national identity, morality, and spatial/ethnic boundaries.⁴² This separatism often includes an implication of cultural incompatibility between [Christian] America and other faiths and cultures, leading to exclusivist

⁴⁰ Weidinger, “Equal before God, and God Alone,” 42.

⁴¹ Brubaker, Rogers. “Religion and Nationalism: Four Approaches.” *Nations and Nationalism*, 2011. Accessed February 13, 2018. <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1469-8129.2011.00486.x/abstract>.

⁴² Andrew L. Whitehead, Samuel L. Perry, and Joseph O. Baker, “Make America Christian Again: Christian Nationalism and Voting for Donald Trump in the 2016 Presidential Election,” *Sociology of Religion*, accessed April 19, 2018, <https://doi.org/10.1093/socrel/srx070>.

stances.⁴³ These stances are found to be racist sentiments for boundary alignment, and equating, “cultural purity with racial or ethnic exclusion.”⁴⁴

Christian nationalism as an ideology serves a pseudo-religious function of setting boundaries, advancing a creation-myth of the nation and unifying the conservative right (in the U.S.) behind a moral identity. The malleability of this “religious” nationalism is evident in its applicability as a secular “litmus test” for political candidates.⁴⁵ Gorski (2016) and Brubaker (2016) have identified, respectively, a culturized Christianity in western politics. This “Christianist”⁴⁶ trend in Europe and “Secular Christian nationalism” in America serves primarily as a discursive and ideological measure of denoting the ethnic or national “other”. In addition, Christian nationalism delivers a set of flexible symbols and causes, “not beholden to any particular institution, affiliation or moral tradition,” allowing for an application of, and adherence to Christian nationalism by non-practising⁴⁷ nationals.⁴⁸ The importance of this for this study is that I posit ‘Christian persecution’ to be one of the malleable symbols of the Christian nationalist movement.

Christian nationalism clearly uses Brubaker’s first two approaches in presenting the nation as an explicitly Christian creation and advancing a synonymy of American identity (or another nationality) and Christianity. This is evident through the existence of Christian identity

⁴³ For literature on this, see Perry, Samuel L., and Andrew L. Whitehead, “Christian Nationalism and White Racial Boundaries: Examining Whites’ Opposition to Interracial Marriage.” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 38 (July 9, 2014): 1671–89. Also see, Williams, Rhys H., “Civil Religion and the Cultural Politics of National Identity in Obama’s America.” *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 52 (June 4, 2013): 239–57.

⁴⁴ Whitehead, Perry, and Baker, “Make America Christian Again,” 4.

⁴⁵ Philip S. Gorski, “Why Do Evangelicals Vote for Trump?,” *The Immanent Frame*, October 4, 2016, <https://tif.ssrc.org/2016/10/04/why-do-evangelicals-vote-for-trump/>.

⁴⁶ Rogers Brubaker, “A New ‘Christianist’ Secularism in Europe,” *The Immanent Frame*, accessed October 12, 2017, <https://tif.ssrc.org/2016/10/11/a-new-christianist-secularism-in-europe/>.

⁴⁷ By “non-practising” I am merely referring to those who do not actively ascribe to or act out religious doctrines. This falls in line with the secular application of religious identity.

⁴⁸ Whitehead, Perry, and Baker, “Make America Christian Again,” 5.

as a “dominant symbolic boundary marker in American society.”⁴⁹ Moreover, Whitehead and Scheitle write that the concept of “America as Christian” has become an ideology *sui generis*—satisfying the fourth approach: a distinctive form of religious nationalism.⁵⁰ Beyond highlighting an overlap of religion and politics, this ideology emphasizes how, “religion and nationality are symbolically aligned and nested within one another.”⁵¹ Thus, Christian nationalism is also advanced through the third approach, using religion as a component of nationalism.

The following empirical analysis will attempt to show the sundry nature of Christian nationalisms invoked, delineating between nationalisms that operationalize Christianity and explicitly ‘Christian nationalisms’ in a cross-national context. This will inevitably entail a demarcation between Christian nationalist discourse and civil religious discourse in the American case, as well as a differentiation between civilizationist discourse and Christian nationalism in the Hungarian case.

The empirical analysis of the paper is put in conversation with the theoretical work of Levinger and Lytle (2003), Krzyżanowski (2009), Wodak and Boukala (2015), and Weidinger (2017). These pieces provided a basis for identifying and explicating nationalist and religious nationalist rhetoric, providing critical theories on the *topoi* application of nationalist actors, common tropes in civilizationist rhetoric, and the triadic structure of nationalist primordialism. Further development on these pieces are discussed in Chapter One and Chapter Two.

⁴⁹ Andrew L. Whitehead and Christopher P. Scheitle, “We the (Christian) People: Christianity and American Identity from 1996 to 2014,” *Social Currents* 5, no. 2 (April 2018): 157, <https://doi.org/10.1177/2329496517725333>.

⁵⁰ Whitehead and Scheitle, 158.

⁵¹ Whitehead and Scheitle, 158.

Chapter One

Chapter Introduction

This chapter begins the analysis of the paper with the main case study, the World Summit in Defense of Persecuted Christians. In keeping in line with the theoretical background, the chapter starts with a discussion on the event itself, the setup, and the significance of Christian nationalism in the socio-political context of the WSDPC. During the presentation of the contextual and background information for the WSDPC, Franklin Graham's address is discussed in short to highlight some of the theological elements of persecution narratives in Christian nationalism as well as the movement's need for political elite voices. Having discussed the internal importance of political elites for the confrontation of Christian persecution, this chapter ends with the two main subjects of analysis: Vice President Mike Pence's address and the WSDPC declaration.

WSDPC Context: Framing the Need for Political Elites in Christian-Nationalism

How was the WSDPC framed? To what extent did religious elites like Franklin Graham advance a need for support by political elites? How was persecution seminal to the pre-election narrative on the Christian nation?

Through the Discourse Historical Approach, sources (text, speech, video) are treated within the socio-political and socio-historical context of the narrative. Thus, it is important to understand Vice President Pence's speech on Christian persecution within the socio-political context of Christian nationalism, and the efforts of sponsoring evangelical organizations. This allows for the analysis to draw upon existing opinions and frameworks to support the assertion that Christian persecution is addressed in the Vice President's speech as a key issue for Christian

nationalists and a defining point of the Christian nationalist identity. Lastly, the socio-political context serves to highlight the importance of political elite discourse to Christian nationalism.

Beginning with the basic facts of the case, the WSDPC was an event hosted from May 10th - May 13th, 2017, by the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA). Through the course of the four-day summit for persecuted Christians, over 600 “church leaders, victims of persecution and advocates” convened with the aim of raising global awareness about the persecution of Christians and producing solutions to strengthening solidarity.⁵² The venue locations for the event were the Mayflower Hotel and the Trump International Hotel in Washington, D.C. Both venues carry significant context to the relation between American evangelicalism and U.S. politics. The Mayflower Hotel is the famous 1961 site of Billy Graham’s National Prayer Breakfast, where Graham invoked a necessary relationship between presidential power and godly leadership.⁵³ Moreover, Graham—using quasi-civil religious language—posited a need for the nation to imitate the characteristics of the “Divine Author of our blessed religion” to prosper and overcome the threat of persecution by external forces (communism, nuclear war, etc.).⁵⁴

This reference to “our” religion marks a historical point in advancing a synonymy of Americans and Christians in confrontation with the *other*. It is also symbolic of a discourse on Christian foreign policy and the cognitive mapping of moral policy.⁵⁵ The location was not chosen without reason, having a connection to the Christian-nationalist narrative. Additionally,

⁵² “Fact Sheet: World Summit in Defense of Persecuted Christians - DeMoss - Thinking | PR.”

⁵³ “AR6334-C. Reverend Billy Graham Speaks at Prayer Breakfast - John F. Kennedy Presidential Library & Museum,” accessed April 28, 2018, <https://www.jfklibrary.org/Asset-Viewer/Archives/JFKWHP-AR6334-C.aspx>.

⁵⁴ “Remarks at International Christian Leadership Dedication Breakfast, 9 February 1961 - John F. Kennedy Presidential Library & Museum,” 5, accessed April 28, 2018, <https://www.jfklibrary.org/Asset-Viewer/Archives/JFKPOF-034-005.aspx>.

⁵⁵ Devuyt, “Religion and American Foreign Policy,” 32.

in line with Franklin Graham's support for the newly elected administration, the organizers of the summit chose the Trump International Hotel for its closing banquet.⁵⁶ This decision sparked media speculation on the intermingling of Trump family interests and official duties.⁵⁷ Yet, beyond the glamorous headlines of business collusion and presidential interests, the location focuses the question on how this event envisaged the role of the president (as a proxy for the nation) in defending and advancing Christianity.

This joint image of the nation, leadership, and Christianity being advanced is more evident when the event is located within the context of a larger narrative/movement. Coming off the heels of the Decision America Tour, a 50-state effort at engaging Christian voters, Rev. Graham issued multiple statements and press releases during his domestic crusades. Of note, Graham invoked the need for a spiritual influence upon the nation and its leadership, urging God's people to exercise their "responsibility to pray for the nation and to vote."⁵⁸ Graham continued in his statement on the Decision America Tour saying, "We need a Christian revolution in America. Let's support men and women...who will lead this country back to really being one nation under God."⁵⁹ Important to this piece, Graham frames the current leadership—alluding specifically to the Vice President—as the necessary leadership for not only the protection of America, but the defense of Christians.

Graham, through this above quote, advances a Christian nationalism that best fits Brubaker's fourth manifestation of religion and nationalism—a distinctive *religious nationalism*.

⁵⁶ Joe Marusak, "Guess Whose D.C. Hotel Franklin Graham Chose to Host His Big Banquet?," Charlotte Observer, accessed April 29, 2018, <http://www.charlotteobserver.com/news/local/article155791734.html>.

⁵⁷ For an example, see: Mattathias Schwartz, "Mike Pence Speaks to Religious Group. Next Day, They Banquet at Trump Hotel.," *The Intercept* (blog), May 16, 2017, <https://theintercept.com/2017/05/16/mike-pence-speaks-to-religious-group-next-day-they-banquet-at-trump-hotel/>.

⁵⁸ "Franklin Graham: We Need a Christian Revolution," accessed April 29, 2018, <https://billygraham.org/story/franklin-graham-we-need-a-christian-revolution-in-america/>.

⁵⁹ "Franklin Graham: We Need a Christian Revolution."

The evangelist, in the months leading up to the WSDPC, highlighted this belief in a unique Christian nationalism, laying out guidelines for how he and other Christians should expect the nation to look. At an address to the Gateway Church “First Conference 2017,” Graham spoke to the moral sins of the American nation (same-sex marriage, abortion and secularism) that he claimed stem from a deviation from national heritage.⁶⁰ In a quasi-oppression/persecution narrative, Graham underscored the need for godly intervention and leadership as the nation had fallen in trouble, as he had seen in the 50-state tour.

The BGEA, through Graham, advanced a pre-election narrative of Christian persecution within America. At the Oregon stop in the Decision America Tour, the minister used language of resistance to galvanize Christian Oregonians to take back their nation, religion and identity.⁶¹ Rev. Graham asserted a privileged position of the nation in the eyes of God, stating, “God has blessed this nation more than any other” yet he followed this with a condemnation of the previous administration, asserting that America has turned its back on God.⁶² The polemical rhetoric about the previous administration and leadership, highlights the perceived importance of political elites in maintaining the Christian nation. In addition, Graham placed an importance on the commitment of political elites to Christianity through the threat of cultural loss and national failure. At his stop in Colorado Graham said:

*I feel that we're going to have to meet our political obligations as Christians and make our voice known if America is to be preserved with a type of Christian heritage which has given us the liberties which we now enjoy...For unless America turns back to God and repents of its sin and experiences a revival we will fail as a nation.*⁶³

⁶⁰ “Franklin Graham | First Conference 2017,” Gateway Church, December 20, 2016, <https://gatewaypeople.com/ministries/life/events/first-conference-2017/session/2017/01/01/franklin-graham-first-conference>.

⁶¹ “Oregon: Decision America Helps Reignite Christian Heritage,” Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, accessed April 29, 2018, <https://billygraham.org/story/oregon-decision-america-helps-reignite-christian-heritage/>.

⁶² “Oregon.”

⁶³ “Franklin Graham: Will You Stand For Biblical Values?,” Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, accessed June 1, 2018, <https://billygraham.org/story/franklin-graham-will-you-stand-for-biblical-values/>.

Here, Graham invokes the common civilizationist trope that Brubaker and Wodak highlight in their work. The election of godly leadership is necessary to preserve America (*continuity and consistency of national identity*) insofar as America, and American values (*liberties*), are tied to this Christian-cultural heritage. The loss of godly leadership, and therefore Christian heritage, is perceived to pose a threat to the secular social values of the state. These values are ultimately only viable in an atmosphere that upholds Christian traditions and customs.

An *internal* Christian persecution narrative was prominent under the Obama administration, giving forth to a partisan narrative masked in a religious framework. This became known in academic and non-academic coverage as the “War on Christmas”. This cultural war marked a point in U.S. politics where conservative religious and political elites decried a displacement of Christian imagery and traditions in U.S. culture for pluralism and secular artifices under an Obama presidency.⁶⁴ Duerringer (2013) noted that the umbrella discourse was “structurally representative of an enduring genre of authoritative discourses that ‘decry’ the persecution of America’s predominant religion (Christianity).”⁶⁵

The founded fear of persecution, or lack of security under a political administration, was disseminated by Christian-conservative elites. Framed in a slippery slope narrative, Bill O’Reilly, Franklin Graham, Pat Robertson and others claimed that the first step to full secularization would be an attack on banal practices such as saying, “Merry Christmas!”⁶⁶ The

⁶⁴ Christopher Duerringer, “The ‘War on Christianity’: Counterpublicity or Hegemonic Containment?,” *Southern Communication Journal* 78, no. 4 (September 1, 2013): 311–12, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1041794X.2013.792866>.

⁶⁵ Duerringer, 311.

⁶⁶ Rachel L. Davis, “Holiday Trees and Seasons Greetings: The Battle of Words in the ‘War on Christmas,’” *Annual Review of Undergraduate Research, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, School of Languages, Cultures, and World Affairs, College of Charleston* 11 (2012): 68–80.

utmost fear of conservative Christians was a loss of culture constitutive of the community, a result of a clash between religious maximalists and their minimalists counterparts.⁶⁷

If they practiced faith in Obama's America, conservative Christians assumed that persecution would follow (*topos of the consequential*). This ideological/theological position is not uncommon in academic studies. Sacvan Bercovitch coined the term 'American Jeremiad' to describe the belief held by conservative Christians in America that they would be persecuted if they practiced their faith in the wake of secularizing forces.⁶⁸ Additionally, this fear of persecution by faith has extended beyond the ecclesiastical, and has been studied as part of or connected to feelings of white diaspora or "white flight" in America and the perception of ethnic/cultural dislocation.⁶⁹ It appeared under this time that conservative Christians in the U.S. held two views on identity, one of a diasporic community within the U.S. and one of a normative understanding of what the United States used to, and ought to look like.

Religious and political elites on the Christian right largely addressed persecution as an internal or domestic issue in the years under President Obama. This fueled a support of political figures by religious conservatives who desired representatives who would legislate America in a godly manner. This triadic nationalist narrative⁷⁰ is represented below in Figure 1. The figure illustrates how nationalist narratives on Christian persecution in the pre-Trump era employed Levinger and Lytle's (2003) rhetorical model for mobilization of political support.

⁶⁷ Bruce Lincoln, *Holy Terrors, Second Edition: Thinking About Religion After September 11* (University of Chicago Press, 2010), 59.

⁶⁸ See: Sacvan Bercovitch, *The American Jeremiad* (University of Wisconsin Press, 2012).

⁶⁹ Mulder, *Shades of White Flight*.

⁷⁰ Matthew Levinger and Paula Franklin Lytle, "Myth and Mobilisation: The Triadic Structure of Nationalist Rhetoric," *Nations and Nationalism* 7 (January 7, 2003): 175–94, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1469-8219.00011>.

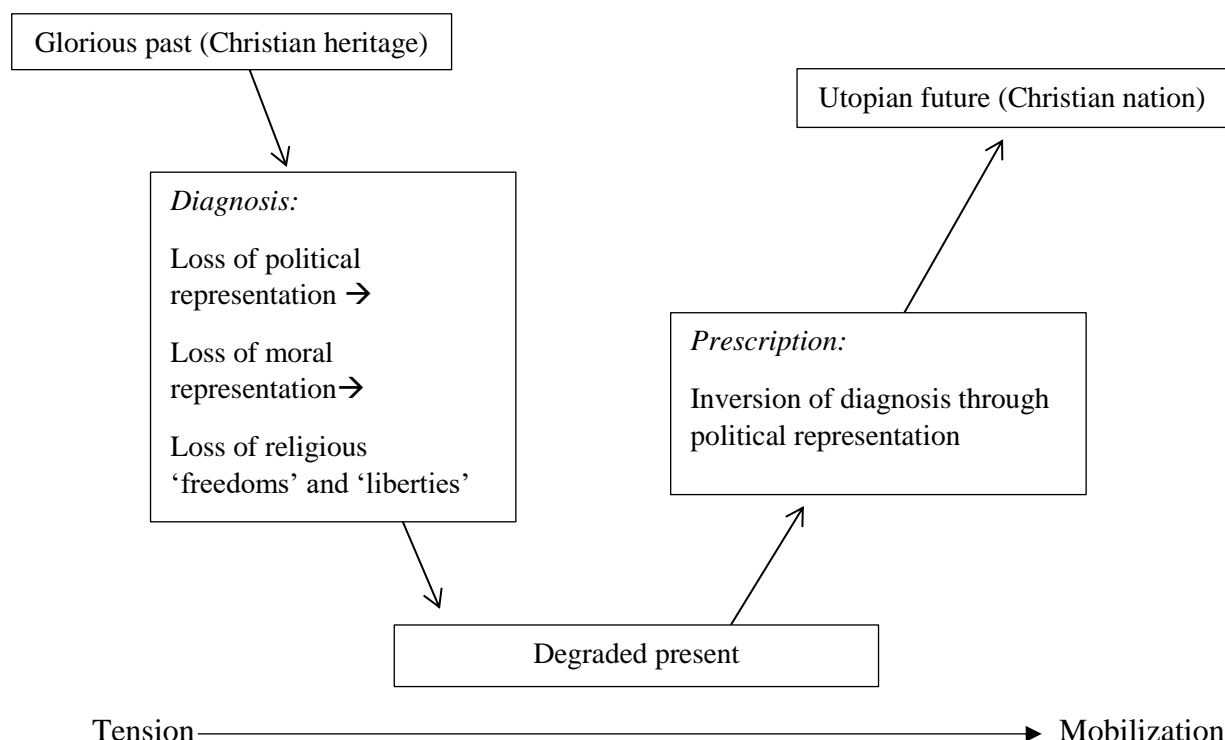


Figure 1: Diagnosis, Prescription and the Vector of National Action⁷¹

Rev. Graham’s narrative maintained through the course of the election, yet he pivoted to a new discourse in his WSDPC address. Still maintaining a firm concern with Christian persecution, Graham concerned himself less with the political apparatus of the nation at the WSDPC and more with the civilizationist threat of Islam. Lauding the new administration’s “support” and willingness to “express [their] faith,” Graham only discusses the failure of U.S. political elites as a problem of the past—signaling a positive change in society with the switch in administration.⁷²

Moreover, the narrative on persecution moved from a concern for the American Christian community to the worldly Christian community. This is most evident in Graham’s civilizationist

⁷¹ This figure was adapted from Figure 2 in: Levinger and Franklin Lytle, 186.

⁷² *Persecuted, But Not Forsaken: Stories of Faithfulness and Messages of Hope*. (Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, 2017), sec. The Rev. Franklin Graham: “Unshakeable, Courageous Faith”.

concern with the threat of Islam. The evangelist sets Christianity, and subsequently all the west, as the opposition culturally and morally to Islam. This is not a new rhetorical tool of Graham—a prominent skeptic of Islam who once instrumentalized fear of the faith to question President Obama’s citizenship and moral aptitude.⁷³

In this speech at the WSDPC, Graham advanced an understanding of religion and nationalism as analogous phenomenon (Brubaker’s 1st approach) through the syllogism of threat. In his address to the WSDPC Graham ‘quoted’ a threat from ISIL stating,

The narrator of the video mockingly called the victims “people of the cross” and declared “we will fight you” - breaking the cross, killing the swine! He then pointed this knife across the Mediterranean and declared “we will conquer Rome by Allah’s permission”. This threat to Rome was not just a threat to the Roman Catholic Church, but to all Christians everywhere.⁷⁴

In this statement by Rev. Graham he emphasizes the threat to Rome—a location often employed in Western populist and nationalist rhetoric as the upmost identity of ‘Western culture’⁷⁵—and the Roman Catholic Church as a threat to the transnational Christian community. Graham applies spatial representation to the Christian community, ‘Western society’. Though no reference is made to the American nation in this pull quote, Graham equates threats to “Rome” or “the West” with a threat to Christianity. This syllogism advanced a civilizationist understanding of the Christian persecution.

The narrative of Graham from the WSDPC reflected common rhetorical themes in fundamental or maximalist religious discourse. Nonetheless, the spiritual leader emphasized political action to confront radical Islam (the perpetrator of Christian persecution) and made

⁷³ “Rev. Graham: Obama Was ‘Born a Muslim,’” ABC News, September 15, 2010, <https://abcnews.go.com/WN/franklin-graham-president-obama-born-muslim-pew-poll/story?id=11446462>.

⁷⁴ *Persecuted, But Not Forsaken*, sec. The Rev. Franklin Graham: “Unshakeable, Courageous Faith”.

⁷⁵ Ruth Wodak, Majid KhostraviNik, and Brigitte Mral, *Right-Wing Populism in Europe: Politics and Discourse* (Bloombury, 2013), 31.

political the differential between the previous and current American administrations.

Additionally, Graham addressed religion as a theological element and a cultural element of the nation—emphasizing the ecclesiastical importance of ‘suffering’ while equally holding Christianity as a cultural signifier of the ‘West’.

Moving from this socio-political and socio-historical context, the upcoming analysis of Vice President Mike Pence’s address at the WSDPC seeks to understand how persecution narratives in the post-Trump election have shifted from constructing American government in a negative light to a positive light. Additionally, I will illustrate how both men still employ elements of relative-deprivation within America, but principally address Christian persecution from the framework of U.S. moral superiority and obligation.

Going forth from how the event was staged and framed by religious elites, how did Pence as a political elite validate this Christian nationalist and quasi-dominionist claims?⁷⁶ The stage was set for Pence, the supported candidate of the sponsor of the WSDPC, yet did his rhetoric invoke a Christian-nationalist agenda for America? And, how in relation to Christian persecution did Pence reassert the U.S.—Christian heritage/identity? Beyond Pence’s address, how was the event positioned as a political call to action? Finally, is the issue of Christian persecution a symbol of the Christian-nationalist movement in the United States?

⁷⁶ For more information on Dominionism consult: Sara Diamond, *Spiritual Warfare: The Politics of the Christian Right* (South End Press, 1989).

In brief, dominionism is essentially the ideology that seeks the establishment of a nation governed by Christians and biblical law.

*Mike Pence's Address: Rest Assured Christian World, America is Here*⁷⁷

Beginning with Vice President Mike Pence's address at the WSDPC, I will break down the nomination/predication of claims to the nation, Christianity, persecution and the like. In short, by analyzing the nomination and predication of statements the focus is placed on how Pence constructs actors, events and phenomena discursively through membership categorization and the employment of tropes.⁷⁸ In addition, this entails elaboration onto how Pence discursively qualifies the nation and social actors through positive/negative attribution, predicative statements, and presuppositions/implicatures.

After identifying nomination and predication strategies raised, the analysis moves forth to explaining Pence's argumentation; i.e. his justification for normative rightness. To accurately describe how Pence argues for a Christian-nationalist agenda, this section references sets of commonly applied *topoi* in populist and nationalist rhetoric.⁷⁹ *Topoi* are discursive strategies or rhetorical conventions used to connect a claim to a conclusion or point. Wodak and Boukala note the advantage of employing topoi, writing that a *topos* "offers the opportunity for a systematic in-depth analysis of different arguments and statements that represent the accepted knowledge—*endoxen*—and which are usually employed by orators or opponents to persuade their audience of the validity of their opinions."⁸⁰ The use of *topoi* to identify argumentation theories is essential to the triangulation of claims with discursive approaches, allowing for a socio-diagnostic critique.⁸¹

⁷⁷ For the course of this analysis, quotes are drawn from Mike Pence's address (Appendix Item I), accessed here: "Remarks by Vice President Pence at the World Summit in Defense of Persecuted Christians." The White House. Accessed April 8, 2018. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-vice-president-pence-world-summit-defense-persecuted-christians/>.

⁷⁸ Reisigl and Wodak, "The Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA)," 95.

⁷⁹ For a full list of *topoi* recognized in nationalist rhetoric, and used in this paper, see Appendix item V.

⁸⁰ Wodak and Boukala, "European Identities and the Revival of Nationalism in the European Union," 94.

⁸¹ Igor Z. Zagar, "Topoi in Critical Discourse Analysis," *Lodz Papers in Pragmatics* 6 (January 1, 2010): 4, <https://doi.org/10.2478/v10016-010-0002-1>.

In this section, the topoi sets are taken and adapted from the work of Krzyzanowski (2009) and Wodak (2015).

Following the application of the Discourse Historical Approach to analyze the discursive construction of the nation, national identity, etc., a brief overview of themes and takeaways from the speech is presented. I attempt to draw on the analysis of the speech and its content, rather than its construction, to discuss how the discourse on Christian persecution by the Vice President advances a civilizationist narrative and ties U.S. national identity to a consistency of fighting Christian persecution.

I. Nomination/Predication Strategies

How does Pence construct the nation? In what ways is Christian persecution predicated? How does Pence present the nation in relation to Christian persecution?

In the nomination/predication of social actors and the nation, Pence implicates a clear national commitment to defending Christians abroad by identifying the nation, its people and representation as unified to protect Christianity. Pence invokes this unity of nation in a reassurance claim directed to those Christians persecuted around the world, stating:

Our brother and sisters in faith, I can assure you are being carried by the prayers of the faithful across this nation and across the world. You have the prayers of our President and all the American people... So, know those of you that stare persecution in the face every day in distant lands, you have the prayers of the American people, prayers of my family, and you have the prayers of the President of the United States.

Immediately, Pence applies kinship address forms (brother and sister) to construct a transnational community or nation, whose predicate is solely *faith*. The pronoun use implies a power balance between Pence and Christians around the world, asserting a commonality of faith between this spatially unbounded group, similar to how kin-states construct solidarity with external ethnic

nationals.⁸² In addition, this semantic device sets boundaries for who is and who is not constituted within the imagined community; though he himself cannot know the extent of all people he aims to protect, he can set a boundary of being within the faith community.

Persecution in this sense is presented as a foreign concept. Pence denotes the spatial location of persecution as that faced in “distant lands.” In doing this, Pence posits a non-national (non-American) element to Christian persecution. In a later quote, he reinforces this concept of America as the antithesis to, or absence of, persecution, stating:

You are here from across this land and from distant others because America was and is and ever will be that shining city on a hill where men and women of faith throughout our history have been able to walk and openly worship their faith in God to the glory of God, and it will ever be true in these United States of America.

A pair of important elements should be elaborated on regarding these two pull-quotes. First, Pence uses two nouns to refer to a crowd of persecuted Christians across the world— “you” and “our.” In the case of the former, “you” is applied to demarcate who is not an American national, prominently noting a power imbalance between the privileged and ‘persecution-less’ United States and persecuted Christians. For example, “**you** are being carried by the prayers of the faithful across this nation” and, “**you** have the prayers of the President of the United States.” In the use of the latter noun, “our” is applied twice in these opening remarks, once to invoke solidarity through faith and second, in reference to the position of “**our** President” who stands in recognition of all Christians facing persecution.

The second element of nomination and predication that must be elaborated on is how America is predicated as an exemplary nation for Christian freedom. Of note, Pence predicates America’s position as a nation that protects and advances Christian freedom through the

⁸² For more information, see: M. Waterbury, *Between State and Nation: Diaspora Politics and Kin-State Nationalism in Hungary* (Springer, 2010).

rhetorical application of a conceptual metaphor.⁸³ America exists as a “shining city on a hill” for the freedom of faith; this metaphor carries both religious and national significance. In Christianity, this statement is traced from Matthew 5:14 (NIV), “You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden.”⁸⁴ Similarly, it has been historically employed in U.S. political rhetoric to invoke American exceptionalism and the status of America as a world leader by politicians such as Massachusetts colonial Governor John Winthrop and President Ronald Reagan.⁸⁵

Finally, this language argues that not only does America exist as this exemplary state, but it has continuously been such. The implication of continuity is essential to the construction of national identity.⁸⁶ Thus, in constructing an identity of the nation which protects Christians from persecution, Pence elaborates on the continuity and consistency, proclaiming, “*America was and is and ever will be that shining city on a hill.*” Implicating a consistency of national moral and political superiority, Pence contradicts the pre-2016 narrative of conservative Christians whose efficacy was low in the U.S. nation state and its leadership. At last, abandoning the ‘fallen from grace’ narrative of the nation state for a narrative of national continuity and consistency in message he reaffirms a *national uniqueness*. The perceptions of U.S. history and *ethos* apparently are tied to the collective remembrance of political parties in power.

⁸³ Elena Semino, Zsófia Demjén, and Jane Demmen, “An Integrated Approach to Metaphor and Framing in Cognition, Discourse, and Practice, with an Application to Metaphors for Cancer,” *Applied Linguistics*, September 21, 2016, amw028, <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amw028>.

⁸⁴ “Bible Gateway Passage: Matthew 5:14-16 - New International Version,” Bible Gateway, accessed May 1, 2018, <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+5%3A14-16&version=NIV>.

⁸⁵ See Reagan, Michael and Jim Denney, “The City on a Hill.” *New York Times*, Accessed May 1, 2018. <https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/books/first/r/reagan-city.html?mcubz=3>.

⁸⁶ Anna Triandafyllidou and Ruth Wodak, “Conceptual and Methodological Questions in the Study of Collective Identities: An Introduction,” *Journal of Language and Politics* 2 (January 1, 2003): 211–13, <https://doi.org/10.1075/jlp.2.2.02tri>.

The invocation of continuity and consistency informs ontological security through presenting, spatially, the most essential category of security: home.⁸⁷ Pence predicates the U.S. as a destination for security—and more subtly a home for religious freedom—in the latter pull-quote, stating that the reason attendees have gathered from “distant lands” in America, is because America is the nation which offers these freedoms and protections. Towards the end of Pence’s address, he draws upon an anecdote of his own home, in which a Bible verse sits above the mantle of his house, reinforcing this ontological security through God, and more so through the commitment of U.S. political elites to the Christian faith.

The commitment of the nation, and its leadership is positioned as *tangible* on three separate occasions in the speech. Through predicating the commitment of the current administration as tangible, Pence builds upon an account advanced by Graham and other conservative religious elites, who challenged the legitimacy of President Obama’s commitment to faith and defending religious freedom.⁸⁸

The predication of tangible support progresses in the speech from a broad commitment to religious freedom to a commitment to American exceptionalism and finally to a validation of U.S. military intervention. Below is the progression highlighted through the three pull-quotes:

- (1) *And I’m here on behalf of the President as a tangible sign of his commitment to defending Christians and, frankly, all who suffer for their beliefs across the wider world...*
- (2) *I stand here today as a testament to President Trump’s tangible commitment to reaffirm America’s role as a beacon of hope and light and liberty to inspire the world...*
- (3) *Because of the action of President Donald Trump, ISIS is already on the run. Progress in Mosul is tangible. But the fight goes on. And I would say to each of you, persevere in prayer for those who wear the uniform and who are in this fight.*

⁸⁷ See: Kinnvall, “Globalization and Religious Nationalism.”

⁸⁸ Tim Mak, “Graham: ‘Assume’ Obama Is Christian,” POLITICO, accessed May 10, 2018, <https://www.politico.com/news/stories/0212/73110.html>.

In these statements, Pence underscores what is presented as the three most firm commitments/actions of the United States leadership: defending against religious persecution, upholding a model of action, and combatting (militarily) political actors who perpetuate religious persecution. I would like to elaborate briefly on two points of interest from this observation.

First, in the beginning predicate of tangible, Pence employs the term as a legitimization of presidential commitment that is inherently connected to the final use. The president's commitment is tangible insofar as it includes military intervention. Secondly, the language presumes a fundamental status of America as both a "*beacon of hope and light and liberty*" and as a military force validated through prayer. In the first sense, the American *ethos* as a symbol of "*hope and light and liberty*" is presumed through calling upon the reaffirmation of this status. Further, Pence invokes a specific *telos* of the presidency—and his position as the Vice President—through defining their actions, and presence, as a commitment to reaffirming the American *ethos*. Simply stated, through calling upon the reaffirmation of the U.S. as a beacon of hope, Pence implicates the inherent, and possibly forgotten, status of the U.S. as a model nation. Furthermore, the *telos* of this administration is tangibly reaffirming this national standard. Finally, despite the understanding of U.S. military as a national force, Pence calls upon the transnational Christian community to validate those in uniform through prayer. This is not an uncommon statement within American civil religion; however, situated within the context of defending Christianity it necessitates some attention.

Wrapping up the nomination/predication approaches through Pence's address, it should be evident that Pence, in speaking to persecution, constructs a tripartite national identity of America. The United States is predicated as: (1) a nation consistently and historically committed to upholding specifically Christian (and more broadly religious) freedom; (2) a symbol/model for

the rest of the world; and (3) a nation committed to defending Christians beyond national borders. The nomination and predication strategies presented in this subchapter reflect a national identity envisaged through an understanding of persecution as an antithesis to U.S. values (thus the U.S. is an exemplary nation), seminal to the agenda of the current administration and affecting a larger transnational community (Christians) which the United States has a connection to, and invested interest in. Beyond the nomination/predication of the U.S. in Pence's discourse the next section will address how this identity is present in the argumentation for action against Christian persecution.

II. Argumentation Strategies

How is the nation argued as a polity for protecting persecuted Christians? How is the nation envisaged as Christian? To what extent is 'othering' applied to bolster claims to the nation?

To validate the nomination of American identity as it relates to Christian persecution, America is conceived as an embattled nation by the Vice President. Just as Christian Smith wrote on the embattled nature of American Evangelicals, a group besieged with the presence of a morally inferior world and its institutions, the rhetoric of Pence invokes a sense of U.S. "practical moral superiority."⁸⁹ Practical moral superiority is the belief that one's way of life, morality, functional standards and justness is simply better than that of others.⁹⁰ In part this reflects an exceptionalism or divineness of the nation which legitimizes political assertions.

This practical moral superiority is argued by Pence through the assertion that the U.S. and its leadership, are cognizant of, and act upon, Christian persecution to a level that the rest of the

⁸⁹ Christian Smith, *American Evangelicalism: Embattled and Thriving* (University of Chicago Press, 2014), 129.

⁹⁰ Smith, 129.

world does not. The Vice President reasserts the president's awareness of, and commitment to fighting Christian persecution, stating:

Know today with assurance that President Trump sees these crimes for what they are: vile acts of persecution animated by hatred — hatred for the Gospel of Christ. And so too does the President know those who perpetrate these crimes. They are them the embodiment of evil in our time. He calls them by name — radical Islamic terrorists.

In this excerpt, he posits the American president as the upmost authority on the persecution of Christians, stating that the President (serving as a proxy for the nation) “sees these crimes for what they are,” “know[s] those who perpetuate these crimes,” and “calls them by name.” In contrast, Pence in a later statement insists:

And I believe ISIS is guilty of nothing short of genocide against people of the Christian faith, and it is time the world called it by its name.

What is seen is a narrative shift, where the speaker employs a *topos of national uniqueness*⁹¹ to advance the understanding that the U.S. is the one nation privy to the suffering of persecuted Christians, whereas the world is failing to address the issue and define its cause. The U.S., unlike other nations, takes an initiative on this issue because of its Christian heritage and leadership.

In framing the United States' commitment to this issue, Pence affirms the importance of addressing the persecution of Christians specifically, defining the victim and perpetrator of terrorism as “the Gospel of Christ” and “radical Islamic Terrorists” respectively (*topos of definition*). Pence links the “victim” of persecution—the Gospel of Christ—to the political head of the nation—the President—reasserting a position of the nation in protecting Christianity while also implicitly presenting a *topos of threat*, the lack of worldly recognition of Islam as a danger.

Interestingly, Pence goes beyond identifying the world as blind to the causes and extent of Christian persecution, to framing the world and its hegemonic norms as a cause of

⁹¹ This *topos* was presented in: Michał Krzyżanowski, “Europe in Crisis?,” *Journalism Studies* 10, no. 1 (February 1, 2009): 103, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616700802560468>.

persecution. Speaking to the source of persecution, Pence begins broadly with the expectations of world conformity, maintaining:

The Bible tells us: “All who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.” And those of you gathered here today are emblematic of millions across the world. You’ve persevered through the crucible of persecution. You refused to be conformed to this world. You have chosen instead to be counted with those outside the city gate for your faith.

Through the *topos of burden*, and the *topos of cause and effect*, he rationalizes the persecution of Christians as a necessary consequence to upholding their faith rather than worldly norms (*topos of opposites*). His speech further highlights a linked practical moral superiority between the Christian identity and U.S. national identity. Whereas Christians in other parts of the world are persecuted due to their faith and lifestyle, U.S. Christians are not, because, the U.S. “upholds” Christian values.

Pence’s rhetoric is not uncommon considering the broader scope of nationalist rhetoric, which as scholars note, often places the nation (and nationals) on a continuum as entities against globalization and the world.⁹² The Vice President, like much of the Christian nationalist movement, services a counter-public discourse, which fixes a subalterity and oppositionality towards the broad public.⁹³ Persecution is fixed within this counter-public discourse as it is the basis for which the United States, unlike other nations (or more broadly the world), fights. Likewise, religion is posed as a stabilizing anchor for the nation within a morally degrading and transforming world.⁹⁴ This last point is evident in the Vice President’s narrative, where he persistently appeals to religious language such as prayer and blessing to strengthen the collective ontological security of the group.

⁹² Amory Starr and Jason Adams, “Anti-Globalization: The Global Fight for Local Autonomy,” *New Political Science* 25, no. 1 (March 1, 2003): 19–42, <https://doi.org/10.1080/0739314032000071217>.

⁹³ Duerringer, “The ‘War on Christianity,’” 313.

⁹⁴ Kinnvall, “Globalization and Religious Nationalism,” 758.

In presenting the United States as a unified force for the protection of worldly Christians, Pence asserts a counter-public narrative, constructing ‘out-groups’ to which the nation is embattled with. Mentioned earlier, the world is constructed as blind and somewhat implicit to the persecution of Christians; in turn America is argued as a nation whose identity and national fabric is connected to the suffering of Christians beyond borders. Pence explicitly states this in his speech:

The suffering of Christians in the Middle East has stirred America to act, and it brings me here today. President Trump rightly said not long ago that — of the Christian church, “nobody has been treated worse in the Middle East.” He’s made it clear that America will stand by followers of Christ in this hour of need.

Employing the *topos of cause and effect* and the *topos of urgency/authority*, the American people are offered as an authority that is responsive to the imperative needs of Christians around the world. Further, the *topos of authority* is raised again, asserting America’s role in coming to the defense of “followers of Christ” at their most vulnerable time.

Continuing with the embattled nature of the American *ethos*, Pence situates America as the seminal opposition to radical Islam, using the United States military as a symbol of defense and force for the greater good:

In President Trump, we not only have a leader who calls our enemy by name, we have a President who is confronting those who commit terror no matter the home or hut or cave in which they hide. In President Trump, I can promise you the armed forces of the United States of America, working with our allies in the region in Iraq and Afghanistan — we will not rest, we will not relent until we hunt down and destroy ISIS at its source.

In the beginning half of this quote Pence illustrates a power imbalance between the “we” (United States) and the “other” radical Islam, stating, “we have a president who is confronting those who commit terror no matter the home or hut or cave in which they hide.” On one end the President is invoked as a universally known position of power (*topos of authority*), while the opposition is posed as feeble, weak and oriental by relegating their domicile to a “home or hut or cave” where

they “hide”. The language invokes an Oriental otherness in the *topos of threat*, rather than a domestic or homegrown threat. This Orientalism is most characteristic of what Edward Said (2003) defined as latent Orientalism—the unconscious and intangible certainty of what is Orient in discourse.⁹⁵ In ‘Orientalizing’ the threat on the basis of its home/domicile, Pence reinforces the ontological security of the American home in contrast to the oriental other.

Beyond the latent Orientalism, Pence evokes a subtle *topos of syllogism* pivoting from religious persecution in the broad sense, to terrorism. Moreover, Christian persecution as the victim is linked to terrorism as the perpetrator (*topos of definition*). Drawing from the above passage, America is positioned alongside regional allies in the battle against ISIS—more specifically ISIS at its “source”. This qualification (ISIS at its “source”) emphasizes a two-part foreign element of the other; it assumes that source is distant both spatially and culturally/theologically. This is observed spatially through the contextualization of the statement, where Pence discusses working with allies in the region that is ISIS’s source, Iraq and Afghanistan. In fact, this is not an incorrect statement. However, the threat of terrorism (or more specifically religious persecution) which is the subject of his discussion, is not confined to this region, tying further into an ‘Orientalizing’ of terrorism and persecution.

Lastly, the theological/cultural element is presented as distant when this discourse is considered in the larger schematic of Christian foreign policy. The usage of terminology such as “evil” and “vile”—both of which were employed in the last two pull-quotes—is common in the religious “cognitive mapping” of U.S. policy makers.⁹⁶ Devuyt (2010) notes that the religious

⁹⁵ Qtd. in Nadia Marques de Carvalho, “Examining Orientalism as a Discourse in Relation to European Culture,” 4–5, accessed April 12, 2018, https://www.academia.edu/6342135/Examining_Orientalism_as_a_discourse_in_relation_to_European_culture.

⁹⁶ Devuyt, “Religion and American Foreign Policy,” 35.

certainty in justifying international relations policy reduces arguments down to a moral choice, often in terms of a source of good versus a source of evil.⁹⁷ There is historic precedence for this discourse in the U.S. context: the rhetoric of the Bush administration post 9-11.⁹⁸ By consequence, this narrative couches the U.S. and its role of defense in a “clash of civilizations” perspective which, as Grim and Finke (2007) note, assumes cultural homogeneity within the two “nations” or groups, and dissimilarity between them.⁹⁹

Concluding this section, the U.S. is argued as a force for protecting and maintaining the free practice of Christianity through the understanding that the defense of Christianity (more broadly religion) is intrinsic to the U.S. national fabric. Moreover, taking cues from common tropes within nationalist rhetoric, the U.S. and its leadership are discussed as the only entities aware of the atrocities committed against Christians, the only entities which identify Christianity as the most attacked group, the only construct capable of addressing persecution, and the only nation which rejects worldly hegemonic standards. Vice President Pence, when discussing Christian persecution, attempts to reinforce an understanding of national uniqueness and an American commitment to counter-public standards.

⁹⁷ Devuyst, 35.

⁹⁸ Solana, Javier. “The Transatlantic Rift: US Leadership After September 11,” *Harvard International Review*, accessed April 14, 2018, <http://hir.harvard.edu/article/?a=1036>.

⁹⁹ Brian J. Grim and Roger Finke, “Religious Persecution in Cross-National Context: Clashing Civilizations or Regulated Religious Economies?,” *American Sociological Review* 72, no. 4 (August 1, 2007): 633–58, <https://doi.org/10.1177/000312240707200407>.

*How does the declaration layout normative standards for the nation and national identity?
How does it define group identity and concerns?*

The last document for analysis from the WSDPC is the final declaration. Produced by the sponsoring organizations and circulated to the attendees as signatories, this document is important to defining group goals and illustrating normative expectations for the nation. In short, at face value the document is not all that provocative regarding the nation. In fact, not once is “nation” or the “United States” mentioned in the entire declaration.

Nonetheless, the document reifies some of the same semantic devices employed through Vice President Pence and Rev. Graham’s Christian nationalist rhetoric. In a very evangelical manner, the persecution of Christians is presented as a sort of rite of passage. Framing the counter-public nature of practicing maximalist faith, the document begins with a passage from 1 Peter 4:12-14,

[B]ut rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ’s sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you...

The suffering of Christians, like Pence and Graham stated, is a necessary consequence of their bravery to fight world conformity. The document continues to reject world hegemony, stating, “the Church is to be the light of truth in the midst of a corrupt world.” Drawing back to the use of a conceptual metaphor in Pence’s speech, both the United States and the Church have been

¹⁰⁰The Full declaration of the WSDPC can be accessed as Appendix item II, and is cited here: “Final Declaration: World Summit in Defense of Persecuted Christians,” accessed May 31, 2018, <https://demoss.com/newsrooms/béea/background/final-declaration-world-summit-in-defense-of-persecuted-christians>.

positioned as a “light” onto the world (*topos of syllogism*)—i.e. a beacon of moral aptitude and justness.

The church, moreover, is used as a metonymy for a large transnational community. In multiple points throughout the document, the church is treated with the respect of an ethnic group or nationality. For example, the declaration calls upon the allegiance of individuals, organizations and governments in aiding the “*persecuted church*”; diction such as “*household of faith*,” “*Community*,” and *familia* language is applied to the target group, invoking a transnational component of the Christian community—presenting Christians as a dispersed and spatially unbounded nation. This communal solidarity is later invoked in the declaration through the equivocation of suffering between ‘Western’ Christians and their “brothers and sisters” around the world. Christians who are from ‘Western nations’ are presented as uncharacteristically marginalized due to the threat of secular forces, ridicule, and challenges to “religious liberty”. This preface of Western Christian persecution is followed by an appeal for understanding, where western Christians are posited as empathetic to the plight of non-western Christians given their level of relative deprivation.

The declaration sets forth normative expectations for the Christian community, specifically elites, expecting that attendees must maintain biblical witness to the church, advocate on the behalf of those Christians persecuted and provide *practical* assistance when possible. The last point is striking as it correlates with both Pence and Graham’s language calling for legitimate and tangible action. In qualifying the assistance needed as *practical* or *tangible* the expectations set that some assistance that has been said to have been offered, or given, was indeed not legitimate, giving forth speculation as to what actions/assistance constitute practical efforts. Interestingly—and possibly connected—the declaration weaves eschatological

understandings of the end times (the church at rest, victorious Christianity, etc.) with pull quotes from the Bible that reference war, conquest, and embattlement with the morally inferior world (Ephesians 6:12-13). These pull quotes follow the pledges of the attendees, resonating in an embattled and militaristic tone of the declaration.

Chapter Summary

This first chapter illustrated a form of Christian nationalism in the United States that exemplifies Brubaker's first and fourth manifestations of religious nationalism. The nation, through the discourses on Christian persecution, is employed to reference both the United States and a larger transnational Christian community. Moreover, terminology such as 'the church' is used to represent a religious entity or a quasi-nation of believers. At other points in the rhetoric of U.S. religious and political elites, a distinctive religious nationalism is presented—Christian nationalism. This is evident in claims for support of the U.S. populace, where a synonymy of Christianity and American is presented.

The United States is offered through the discourse of Pence as a privileged and unique nation due to its relative lack of persecution. Yet, religious elites like Graham—and even conservative political figures such as Pence—have flipped in this narrative from a position of disadvantage to advantaged. As the background section of the chapter demonstrated, the persecution narratives of conservative religious elites differed in the pre-Trump presidency, focusing heavily on a nation of believers who were dislocated within an American society that had turned its back on Christianity for secularism and modernity. This indicates a high degree of political and partisan influence over the perception and scope of persecution.

Finally, this chapter presents the persecution narratives of political and religious elites through the framework of counter public discourse—a commonly employed narrative within

nationalism. The U.S. and more specifically Christianity, is discussed as an embattled group. External actors and forces are predicated as unaware of, or implicit to, the persecution of Christians worldwide.

Chapter Two

Chapter Introduction

The marriage of religion and politics in Hungarian culture is admittedly quite different than that of the United States. The Hungarian society is, like much of Central and Eastern Europe, less religiously observant than the United States. However, as a 2017 Pew Research Center study found, “Many people in the region embrace religion as an element of national belonging even though they are not highly observant.”¹⁰¹ This trend of reasserting religion in Central European culture has been a focal point of studies on Hungarian, Slovak, and Czech right-wing rhetoric and parties.

Growing attention has been given to the Orbán administration’s instrumentalization of religion in the discourse on national identity and heritage. From the 2012 changes to the constitution—which gave legitimacy to the synonymy of Hungarian identity with Christianity—to the promotion of Christian arts and culture as exclusively Hungarian, the acts of Fidesz (the ruling party) have garnered much scrutiny.¹⁰² Constitutionally and politically, Hungary has attempted to demarcate the boundaries of Christianity and Christian identity within its own nation, leading to claims of persecution of Christian denominations within Hungary.

Beginning with the 2011 revisions to the constitution, the changes supported both the Hungarian claim to Christian nationhood and challenge the actual practice to fighting Christian persecution. Renata Uitz (2012) wrote that the changes in Article VII of the constitution—from 1989 where separate zones of operation for church and state were clearly defined, to 2011

¹⁰¹ Alan Cooperman, Neha Sahgal, and Anna Schiller, “National and Religious Identities Converge in a Region Once Dominated by Atheist Regimes,” 2016, 6.

¹⁰² “How Viktor Orban Bends Hungarian Society to His Will.” The New York Times. accessed May 16, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/27/world/europe/viktor-orban-hungary.html>.

where Parliament could identify “recognized” churches and work bilaterally with such on-community projects—signaled a “privileged position *ex lege* to certain churches.”¹⁰³ This sectarian privilege could be subsumed in the larger category of Christian or religious persecution. Pap (2017) noted that this law allowed Parliament to “distinguish between incorporated churches and other religious organizations with certain privileges, such as tax benefits and subsidies.”¹⁰⁴ The contentiousness of this act also led to an *amicus brief* drafted for the Venice Commission that on the behalf of minority denominations and religions claimed an impartiality of the Hungarian government towards certain religious sects, which violated human rights.¹⁰⁵ Drawing from Simonovits (2014) study referenced in Pap’s work, the decline in Hungarian religiosity coupled with the political advancements mentioned prior point to Christianity serving an “othering” purpose in elite discourse and politics.¹⁰⁶

Now a nation defined constitutionally by its Christian heritage, the Hungarian identity under Orbán poses a ‘Christianist’ nationalism that sparks anti-immigration and culturally exclusive politics. In line with the instrumentalization of Christianity and Christian heritage for the advancement of a homogenous Hungarian identity and right-wing politics, this chapter seeks to elaborate on how the recent interest in Christian persecution by Hungarian political elites is connected to ethnic nationalism and demarcating the Hungarian from the ‘other’. Considering the socio-historical and socio-political context of the ICCP, one notices a trend within Hungarian

¹⁰³ Renáta Uitz, “Freedom of Religion and Churches:: Archeology in a Constitution-Making Assembly,” in *Constitution for a Disunited Nation*, On Hungary’s 2011 Fundamental Law (Central European University Press, 2012), 201, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7829/j.ctt2tt27x.13>.

¹⁰⁴ András L. Pap, *Democratic Decline in Hungary: Law and Society in an Illiberal Democracy* (Routledge, 2017), 71.

¹⁰⁵ Pap, 71–72.

¹⁰⁶ Pap, 73.

political rhetoric at presenting the nation, its people, and culture as challenged or threatened by the outside world.

The Discursive Context of ICCP: Hungarian Political and Religious Elites Setting the Stage

The discourse analyzed within the ICCP is not without context, and Hungarian political and religious elites have taken on persecution narratives frequently within the 21st century. In fact, many scholars have noted that discourse on persecution is seminal to the Hungarian identity, denoting a nation whose collective remembrance is inherently tied to feelings of subjugation and persecution.¹⁰⁷

In an effort to succinctly provide context, this background section picks up in mid-2017, where the Hungarian Deputy Prime Minister, Zsolt Semjén addressed The Hague to garner support for the prosecution of ‘Islamists’ committing anti-Christian genocide. Similar to the degree of American rhetoric, Minister Semjén acknowledged types or grades of persecution, noting that “hard” persecution was that felt by Christian communities in “the East,” which differed from the “light” persecution of Christians in the European Union.¹⁰⁸ Nonetheless, this delineation strategy between *light* and *hard* persecution extended so far as to predicate a claim to prevent the cause—Islam—from entering European society. The “light” persecution of European Christians and “Christian civilization” was presented as a danger, however. The Minister claimed that a failure of EU officials to recognize the explicit Christian culture of Europe, and the EU’s concern with human rights and religious grievances rather than cultural history and preservation,

¹⁰⁷ See the works of: Katarina Gombocz, “‘They Gave Hungary Away’: Depression and Traumatic Cultural Identity Among Hungarians,” 2016, 104. And: Menyhért, “The Image of the ‘Maimed Hungary’ in 20th Century Cultural Memory and the 21st Century Consequences of an Unresolved Collective Trauma.”

¹⁰⁸ “Taking Care of Persecuted Christians Is a Natural Obligation of Hungary,” Government, accessed May 16, 2018, <http://www.kormany.hu/en/prime-minister-s-office/news/taking-care-of-persecuted-christians-is-a-natural-obligation-of-hungary>.

had led to Islam pushing through Europe, “like a hot knife through butter” (*employment of a conceptual metaphor*).¹⁰⁹

The words of the Deputy Minister resonated as a challenge to an unassuming and politically weak European Union. Semjén’s plea to the Hague continued with an array of conceptual metaphors, nationalist tropes, and seeded Christianist language, ultimately identifying Christian persecution as challenges to European, and more specifically Hungarian, identity. This existential civilizationist narrative is advanced throughout the discourse of Hungarian political elites. Minister of Human Resources and Calvinist pastor Zoltán Balog was unavailable for comment during this investigation; however, his statements on the ICCP and Christian persecution available through the state sight are telling of a common elite narrative.

Speaking to the failures of the European Union to accept its Christian heritage, and the internal threats of intellectualism and secularism, Balog stated:

*A person or community which fails to identify themselves, which conceals who they actually are and hides behind some kind of ideological neutrality is much more of a threat to another person or community...*¹¹⁰

This Euro-skepticism marks the second institution or group (Islam being the first) to blame for the persecution of Christians and underscores a claim to national uniqueness. Christian Democratic representative and member of the Reformed Church of Hungary (one of the largest state sponsored Churches) MEP György Hölvényi spoke to the lack of European unification in addressing Christian persecution claiming it was, “why the Hungarian Government had to decide on the establishment of a separate State Secretariat for preventing the persecution of

¹⁰⁹ “Taking Care of Persecuted Christians Is a Natural Obligation of Hungary.”

¹¹⁰ “Preservation of Christianity Is Preservation of Democracy All at Once,” Government, accessed May 16, 2018, <http://www.kormany.hu/en/ministry-of-human-resources/news/preservation-of-christianity-is-preservation-of-democracy-all-at-once>.

Christians...because someone has to begin this process.”¹¹¹ National projects such as the Hungarian scholarship program for Christian young people and the establishment of the Deputy State Secretariat for the Aid of Persecuted Christians were aimed at demonstrating a uniquely Hungarian commitment to tackling the persecution of Christians.

Of importance for the construction of national identity, the efforts of addressing Christian persecution outside of Hungary have been pushed forward out of a fear of an advancement by Islam and Eastern culture into Europe. Hölvényi and Secretariat for the Aid of Persecuted Christians Mr. Török firmly maintained a position that stabilizing, democratizing, and Christianizing these nations undergoing persecution in the Middle East was necessary to preventing the “end of Christianity in the Country.”¹¹² Moreover, these political figures reasserted a belief that taking in these persecuted individuals was not the best strategy, but rather Europe should seek to protect their homelands. Though religious and political elites in Hungary, such as Mr. Balog, speak to their desire for Hungary to be the refuge for persecuted Christians, their political aims still seek to maintain cultural and ethnic division.¹¹³ Programs such as the scholarship for Christian Youth are aimed at educating Christian students from the Middle East to prepare them to return home and “preserve religious identities” and “commitment to the lands of their birth.”¹¹⁴ This signals a commitment to Christian foreign policy and a conviction that the Hungarian nation must help preserve Christianity both regionally and in conflict areas abroad.

¹¹¹ Qtd. in: “Hungary Plans to Become a Centre for Efforts to Combat Christian Persecution,” Reformatus. accessed May 16, 2018, <http://www.reformatus.hu/mutat/13357/>.

¹¹² Qtd. in: “Hungary Plans to Become a Centre for Efforts to Combat Christian Persecution.”

¹¹³ Qtd. in: “Hungary Would like to Be a Refuge for Persecuted Christians,” Reformatus. accessed May 16, 2018, <http://www.reformatus.hu/mutat/14187/>.

¹¹⁴ Qtd. In: “Hungary Would like to Be a Refuge for Persecuted Christians.”

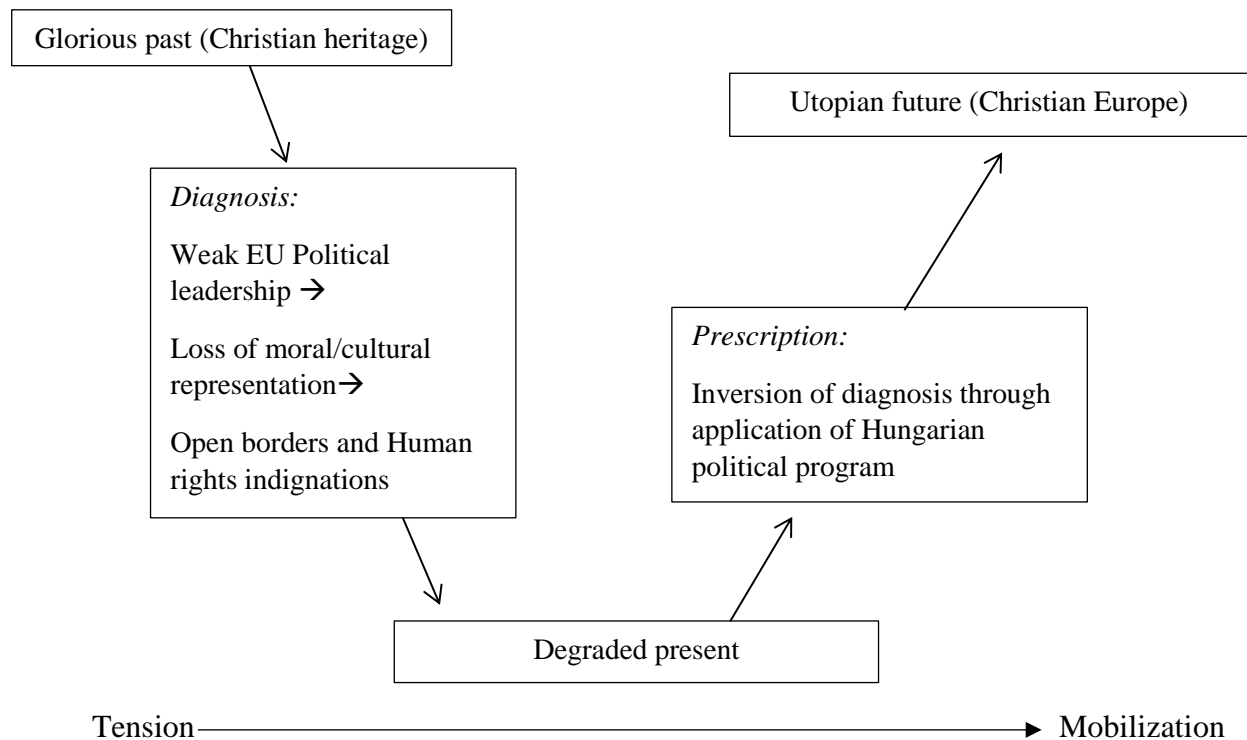


Figure 2: *Diagnosis, Prescription and the Vector of National or Supranational Action (Hungary)* ¹¹⁵

Above, Figure 2 illustrates how Europe is viewed as a politically weak or degraded continent considering immigration, and EU refugee relief policies. The figure uses the same model as Figure 1. and is borrowed from the model put forth by Levinger and Lytle (2003). The purpose is to demonstrate how Hungarian nationalist rhetoric on Christian persecution resembles the triadic structure of pre-Trump Christian conservative rhetoric in America. Both hold a failure in political leadership as the key reason for cultural (Christian) loss and posit a cultural threat to Christianity from secular and Islamic forces. Further, each rhetorical set posits a model of representation from the in-group as the ‘fix’ or ‘prescription’ to national/continental degradation.

The final contextual point is that the Hungarian state is often positioned not only as nationally unique, but representative of a greater Central European culture and region. Hölvényi,

¹¹⁵ This figure was adapted from Figure 2 in: Levinger and Franklin Lytle, “Myth and Mobilisation,” 186.

and Ministerial President of the Reformed Church of Hungary István Szabó have spoken largely to the national uniqueness of the Hungarian state. Both men advocated that the nation's commitment to protecting Christianity is a product of Central Europeanness, and the "extensive experience about persecution" (*continuity and consistency of national identity*), that has brought the nation closer to its Christian heritage and the "unfailing mercy of God."¹¹⁶ In the Hungarian discourse, national identity is greatly informed by an understanding that the contemporary Hungarian nation is a product of a long history of turmoil, occupation, and invasion within Central Europe (*topos of continuity and consistency*).¹¹⁷ The consequence of such is an identity predicated on the fear of others or 'otherness' with the most common trope being Islam. Central Europe, along with Hungary, is discursively constructed as the frontlines of a Christian Europe fighting off invasion by Islam.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁶Qtd. in: "Preservation of Christianity Is Preservation of Democracy All at Once."

¹¹⁷ For more information on Hungarian nationalism and the influence of persecution perspectives, see: György Csepeli and Antal Örkény, "The Changing Facets of Hungarian Nationalism," *Social Research* 63, no. 1 (1996): 247–86.

¹¹⁸ "Hungarian Leader Calls Christianity 'Europe's Last Hope'." The Washington Post. accessed May 16, 2018, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/hungarian-leader-calls-christianity-europes-last-hope/2018/02/18/4ba47cdc-14d6-11e8-930c-45838ad0d77a_story.html?noredirect=on&utm_term=.e630ecaf0a1f.

I. Nomination/Predication Strategies

In line with the socio-historical context and discourse of other political/religious elites, how does Orbán construct the Hungarian nation as uniquely Christian in the discourse on Christian persecution? Who/what does Orbán identify as the perpetrator and victim of persecution against Christians? Who belongs to the nation that Orbán speaks to?

Through the application of nomination and predication strategies, Orbán begins his address by qualifying the types of persecution which he speaks to when discussing Christian persecution. On one hand he discusses Christian persecution as the “sophisticated and refined methods of an intellectual nature” that challenge European Christian culture. Inherent in his predication of European persecution, Orbán understands EU institutions, the intelligentsia, and influence from western culture as a *sophisticated* and somewhat *subversive* perpetrator. This is juxtaposed with a “brutal physical persecution” that Orbán claims “Christian brothers and sisters” of Africa and the Middle East experience. In his opening remarks, Orbán employs similar discursive tools that Pence uses, such as *familia* language, to create a commonality in identity between the nomination of himself (a political elite) and participants, as well as himself (a Hungarian) and Christians as a transnational community. These opening statements preface the aim of his speech and presence, claiming that his interest is speaking to the latter form of persecution--the physical and brutal foreign threat.

Notably, Orbán does not speak to the “brutal physical” persecution without clearly attempting to locate its threat to Europe and European values. Pivoting from his concern for the

¹¹⁹ Quotes from Prime Minister Orbán’s speech were accessed from a transcript available on the government website (Appendix item III), cited as: “Prime Minister Viktor Orbán’s Speech at the International Consultation on Christian Persecution – Miniszterelnok.Hu.” Accessed April 13, 2018. <http://www.miniszterelnok.hu/prime-minister-viktor-orbans-speech-at-the-international-consultation-on-christian-persecution/>.

Christians of Africa and the Middle East, the Prime Minister invokes a sense of responsibility for the Hungarian people, and leadership, through the nomination of Hungary as a “watchman” for the European people. Invoking biblical scripture from the Book of Ezekiel, Orbán posits a *topos of obligation* under the *topos of threat*, stating:

We have come from different countries, yet there's something that links us -- the leaders of Christian communities and Christian politicians. We call this the responsibility of the watchmen. In the book of Ezekiel we read that if a watchman sees the enemy approaching and does not sound the alarm, the Lord will hold that watchman accountable for the deaths of those killed as a result of his inaction.

Ambiguously nominating an enemy—which he latter defines as Islamic extremism—the Prime Minister couches anti-immigration sentiments within a call for Christian leadership to watch over a European borderland. Orbán further holds that biblical accountability will follow the inactivity of those “not sounding an alarm.” This is a conceptual metaphor feeding into the Euro-skepticism woven through the discourse in the socio-historical section.

In this address, Orbán, unlike Pence, makes the majority subject of his speech the Hungarian people rather than a transnational Christian community. When employing a call to action or *topos of obligation*, he refers to “we Hungarians” and their obligation to Christians and Europe (*topos of European and national identity*). This nomination strategy is broadly applied to invoke a level of empathy between “we Hungarians,” a historically persecuted nationality, and Christians. Additionally, this discursive strategy emphasizes the distinctive role of Hungarians in protecting Christians and Christian Europe. Speaking to the continuity and consistency of the Hungarian efforts to protect Christian Europe, Orbán stated:

*For centuries **we** fought on **our** homeland's southern borders, defending the **whole** of Christian Europe, while in the twentieth century **we** were the victims of the communist dictatorship's persecution of Christians.*

In the above quote, the Prime Minister makes it abundantly clear that Hungarian identity and national history is deeply connected to combatting and experiencing Christian persecution. This

feeds into what Anna Menyhért (2016) called “Maimed Hungary”.¹²⁰ This is a collective, cultural memory within the Hungarian nation of a perennially invaded, mutilated, and maimed country, which drives a collective identity of subjugation within the nation. This is apparent in the subtle reference to the “southern borders” which spatially locates a historical threat to national identity, from a non-European, Islamic ‘other’ in the Ottoman empire.

Beyond implicating the threat/enemy above as Islam, Orbán directly addresses the external forces catalyzing the fall of Christian Europe as the European Union, and the world. Making direct reference to the threat facing persecuted Christians, Orbán states:

We must call the threats we’re facing by their proper names. The greatest danger we face today is the indifferent, apathetic silence of a Europe which denies its Christian roots...Europe, however, is forcefully pursuing an immigration policy which results in letting in extremists, dangerous extremists, into the territory of the European Union.

The threat of persecution lies not only in the civilizational opposition of Islam—in which Orbán equivocates all immigrants of the Islamic faith to extremists—but also in the unaware, and unconscious *ethos* of European society. Drawing upon nativist language such as “roots” and later references to the, “*cultural and ethnic composition of our continent*,” Orbán makes it clear that he speaks to an existentially burdened and situationally unaware Christian Europe, as someone who hails from an enlightened and politically engaged nation. This last point is evident in the middle part of his speech where he emphasizes that despite the relatively small geographic and spatial stature of Hungary, the nation has stable support and leadership in its Christian heritage allowing it to take a position where it must speak up for persecuted Christians. Closing this point, Orbán emphasizes a divine validation and obligation of the Hungarian nation, for, “*This is how fate and God have compelled Hungary to take the initiative, regardless of size.*”

¹²⁰ Anna Menyhért, “The Image of the ‘Maimed Hungary’ in 20th Century Cultural Memory and the 21st Century Consequences of an Unresolved Collective Trauma: The Impact of the Treaty of Trianon,” *Environment, Space, Place* 8, no. 2 (2016): 69–97.

II. Argumentation Strategies

How does Victor Orban argue that the nation should address Christian persecution? Why Hungary? How is Christian persecution argued as a key issue to the Hungarian people?

Much of the argumentation strategies employed by Prime Minister Orbán were implicitly discussed in the nomination/predication of issues and social actors. Nonetheless, Orbán, through his vision for how the Hungarian nation should address Christian persecution, argues from a standpoint of maintaining a culturally and ethnically unified nation. Criticizing European political leaders who seek to “*create a mixed society within Europe*,” Orbán understands the Hungarian nation as obligated to help the transnational Christian community, but equally obligated to maintain Hungarian cultural and ethnic composition.

Continuing in line with the metaphor of the watchman, Orbán posits the Hungarian people as representative of the true European Christian identity. In the face of ‘persecuting’ forces, the Hungarian people are presented as a nation true to, and committed to protecting, European identity. This *topos of European values* is the result of regional or supranational identity being driven by purely national experiences. Galasinska and Krzyzanowski (2009) note that this same trope of Christian-European values was developed through Polish nationalist discourse in the 2002-03 European Convention and is consistent in the mapping of European *topoi* through national lenses.¹²¹

Moving forward, Orbán highlights how the European Union has strayed from its Christian heritage, which Hungary still recognizes, through a criticism of policy and political correctness within European Union systems. On over three occasions within Orbán’s speech he

¹²¹ Galasinska, Krzyzanowski, and Krzyzanowski, *Discourse and Transformation in Central and Eastern Europe*, 107.

pivots on a *topos of syllogism* and *topos of opposites*; first he criticizes “politically correct” and “human rights induced” efforts at addressing the issue of persecution (i.e. immigration), while praising on the other hand Hungarian efforts at strengthening internal religious communities within highly persecuted nations (such as Syria, Iraq and Nigeria). Employing nomination strategies, Orbán argues for the significance of maintaining nationalities within the ‘transnational Christian community,’ stating:

*We Hungarians want Syrian, Iraqi, and Nigerian Christians to be able to return as soon as possible to the lands where **their** ancestors lived for hundreds of years. This is what we call Hungarian solidarity—or, using the words you see behinds me: “**Hungary helps**”.*

Setting the groundwork for this affirmation of Hungarian commitment, Orbán prefaced these efforts with a *topos of opposites* and counter-public narrative between the Hungarian political agenda and the EU political agenda:

The solution we settled on has been to take the help we are providing directly to the churches of persecuted Christians...And as we are Christians, we help Christian Churches and channel these resources to them. I could also say that we are doing the very opposite of what is customary in Europe today: we declare that trouble should not be brought here, but assistance must be taken where it is needed.

Juxtaposing the open border policy of the EU—and its willingness to solve the refugee crisis through immigration strategies—with Hungarian political aims, Orbán argues for a national effort that aptly respects the boundaries of the Hungarian nation.

The Prime Minister argues a two-part claim to the *topos of national uniqueness* in these past two pull quotes. First, the Hungarian nation and its people are unique in that they are aware of, and obligated to fight, the persecution of Christians in both foreign nations and within Europe. Moreover, the Hungarian political elites are unique insofar as they have designed and executed a political agenda that maintains European Christian heritage while assisting persecuted Christians abroad. This lends its way into the final understanding of national uniqueness, which

is that the Hungarian Christian identity is unique from a transnational Christian identity, necessitating policies that maintain this spatial distinction. Orbán states,

We want Christian communities returning to Syria, Iraq and Nigeria to become forces for the preservation of their own countries, just as for us Hungarians Christianity is a force for preservation.

The unique Christianity of the Hungarian people is posited as a force for national “*preservation*,” much to the extent that Christianity—in a nationally unique sense—is important to the nationhood of Syria, Iraq and Nigeria. Here, Orbán affirms a nationalism *sui generis*, a specific Hungarian-Christian national identity (Brubaker’s 4th approach).

In Orbán’s understanding of the Hungarian nation as nationally unique within Europe, he employed a two-part primordialist identity. In one sense, he appeals to his Hungarian national identity that is posited as culturally and politically unique through its historic and consistent commitment to protecting Christians and Christian Europe. In another sense Orbán recognizes his identity as a European, and in such speaks to the diagnosis of a Europe which has a glorious national past (heritage), an existentially challenged future, and a morally/politically degrading present. This follows the triadic nationalist narrative pattern identified in the work of Levinger and Lytle (2003).¹²² The solution to this self-diagnosed plague to Europe, is a European political agenda modeled from Hungary.

Throughout the speech, Orbán reinforces the argumentation strategies above to highlight his main claim that “*Europe is a Christian continent, and this is how we want to keep it.*” This claim is argued through a pervasive framework in Orbán’s address, the *topos of advantage or usefulness*. In his speech he references reasons for why Hungary is advantaged over other western nations in the effort to stop Christian persecution. First, Hungary is advantaged insofar

¹²² Levinger and Franklin Lytle, “Myth and Mobilisation,” 177.

as it has the cultural and historical identity of persecution, allowing it to empathize and respond accordingly to new forms of persecution. Second, Hungary is not burdened politically by actors who fail to recognize the Christian heritage of the nation, nor is Hungary bound with the “*shackles of political correctness and human rights incantations*,” which Orbán finds limiting to tangible efforts at addressing persecution. Finally, and most important to the study of religious nationalism or Christian nationalism, Orbán holds that the Hungarian nation is obligated to act, and advantaged in such, as God has “entrusted” this right to the Hungarian people.

The ICCP Budapest Declaration: Bolstering Recognition for the Hungarian Government¹²³

How does the Budapest declaration reinforce an understanding of national uniqueness invoked in the speech of Prime Minister Viktor Orban? Moreover, how does the declaration back up an understanding that Christian nationalism is important for maintaining national spatial territory and heritage?

In line with the course of analysis in Chapter two, a study of the Budapest Declaration produced at the International Consultation on Christian Persecution follows. Though the declaration—much like its counterpart from the WSDPC—is not all that provocative, its discourse and structure are telling of a narrative advanced in Orbán’s address. Through the nomination of concern, the declaration highlights the protection of Christians as the seminal focus of conference participants. This seems rather redundant given that the aim of the event is to address Christian persecution specifically, yet the declaration highlights a need for the European Union and Hungarian nation to strengthen their commitments to persecuted Christians.

¹²³ The full Budapest declaration can be accessed as Appendix item IV, and is used for the entirety of quotes from this sub-chapter. “Budapest Declaration - International Conference on the Persecution of Christians,” Ökumenikus Segélyszervezet, accessed April 13, 2018, <https://www.segelyszervezet.hu/en/news/budapest-declaration-international-conference-persecution-christians>.

Markedly, the declaration begins with the presumption that the international community and external actors are not committed to, nor cognizant of, the successes of the Hungarian political platform. In declaration number (3) and declaration number (8) the piece makes clear a *topos of national uniqueness* of the Hungarian nation in confronting the persecution of Christians, and the ineffectiveness of European Union policy:

(3) Recognize the Hungarian governments actions in support of persecuted Christians and other religious minorities, as well as the similar actions of other governments.

*(8) Call upon the European Union to **revise** the effectiveness of restrictive measures and amend them taking into account the interests of the civilian populations of the countries involved.*

The semantics of the declaration emphasize the seminal position of the Hungarian government in protecting Christians from persecution, while alluding to the ‘European civilian first’ model—as opposed to human rights incantations, and politically correct policy that the EU puts forth—that Orbán speaks to in his address.

Going beyond this allusion, the address also places emphasis on the importance of maintaining national boundaries and belonging within the transnational Christian community. Similar to the Orbán address declaration number (11) and (12) emphasize the importance of works that rebuild national infrastructure in nations where Christian persecution is faced, so to allow Christians and other persecuted individuals the ability to return and remain in “ancestral homelands.” The weight placed on returning to and reclaiming national homelands for persecuted Christians echoes the Orbán rhetoric and political aims of Hungary, which stress maintenance of cultural and ethnic boundaries.

Beyond the reinforcement of Hungarian national uniqueness and the political agenda of the Hungarian nation, the declaration pays little more than lip service to the wide scope of individuals affected by religious persecution, often placing ‘other’ religious minorities in a

secondary or tertiary position in discourse. Moreover, the Budapest declaration makes slight nomination inferences that denote a demarcation in the perception of persecuted Christians from refugees—the latter being a group highly politicized and characterized as dangerous under Orbán rhetoric.

Chapter Summary

The need to perpetuate/maintain a territorial myth, foundational values and cultural heritage is intrinsically connected to a desire to maintain ontological security in identity and nation through post EU refugee crisis discourse.¹²⁴ It is important to note that persecution narratives, or more broadly the concern of persecution, is not a new phenomenon in Hungarian or Central European political discourse. Additionally, this discourse is located within a larger canon of EU migration narratives. Protection from persecution—i.e. the defense of a Christian identity and heritage—is deeply connected to the securitization discourse advanced in the late 1980's that politicized, in a civilizationist manner, Islam and European norms.¹²⁵

Second, Orbán and the ICCP declaration advance a level of national uniqueness that is inherently connected to an understanding of persecution. In this understanding of an inherent connection, the Hungarian political elite construct the nation as

- I. Nationally unique insofar as Hungary is explicitly Christian (*explicit marriage of religious and national identity*).
- II. Nationally unique insofar as the Hungarian people and nation have a history and cultural identity of being victims of persecution (*topos continuity & consistency*).

¹²⁴ Vincent Della Sala, "Homeland Security: Territorial Myths and Ontological Security in the European Union," *Journal of European Integration* 39, no. 5 (July 29, 2017): 545, <https://doi.org/10.1080/07036337.2017.1327528>.

¹²⁵ Virginie Mamadouh, "The Scaling of the 'Invasion': A Geopolitics of Immigration Narratives in France and The Netherlands," *Geopolitics* 17, no. 2 (April 2012): 389, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14650045.2011.578268>.

- III. Nationally unique in that the nation has demonstrated an effective commitment to aiding persecuted Christians. This commitment is free from the bureaucratic and politically correct processes of the EU and other nations.

Finally, this chapter illustrated how Christian nationalism is seminal in Orbán's understanding of aiding and assisting persecuted Christians from other nations. Orbán stresses a maintenance of national, ethnic and cultural boundaries inimitably connected to Christian nationalities. Specifically, an importance is placed on maintaining national preservation through protecting the Christianity of Hungary. This religious or Christian nationalism closely mirrors Brubaker's second and third forms of religious nationalism. In claim, religion both provides an explanatory or legitimizing role for the nation and is treated as a component of the nation.

Chapter Three

Comparative Analysis

The purpose of this analysis, if not evident by now, was to investigate how politically conservative elites in the United States and Hungary engaged with the concept of the nation and nationalism in the discourse on Christian persecution. As such, my thesis concludes with a brief comparative analysis of the findings for each of the case studies. This highlights similarities and differences in the composition, structure, and conclusions drawn in the speeches of Vice President Mike Pence and Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán .

The two events of analysis have inherent differences from the beginning, notably starting with the sponsorship and hosting of the two events. In the case of the United States, the WSDPC was an event sponsored and organized by non-governmental religious organizations. Spearheaded by the BGEA, Pence's presence was there to show a commitment from the federal government to both the United States Christian community, the international Christian community and to a significant political and economic base from his election. This contextual setting influenced how Pence addressed the audience, speaking to both a transnational Christian nation and his constituency, the American people.

On the other end, the ICCP was a government-sponsored event, put on by the Ministry of Human Resources of Hungary. Thus, the structure of the event was less concerned with responding to a call to action by constituents or religious elites, but more so concerned with highlighting the Orbán administration's previous and current policies. Yet, though the participants of the event, and scope, were largely Hungarian, there was attendance by some religious/political elites from other European nations and North America. Of interest, American

politicians and religious figures such as Christian Smith, Republican Congressman from New Jersey, and Kent R. Hill, Executive Director of the Religious Freedom Institute in Washington, DC, were points of cross-over in both events. Rep. Smith provided a video message, which could not be analyzed for this thesis, to the Hungarian Conference, echoing U.S. support for the Hungarian efforts at addressing Christian persecution. This showing of transnational support between U.S. elites and Hungary has been prominent, with Smith drawing positive comparisons between Viktor Orbán and former U.S. president Ronald Reagan for their commitment to protecting Christianity.¹²⁶

Beyond the structure of the events, the content of the two keynote addresses by political elites are closely tied. In the discursive construction of the nation, both men drew upon an understanding of national uniqueness to emphasize the advantageous and exceptional position of their respective nations. Below are two quotes pulled from each address, the first from Pence and the second from Orbán :

The suffering of Christians in the Middle East has stirred America to act, and it brings me here today. President Trump rightly said not long ago that — of the Christian church, “nobody has been treated worse in the Middle East.” He’s made it clear that America will stand by followers of Christ in this hour of need. -Vice President Mike Pence

In other words, in such a stable situation, there could be no excuse for Hungarians not taking action and not honouring the obligation rooted in their Christian faith. This is how fate and God have compelled Hungary to take the initiative, regardless of its size. We are proud that for more than a thousand years we have belonged to the great family of Christian peoples. This, too, imposes an obligation on us. -Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán

Both men, as seen above, invoke a sense of obligation towards assisting persecuted Christians that is predicated on their national identity and *ethos*. The actions of each respective nation are framed in a response to the suffering of Christians, or followers of Christ. In the argument of national uniqueness, both the United States and Hungary are perceived to be obligated through

¹²⁶ “Amerikából a választásról: Ronald Reaganhez hasonlítják Orbánt,” Válasz, accessed May 21, 2018, <http://valasz.hu/vilag/egy-amerikai-politikus-aki-hasonlosagot-lat-ronald-reagan-es-orban-viktor-kozott-75407>.

biblical or theological mandate and national ethos/history. This is evident for the Hungarian case, where Orbán makes appeals such as, *“This is how fate and God have compelled Hungary”* and *“more than a thousand years we have belonged to the great family of Christian people... This, too, imposes an obligation on us.”* Later quotes from Pence’s address invoke similar narratives, where the United States and the President are committed to defending Christians because, *“America was and is and ever will be that shining city on a hill where men and women...openly worship their faith in God.”* The invocation of national history/*ethos* lends “gravity” and “legitimacy” to the causes of the two actors.¹²⁷

Beyond imposing a narrative of national uniqueness through the understanding of national-divine ordination and the continuity and consistency of such, the two political actors invoke national uniqueness through a counter public narrative. Pence and Orbán construct their respective nations as the utmost qualified polities for addressing Christian persecution, claiming they are cognizant of, and respond to, Christian persecution unlike the broad public (the world or the EU). Pence justifies the assembly of the WSDPC as an effort at *“calling attention to the world,”* the issue of Christian persecution—often framing President Trump and the U.S. government hyper-vigilant responders to the crisis.

Just as Pence praises the unique vigilance of U.S. political elites and America as a nation, Orbán speaks to the role of the Hungarian nation in acting as a watchman for Christian Europe. He highlights the Hungarian awareness of such persecution and drives home the importance of *how* Hungary is addressing Christian persecution, emphasizing that programs aimed at assisting religious structures and communities within these nations of high persecution are more effective

¹²⁷ Levinger and Franklin Lytle, “Myth and Mobilisation,” 179.

that EU immigration and human rights-based policies. Also, appealing to the *topos of disadvantage*, Orbán makes use of the fact that Hungary is “*only a medium-sized European state*,” with a non-significant army, population and territory to underscore the relative success of the nation in taking on an issue that could [and should] be more easily addressed by larger countries.

This last point smoothly transitions into the next line of comparison, which is aimed at contrasting what both nations perceive to be the cause of persecution and how each nation should address it. Beginning with Pence, he makes it clear through nomination and predication strategies that the cause and location of persecution is external to the United States—this is done through speaking to locations where persecution occurs (Iraq and Syria) as well as nominating the persecuted as a distinct other from U.S. Christians (using nouns such as ‘you’ when discussing persecution by “distant lands”). However, this understanding of persecution as distant—spatially and culturally—is highly predicated on the partisan identity of the nation’s leadership, as Rev. Graham shows in his change in narrative from the Obama administration to the Trump administration.

Important to the United States’ case is the understanding that the persecution of Christians is driven both by actors and, the necessary consequence of maintaining faith. In his speech, Pence contends that the cause of persecution should be “*called by its name*” as Islamic extremism and employs a subtle Orientalizing of the threat. Beyond identifying Islamic extremism as an actor which threatens the livelihood and free practice of Christianity, Pence notes that Christian persecution is inevitable for those who have “*refused to be conformed to this world*,” stating that these individuals have made the decision to be actively counted outside the city gate (*conceptual metaphor*). In this counter-public narrative Pence speaks to the Christian

community as part of a larger faith-based nation; one in which suffering, or persecution is a mark of moral exceptionalism and a burden alleviated by eventual salvation. This discursive construction of the ‘suffering self’ is integral in maximalist interpretations of scripture and fundamental Christianity.¹²⁸

Like Pence, Orbán constructs radical Islam as the actor driving Christian persecution. Yet, different from his American counterpart, Orbán does not construct this as a necessary result of practicing the Christian faith, but rather as a necessary result of failed EU policy and the ignorance of world leaders to the continued persecution of Christians. In Orbán’s counter public narrative, he stresses an importance of maintaining cultural, ethnic and national boundaries in the assistance of persecuted Christians—i.e. assisting from abroad. In exalting the policy choices of Hungary, Orbán notes that there are two types of Christian persecution faced today: the brutal or physical persecution enacted by radical Islamists, and the more intellectual/sophisticated persecution of Christians, reflected in the rejection of European Union Christian heritage by political elites. The former, according to Orbán, is catalyzed and permitted by the actions of the latter.

Speaking mostly to the latter form of persecution, Orbán’s concern in the address is protecting the Christian way of life and identity. This serves to represent the Hungarian nation and the European Union in a wider concept. Additionally, Orbán’s concern with the European way of life, values and identity signals a stark difference from the address by Pence. Not once in Pence’s address does he employ the term “value” or “identity” nor, does he make explicit

¹²⁸ For more on the concept of the ‘suffering self’ in Christianity see: Judith Perkins, *The Suffering Self: Pain and Narrative Representation in the Early Christian Era* (Routledge, 2002), 32–40.

reference to culture. In fact, when referencing either the nation or Christians or Christianity, Pence makes explicit his concern with faith, belief and livelihood.

In Table 1, there is an illustration of how Pence contextually settles terms relating to nation, Christian and Christianity within discourse. The table depicts a trend within Pence's discourse of referencing Christianity and even the nation in terms of faith, belief and religious practice (prayer). This data was computed through locating the most commonly applied predicates and subjects of sentences in Pence's discourse involving nouns and pronouns related to the nation and Christianity.

Table 1: Contextualization of National and Group Terms in Mike Pence's Speech

Term	Predication or Subject (# of times)	Examples
<i>Mike Pence</i>		
<i>Nation; America; United States</i>	Faith/Belief (15) Freedom/Rights (6) God (3) Courage/Courageous (2)	"Fellow believers in Christ, cling to one another in these challenging times. Know that America stands with you and will labor alongside."
<i>Christian; Christianity</i>	Faith/Belief (5) Community/Population (3) Tradition (2) Church (2)	"And I believe ISIS is guilty of nothing short of genocide against people of the Christian faith, and it is time the world called it by name. "

Source: "Remarks by Vice President Pence at the World Summit in Defense of Persecuted Christians." The White House. Accessed April 8, 2018. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-vice-president-pence-world-summit-defense-persecuted-christians/>.

Table 2 illustrates how Prime Minister Orbán contextually settles the same terminology of Table 1. The results depict a trend within Orbán's rhetoric of discussing Christianity in relation to identity, and the Hungarian nation/people. Rather than serving the purpose of identifying a faith or religious dogma, Christianity is mainly used in Orbán's address as a

signifier for Europe, Hungary and conceptions of a historical homeland. Moreover, the nation in Orbán's address is discussed in terms of value, culture and preservation. When employing references to the nation or other spatial territories such as Europe, Orbán is often referring to an urgency in preservation of identity and culture.

Table 2: Contextualization of National and Group Terms in Viktor Orbán's Speech

Term	Predication or Subject (# of times)	Examples
<i>Viktor Orbán</i>		
<i>Nation; Hungary; Europe</i>	Values/Identity/Culture (5) 'Christian Europe' (4) Preservation of Nation (2)	"For us, Europe is a Christian continent, and this is how we want to keep it. Even though we may not be able to keep all of it Christian, at least we can do so for the segment that God has entrusted to the Hungarian people."
<i>Christian; Christianity</i>	'Nation', 'Native', 'Roots' or 'Nationality' (12) Community, Family or Group (8) Religious Belief (5) Identity (2)	"We Hungarians recognize the role of Christianity in preserving nationhood. And if we recognize this for ourselves, then we also recognize it for other nations; in other words, we want Christian communities returning to Syria, Iraq and Nigeria..."

Source: "Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's Speech at the International Consultation on Christian Persecution – Miniszterelnok.Hu." Accessed April 13, 2018. <http://www.miniszterelnok.hu/prime-minister-viktor-orban-s-speech-at-the-international-consultation-on-christian-persecution/>.

These two tables provide a clear contrast in the scope of the two speeches. Though both men seek to assert some level of connection between their respective nation and Christianity, their concepts of Christianity widely differ. Pence approaches Christianity as a faith-based religion, one in which the United States—a nation founded on the freedom of faith—seeks to protect. In discussing the protection of individuals ability to practice faith, Pence invokes an understanding of freedoms and rights which must be upheld. Further, though Pence speaks to an

explicitly religious constituency, he makes use of civil-religious¹²⁹ language, making broad statements on American religious freedom such as, “*The freedom to worship God according to the dictates of our conscience is at the very heart of who we are as Americans.*” This is indicative of the perspectivization of Pence’s address, where he straddles the line of speaking to fellow Christians—a group in with which he identifies—and on the behalf of all American people. Subtly, Pence makes no qualification that all Americans are Christians, however through his discourse he makes clear that Christianity is seminal to the American history and *ethos*. Thus, the vice president changes throughout the discourse who the subject is—a transnational Christian community, or the United States people.

Orbán , unlike the American vice president, does not attempt to pass off civil-religious language. In fact, when referencing terms of the nation or Europe, and terms of religious ascription, he often conflates the two. As is seen in Table 2, the most common correlates in statements about the *nation*, *Hungary* or *Europe* was value/identity and *Christian Europe*. Similarly, when discussing *Christians* or *Christianity* the most common correlate was *nation*, *native*, *roots* or *nationality*. Christianity, in the case of Hungarian political discourse is applied as a descriptive term for identity. This is not a new finding, Brubaker highlighted similar trends within Northern and Western Europe, where religio-civilizational understandings of Christianity are applied in right-wing political discourse.¹³⁰ Nonetheless, this finding exposes that Christian persecution, or more aptly, the fear of culture and civilizational loss in Europe, is an aspect of the European nativist “master frame.”¹³¹

¹²⁹ For more information on civil religion theory see: “Civil Religion in America by Robert N. Bellah,” accessed April 14, 2018, http://www.robertbellah.com/articles_5.htm.

¹³⁰ Brubaker, “A New ‘Christianist’ Secularism in Europe.”

¹³¹ Koen Vossen, “Classifying Wilders: The Ideological Development of Geert Wilders and His Party for Freedom,” *Politics* 31, no. 3 (October 1, 2011): 179–89, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9256.2011.01417.x>.

Chapter Summary

Concluding this section, the two discourses on Christian persecution employed similar rhetorical strategies in nomination, predication and argumentation to distinguish each nation from the world. The importance of which was highlighting a national uniqueness in calling attention to and addressing Christian persecution. Nonetheless, both political elites identified a different definition of persecution, and a different definition of Christianity, thus influencing their understanding of how the nation must act. In the case of Vice President Pence, persecution was defined in terms of any action taken to thwart the free practice and livelihood of Christians. Hence, given understandings that the current administration in the United States is true to the national history of religious freedom, this was an external issue in both perpetrator and victim. The nation was then understood as a guardian or defender of the freedom of religious practice, specifically Christianity, around the world—giving way to militaristic language and solutions to the issue.

Orbán , identified persecution as both an internal and external threat, citing two types of persecution of Christians; one, a sophisticated dismantling of EU Christian heritage, and the other, the brutal and impending threat of Islam. Given this perspective on Christian persecution, the rhetoric of Orbán , and other political elites in Hungary, reflected a defensive stance. Orbán concerned himself with maintaining the *cordon sanitaire* that is Hungary to Christian Europe. This position was one in which the preservation of cultural, ethnic and national identity was an umbrella concern with Christian persecution subsumed within it. To briefly illustrate this in a concise manner, Table 3 below gives a breakdown of how each actor addressed the discourse on Christian persecution.

Table 3: Comparison of Persecution Narratives Between Mike Pence and Viktor Orbán

Subject	Vice President Pence	Prime Minister Orbán
Definition or Cause of Christian Persecution	Acts of violence, discrimination and intimidation towards believers in Christ. Discussed as occurring everywhere, but predominately a concern in the middle east.	Defines two types of persecution: intellectual/sophisticated rejection of EU Christian heritage and brutal/physical violence towards Christians in middle east and Europe (terrorist attacks).
Actors at fault	Islamic Extremism, Secular governments, and the natural consequence of maintaining faith in a non-believing world.	Islamic Extremism, European Union officials and Western nation states which pursue open borders, human rights indignations and political correctness.
<i>Internal/ External threat to the Nation?</i>	Pre-Trump election: Internal & External Post Trump election: External threat to external actors (i.e. Persecution exists in foreign nations)	External Threat, but largely concerned with how it will affect the nation or internal actors
Reasoning for National Involvement	National History and Mission, 'Moral' obligation	National History and Mission, 'Moral' obligation
Type of National Involvement	Militaristic, Religious Involvement (Prayer)	Addressing immigration, strengthening EU security, and assisting religious institutions within nations of high persecution
Rhetorical Strategies Employed	<i>Topos of national uniqueness, Topos of advantage, Topos of threat, Topos of opposites, Topos of cause and effect</i>	<i>Topos of national uniqueness, Topos of disadvantage, Topos of threat, Topos of opposites, Topos of European values</i>

Source: Information from this table is drawn from the speeches of Vice President Mike Pence and Prime Minister Victor Orbán , available in the appendix.

Conclusion

Takeaways from the Study

Returning to the main aim of this study, how, and to what extent, are these nationalist discourses? And, do these two men address the issue of Christian persecution from a context of bolstering a nationalist framework? Simply, these two discourses both employ tropes and rhetorical devices commonly found in nationalist discourse. Additionally, the two speeches reflect a religious nationalist discourse, combining to some extent divine or religious understandings of the nation with assertions of national exceptionalism.

For the main case study, the WSDPC, the discourse of Reverend Franklin Graham reflected a civilizationist understanding of the ‘Christian West’. As the main religious elite in attendance, Graham spoke with authority on the threat of Islam both theologically and culturally. Beyond advancing a nativist and civilizationist narrative of Christianity, Graham in his pre-WSDPC statements and his statements at the event, underscored a need for political representation by Christians. This in turn was structured as a necessity for allowing the United States to preserve its Christian heritage and maintain an international role in protecting the practice of Christianity (*triadic structure of nationalist rhetoric*).

Unlike Graham, Pence engaged with religious nationalism solely based on value dimensions. Supporting Bernhard Weidinger’s thesis on Christian rhetoric in nativist discourse in the U.S. and Austria, the U.S. political elite approached religion as a theological practice.¹³² Referencing his own religious-nationalist identity through faith and positing a blanket support of all religious freedom—though intently focusing on Christianity—Pence made little attempt to

¹³² Weidinger, “Equal before God, and God Alone.”

identify Christianity as a prerequisite for American identity. Nonetheless, Pence's Christian nationalism was evident through his understanding of American-Christian heritage, his role as a Christian politician and the commitment he plays in assisting a transnational Christian community. This last point is most important to the understanding of Pence's rhetorical construction of the *nation*. When speaking to a persecuted Christian faith, Pence invoked old testament biblical understandings of the Christian people as a nation. Thus, in the discourse on Christian persecution, Pence held a personal nationalism, where religion or Christianity was a component (albeit the largest component) of his national identity as an American, and an identity within itself. In his talk to the issue, he reflected a belief that religion is an integral part of national history.

In the secondary case, Orbán engaged with religious nationalism through the predication of Christianity as a necessary component of Hungarian-ness. To be Hungarian was to be a part of Christian Europe (Christendom), and more explicitly, a perennially persecuted Christian subset of Europe. Supporting the thesis of Weidinger, the Central European rhetoric addressed “cultural” Christianity. In this address, Orbán exemplified how religious ‘otherness’ could replace national or ethnic ‘otherness’.¹³³ Equally, Orbán emphasized a Christian element of in-groupness in Hungarian and European identity, rooted in an understanding of historical *continuity* and *consistency* which created new identity *sui generis*, a Hungarian Christianity. This identity marked a culturally constructed history of Hungary existing as the front lines of defense for European Christendom.

¹³³ Weidinger, 57.

This nationally unique Christian identity of Hungary imposes—in the eyes of Hungarian political elites—a need for maintaining nationally and ethnically independent Christian polities, underscoring the Hungarian commitment to assisting persecuted Christians abroad, while maintaining strict immigration policies. In part, the discourse of this event reflected the findings of previous studies on “cultural” Christianity, as Christian persecution was discussed by Hungarian elites alongside, and consequently to, immigration. This unique Hungarian-Christian perspective somewhat resembles a thread in the discourse of the WSDPC, where Vice President Pence and Rev. Graham both demarcate American Christians from a large transnational faith community, though less explicitly stated.

Finally, the main nationalist argument that both cases advanced was an understanding of their respective national uniqueness. The United States and Hungary were both viewed as the most equipped nations for addressing the issue of ‘Christian persecution’. In part, this argument was underscored in the narrative of national consistency and history. The nation and its identity were defined in the understanding of a glorious past, and consequently and advantaged present. In the American case this understanding was true only in light of the election of the Trump administration. In the Hungarian case, Orbán made an argument for saving European identity, appealing to the triadic structure of nationalist rhetoric (appeal to glorious past; condemnation of a degraded present; desire for utopian future), with Hungarian policies as the model for EU advancement. In these understandings, national uniqueness both gave ground to an argument for addressing ‘Christian persecution’ as well as gave rise to an initial definition of the nation that both actors used to strengthen the legitimacy and emotional appeals of their discourse.

In conclusion, this study is faced with a few limitations. First and most prominent is the lack of empirical data at my disposal for analysis. The claims made in this thesis would hold

more validity if I could perform a large-scale analysis of multiple addresses on Christian persecution by a plethora of political elites in each nation. Moreover, this thesis only deals with the perception and rhetorical dimensions of national identity in two political elites. To obtain a conclusion more indicative of how populations or mass amounts of political/religious elites perceive the nation in relation to Christian persecution, a different and more quantitative methodology should be applied. The purpose of this thesis was to serve primarily as a pilot study for further investigation, and as such, future research should look to challenge these findings in the context of different discourses and case studies.

Appendix

Appendix Item I: “The Christian Faith is Under Siege”¹³⁴

Presented by Mike Pence Speech at the WSDPC – May 12, 2017 (W/intro by Rev. Franklin Graham)

Reverend Franklin Graham:

What I appreciate so much about our Vice President is his...his strong faith in god. And his belief in Jesus Christ as the son of God.

And um...as a nation we are very fortunate to have a president who believes in God and a Vice President who strongly supports all of us in the church and he is not afraid to express his faith. So, it is an honor of me to be able to welcome here today the VP of the United States, VP Mike Pence.

Vice President Mike Pence:

It is a joy to be with all of you today to touch on a topic of enormous importance not only in the life of people of faith across the world, but enormous importance to this administration. And would you join me in congratulating Reverend Franklin Graham for bringing together this first ever World Summit in Defense of Persecuted Christians.

Reverend Graham, Senator Lankford, Senator Blunt, Congressman Smith, Congressman Hultgren, leaders of faith in public life across this country and across the world, to my brothers and sisters in Christ. (Applause.) I often say when people have asked me over the years what my philosophy is, I tell them I’m a Christian, a conservative, and a Republican, in that order. (Applause.)

It is a distinct honor and, frankly, a humbling privilege to join you today at this first-ever Summit in Defense of Persecuted Christians. Let me first and foremost bring greetings from my friend, a champion of the freedom of religion and the freedoms enshrined in our Bill of Rights, the 45th President of the United States of America, President Donald Trump.

And I’m here on behalf of the President as a tangible sign of his commitment to defending Christians and, frankly, all who suffer for their beliefs across the wider world. I stand here today as a testament to President Trump’s tangible commitment to reaffirm America’s role as a beacon of hope and light and liberty to inspire the world. You are here from across this land and from distant others because America was and is and ever will be that shining city on a hill where men and women of faith throughout our history have been able to walk and openly worship their faith in God to the glory of God, and it will ever be true in these United States of America.

¹³⁴ “Remarks by Vice President Pence at the World Summit in Defense of Persecuted Christians,” The White House, accessed April 8, 2018, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-vice-president-pence-world-summit-defense-persecuted-christians/>.

And on behalf of our President, let me personally thank our host today. This is a man who I, having just recognized once — someone who I'm blessed to call my friend, and the President is blessed to call a friend in Reverend Graham. And I want to thank all of you Christian leaders from so many faith traditions who have traveled to join us here today. To Cardinal Wuerl, Archbishop Pierre, Archbishop Tikhon, Metropolitan Hilarion, Bishop Anis, Patriarch Aphrem, Dr. Zacharias, Dr. Michael Youssef, Dr. Youssef, and all the faith leaders are here today.

Each one of you bear witness to the power of truth to transform lives. And the people that you shepherd impact every corner of the world. And it's an honor to be with all of you today.

And of course, let me also say how deeply humbling it is for me to stand today before the courageous men and women who are with us, who have stood without apology for their faith in Christ and suffered persecution across the wider world. Reverend Sami Dagher, Father Douglas Bazi, Reverend Eliseo Villar, Rashin Soodmand, Cheol Kang, Ishak Shehata, Ishmail, and so many others who are here with us today.

Your faith inspires me. It humbles me. And it inspires all who are looking on today. Would you all join me in thanking the courageous believers who have stood for their faith under withering persecution who are with us here today? We are honored by their presence. On behalf of the President of the United States, I say from my heart to that number, we are with you. We stand with you. And we are here at this world's summit because of you.

The Bible tells us: "All who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted." And those of you gathered here today are emblematic of millions across the world. You've persevered through the crucible of persecution. You refused to be conformed to this world. You have chosen instead to be counted with those outside the city gate for your faith. And by your life, you bear witness to the truth that brings us together here at this summit.

The reality is, across the wider world, the Christian faith is under siege. Throughout the world, no people of faith today face greater hostility or hatred than the followers of Christ. In more than 100 countries spread to every corner of the globe — from Iran to Eritrea, Nigeria to North Korea — over 215 million Christians confront intimidation, imprisonment, forced conversion, abuse, assault, or worse, for holding to the truths of the Gospel. And nowhere is this onslaught against our faith more evident than in the very ancient land where Christianity was born.

Two millennia ago, the Disciples of Christ, the forefathers of our faith, fanned out from Israel in every direction to bring the good news that we proclaim across the globe to this day. And in the valleys of Syria, Palestine, the plains of Nineveh and the Nile, on the banks of the Tigris and the Euphrates, they planted seeds of belief. They watered them with their sacrifice and their courage. They blossomed into fruit and have borne fruit for the Gospel ever since.

The Christian communities where the message of our Lord was first uttered and embraced today, though, are often the targets of unspeakable atrocity. In Egypt, just recently, we saw bombs explode in churches in the very midst of the celebration of Palm Sunday. A day of hope was transformed into tragedy. I was just this weekend with a pastor who — from Egypt who spoke

of the images that day, of seeing the palms the people carried into church on the ground, marked with the blood of the injured.

In Iraq, at the hands of extremists, we've actually seen monasteries demolished, priests and monks beheaded, and the two-millennia-old Christian tradition in Mosul virtually extinguished overnight. In Syria, we see ancient communities burned to the ground. We see believers tortured for confessing Christ, and women and children sold into the most terrible form of human slavery.

Know today with assurance that President Trump sees these crimes for what they are: vile acts of persecution animated by hatred — hatred for the Gospel of Christ. And so too does the President know those who perpetrate these crimes. They are them the embodiment of evil in our time. He calls them by name — radical Islamic terrorists.

From al Qaeda to al Shabaab, from Boko Haram to the Taliban, these extremist groups seek to stamp out all religions that are not their own, or even a version of their own that they approve. And believers from every background have suffered grievously at their hands. And this summit is about calling the attention to the world to those tragic circumstances.

The practitioners of terror harbor a special hatred for the followers of Christ, and none more so than the barbarians known as ISIS. That brutal regime shows a savagery, frankly, unseen in the Middle East since the Middle Ages. And I believe ISIS is guilty of nothing short of genocide against people of the Christian faith, and it is time the world called it by name.

And there I witnessed something I'll never forget. I saw the local imam standing in his traditional apparel, and then as the local bishop arrived I saw the two of them embrace warmly, and began to speak with one another in animated ways. And the translator who was with me said that they were speaking about their families. The imam was expressing the appreciation that the bishop had expressed for condolences for the loss in their community. And there was warm affection between them.

I turned to the State Department official who was traveling with us and said — not knowing, I said, how long has there been a Christian church in al-Basrah? And he smiled and said, about 1,500 years. It's a community of common purpose and affection. And it can be that way again.

Our brother and sisters in faith, I can assure you are being carried by the prayers of the faithful across this nation and across the world. You have the prayers of our President and all the American people. And the Old Book says, not be anxious about anything but in every form of prayer and petition with thanksgiving, present your request to God and the peace of God that passes all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

So know those of you that stare persecution in the face every day in distant lands, you have the prayers of the American people, prayers of my family, and you have the prayers of the President of the United States.

The suffering of Christians in the Middle East has stirred America to act, and it brings me here today. President Trump rightly said not long ago that — of the Christian church, "nobody has

been treated worse in the Middle East.” He’s made it clear that America will stand by followers of Christ in this hour of need. Our administration is fully committed in bringing relief and comfort to believers not only across the Middle East but across the world. This President knows the terrorists will not stop until we stop them. And under President Donald Trump, we will stop them.

In President Trump, we not only have a leader who calls our enemy by name, we have a President who is confronting those who commit terror no matter the home or hut or cave in which they hide. In President Trump, I can promise you the armed forces of the United States of America, working with our allies in the region in Iraq and Afghanistan — we will not rest, we will not relent until we hunt down and destroy ISIS at its source.

Because of the action of President Donald Trump, ISIS is already on the run. Progress in Mosul is tangible. But the fight goes on. And I would say to each of you, persevere in prayer for those who wear the uniform and who are in this fight. Carry them in your prayers.

I was out at Walter Reed Hospital not long ago with one of our servicemembers who had been injured in Mosul. And like all of our courageous men and women, the only thing he wanted to do was get better and get back and fight. So carry them in your prayers, the effective and fervent prayer of a righteous people avail of — much. We ask you to avail yourselves to the opportunity to remember our armed forces as they fight for our freedom across the world.

And rest assured, in the Middle East and North Africa, anywhere terror strikes, America stands with those who are targeted and tormented for their belief, whether they’re Christian, Yazidi, Druzes, Shia, Sunni, or any other creed. The President’s commitment to protecting people of faith also will not end with the elimination of ISIS or the eradication of terror. Under President Donald Trump, America will continue to condemn persecution of any kind, of any faith, any place, any time. We will stand against it with our ideals and with all our might.

The freedom to worship God according to the dictates of our conscience is at the very heart of who we are as Americans. In a very real sense, America was founded by people who had the courage to cross the Atlantic, motivated in so many cases to come here so that they might have that freedom of religion.

Truth is, today, for all the prosperity of the freedom of faith in America and other free societies, today, according to the Pew Center, nearly 80 percent of the human family lives in places where restrictions on religion are either “high” or “very high.” It’s a five-percent increase in a single year.

Too many nations let the mob trample on the rights of the minority. Still more prefer the coercion of the state to conviction of the soul. And the limitations placed on people of belief have become too numerous to count. They range from violence to vandalism — forced conversion to crush free speech, blasphemy laws to building codes, to detainment, to death.

Across the wider world, Christians face this and more. But to be clear, adherents of other religions across the world have not been spared. And we will speak for them and pray for them

as well. For as history attests, persecution of one faith is ultimately the persecution of all faiths. (Applause.)

President Trump will continue to stand without apology to protect this fundamental freedom, not just for our people but stand for it in the world. Since the founding of our nation, America has stood for the proposition that the right to believe and the right to act on one's beliefs is the right of all peoples at all times. Protecting and promoting religious freedom is a foreign policy priority of the Trump administration.

Under President Donald Trump, America will continue to stand for religious freedom of all people, of all faiths, across the world. And I believe that all God's children, no matter their country or their creed, can know with confidence that God will continue to guide this nation, to play our unique role on behalf of freedom in the world. So, have confidence.

When I first ran for office back in 1999 — okay, when I first ran successfully for office — (laughter) — my wife presented me with a framed verse. It hung over our mantle for 12 years when I served in the Congress of the United States. And it hung over the mantle of the Governor's Residence in Indiana. Now it hangs over the mantle in the home of the Vice President of the United States of America.

It simply reads some ancient words people of faith have clung to throughout the millennia. And as we reflect on the great challenges at this world summit today that believers Christ face across the globe, I think we do well to claim this promise again. It simply reads, "For I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you, and not to harm you, plans to give you hope, and a future."

True words when they were first spoken by the prophet, every bit as true today. And so I want to encourage all of you today, fellow believers in Christ, cling to one another in these challenging times. Know that America stands with you and will labor alongside. But be confident because in the midst of it all, he knows the plans he has for us.

And even as history records, even in times of persecution, this church has prospered, it's grown, it's had hope and a future. And with your continued courage and faith, and with the strong and unwavering support of America and its courageous President, Donald Trump, I know that future is bright indeed, now and in eternity.

Thank you very much. May God bless your ministries in this land and around the world. God bless you all and these United States of America.

Washington, DC, USA

May 10 – 13, 2017

“Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial ... as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ’s sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you for the Spirit of God rests upon you ...” (1 Peter 4:12-14).

Our lord and savior Jesus Christ came from Heaven to earth to save us through His death on the cross. The willing sacrifice of blood shed by the Savior of the world to cover human sin, and His miraculous resurrection 2,000 years ago to bring new life, gave birth to the beloved church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Down through the centuries His church, made up of redeemed men, women, and children who have put their faith and trust in Him alone, has encountered conflict, oppression, brutality and even death at the hands of those who reject the Only-Begotten Son of God Jesus Christ and are hostile to His Gospel. Yet the purpose of the Church is to be the light of truth in the midst of a corrupt world.

This glorious message breaks through the darkness and calls all people to repent of sin and turn to Christ, accept God’s forgiveness, receive the salvation that comes by the grace of God through faith in Him alone, live in obedience to Christ, and serve Him as Master and Lord. Historically, this powerful testimony for Christ has often led to persecution of His people.

Jesus warned His disciples, *“If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first ... If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you ...” (John 15:18, 20).* In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus said, *“Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you” (Matthew 5:11-12).*

Studying the holy Word we see the evidence that persecution for the name of Jesus Christ strengthens and grows His church. Persecution also leads others, sometimes even persecutors, to

¹³⁵ “Final Declaration.”

salvation, adding to the church and filling God's eternal home with souls won for His kingdom. This is clearly the hope of the church triumphant; for Christ promised, "... *I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it*" (Matthew 16:18).

The Apostle Paul, who before his conversion had persecuted Christians, came to experience perhaps more than any other apostle, the comfort of knowing Christ's forgiveness and the forgiveness of those who became his brothers and sisters in the faith. He wrote, "*Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith*" (Galatians 6:10).

The Scriptures tell Christians to expect suffering because of His name. "... *all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution*" (2 Timothy 3:12). "*For Your sake we are killed all day long ... Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us*" (Romans 8:36-37). The Bible promises that Jesus will never leave us nor forsake us (Hebrews 13:5).

The atrocities being committed against Christians around the world in the 21st century have brought us together in Washington, DC. ***The World Summit in Defense of Persecuted Christians*** at its heart is to embrace "the household of faith" suffering for Christ's sake. Assembled here from more than 130 countries with various church backgrounds, we are joined by our commitment to Jesus Christ and His Word to share our deep concern for the persecuted. We ask for God to bolster our faith through prayer and praise; thanking Him that their testimonies for Christ will be used to spread the Gospel to the ends of the earth and bring glory to Him.

We have been profoundly moved by testimonies from those who have lived under constant threats of persecution and, in many instances, bear its scars. Their examples of courage and faith have inspired and challenged those of us who live in less restricted societies.

In western nations, Christians now experience marginalization, ridicule, and threats to religious liberty. In other places in the world, Christians face torture, mass executions, and attempts to extinguish historic Christian churches. In the catastrophes of the Middle East and North Africa, Christians and their families have been forced to flee their homelands. They are our brothers and sisters in Christ. Their suffering is our cause. With resolve may we, by the power of the Holy Spirit, be equipped as Paul to say, "... *I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus*" (Galatians 6:17).

As Christ's followers we are commanded to pray, encourage and support our fellow believers. We must not sit back and passively refuse to act on their behalf. *"Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves in the body"* (Hebrews 13:3). When Peter was unjustly imprisoned for preaching Christ, the church took hold of the most powerful weapon in the believer's arsenal—they called on the God of Heaven. And as Christians were praying, Peter knocked on their door. He had been freed in answer to fervent prayer.

Let us declare our allegiance with all who suffer for Christ's name and pledge to make the following commitments:

We pledge to promote awareness of persecuted Christians worldwide and work to help in their hour of need.

We pledge to pray unceasingly, urging other believers throughout the world to pray for those being persecuted, that the whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless. (*1 Thessalonians 5:17, 23-24*)

We pledge to provide practical assistance, whenever possible, to the persecuted church. (*Philippians 2:4*)

We pledge to work with individuals, organizations, and government agencies encouraging them to act as advocates on behalf of the persecuted because of their faith in Christ Jesus. (*Proverbs 31:8-9*)

We pledge to follow the biblical mandate to comfort and edify one another so that we exemplify Christ's love and transforming power, even in the midst of hardship (*1 Thessalonians 5:11*).

We pledge to strengthen the worldwide witness of the church around the world through biblical proclamation-evangelism, and to do so boldly, unapologetically, and without compromise (*Mark 16:15; Romans 1:16*).

Persecution is increasing, but the church's witness to the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ will never be extinguished. We pray for our fellow Christian believers, wherever they may be found. We

claim the Lordship of Christ and watch for that day when He will return and reign as King of Kings forever, and we pray for that promised day when, as that cherished hymn of the faith declares, “the great church victorious shall be the church at rest.”

“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day ...” (Ephesians 6:12-13).

All Scripture references taken from the King James Version, New King James Version, or New International Version.

Appendix item III: Prime Minister Viktor Orbán 's address at the ICCP¹³⁶

12 October 2017

Budapest, Hungary

Your Holiness, Your Excellencies and Eminences, Esteemed Church and Secular Leaders,

Welcome to Budapest. Today I do not wish to talk about the persecution of Christians in Europe. The persecution of Christians in Europe operates with sophisticated and refined methods of an intellectual nature. It is undoubtedly unfair, it is discriminatory, sometimes it is even painful; but although it has negative impacts, it is tolerable. It cannot be compared to the brutal physical persecution which our Christian brothers and sisters have to endure in Africa and the Middle East. Today I'd like to say a few words about this form of persecution of Christians. We have gathered here from all over the world in order to find responses to a crisis that for too long has been concealed. We have come from different countries, yet there's something that links us – the leaders of Christian communities and Christian politicians. We call this the responsibility of the watchman. In the Book of Ezekiel we read that if a watchman sees the enemy approaching and does not sound the alarm, the Lord will hold that watchman accountable for the deaths of those killed as a result of his inaction.

Dear Guests,

A great many times over the course of our history we Hungarians have had to fight to remain Christian and Hungarian. For centuries we fought on our homeland's southern borders, defending the whole of Christian Europe, while in the twentieth century we were the victims of the communist dictatorship's persecution of Christians. Here, in this room, there are some people older than me who have experienced first-hand what it means to live as a devout Christian under a despotic regime. For us, therefore, it is today a cruel, absurd joke of fate for us to be once again living our lives as members of a community under siege. For wherever we may live around the world – whether we're Roman Catholics, Protestants, Orthodox Christians or Copts – we are members of a common body, and of a single, diverse and large community. Our mission is to preserve and protect this community. This responsibility requires us, first of all, to liberate public discourse about the current state of affairs from the shackles of political correctness and human rights incantations which conflate everything with everything else. We are duty-bound to use straightforward language in describing the events that are taking place around us, and to identify the dangers that threaten us. The truth always begins with the statement of facts. Today it is a

¹³⁶ “Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's Speech at the International Consultation on Christian Persecution – Miniszterelnok.Hu,” accessed March 23, 2018, <http://www.miniszterelnok.hu/prime-minister-viktor-orbans-speech-at-the-international-consultation-on-christian-persecution/>.

fact that Christianity is the world's most persecuted religion. It is a fact that 215 million Christians in 108 countries around the world are suffering some form of persecution. It is a fact that four out of every five people oppressed due to their religion are Christians. It is a fact that in Iraq in 2015 a Christian was killed every five minutes because of their religious belief. It is a fact that we see little coverage of these events in the international press, and it is also a fact that one needs a magnifying glass to find political statements condemning the persecution of Christians. But the world's attention needs to be drawn to the crimes that have been committed against Christians in recent years. The world should understand that in fact today's persecutions of Christians foreshadow global processes. The world should understand that the forced expulsion of Christian communities and the tragedies of families and children living in some parts of the Middle East and Africa have a wider significance: in fact they threaten our European values. The world should understand that what is at stake today is nothing less than the future of the European way of life, and of our identity.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We must call the threats we're facing by their proper names. The greatest danger we face today is the indifferent, apathetic silence of a Europe which denies its Christian roots. However unbelievable it may seem today, the fate of Christians in the Middle East should bring home to Europe that what is happening over there may also happen to us. Europe, however, is forcefully pursuing an immigration policy which results in letting extremists, dangerous extremists, into the territory of the European Union. A group of Europe's intellectual and political leaders wishes to create a mixed society in Europe which, within just a few generations, will utterly transform the cultural and ethnic composition of our continent – and consequently its Christian identity.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We Hungarians are a Central European people; there aren't many of us, and we do not have a great many relatives. Our influence, territory, population and army are similarly not significant. We know our place in the ranking of the world's nations. We are a medium-sized European state, and there are countries much bigger than us which should, as a matter of course, bear a great deal more responsibility than we do. Now, however, we Hungarians are taking a proactive role. There are good reasons for this. I can see – and I know through having met them personally – how many well-intentioned truly Christian politicians there are in Europe. They are not strong enough, however: they work in coalition governments; they are at the mercy of media industries with attitudes very different from theirs; and they have insufficient political strength to act according to their convictions. While Hungary is only a medium-sized European state, it is in a different situation. This is a stable country: the political formation now in office won two-thirds majorities in two consecutive elections; the country has an economic support base which is not

enormous, but is stable; and the public's general attitude is robust. This means that we are in a position to speak up for persecuted Christians. In other words, in such a stable situation, there could be no excuse for Hungarians not taking action and not honouring the obligation rooted in their Christian faith. This is how fate and God have compelled Hungary to take the initiative, regardless of its size. We are proud that for more than a thousand years we have belonged to the great family of Christian peoples. This, too, imposes an obligation on us.

Dear Guests,

For us, Europe is a Christian continent, and this is how we want to keep it. Even though we may not be able to keep all of it Christian, at least we can do so for the segment that God has entrusted to the Hungarian people. Taking this as our starting-point, we have decided to do all we can to help our Christian brothers and sisters outside Europe who are forced to live under persecution. What is interesting about this decision is not the fact that we are seeking to help, but the way we are seeking to help. The solution we settled on has been to take the help we are providing directly to the churches of persecuted Christians. We are not using the channels established earlier, which seek to assist the persecuted as best they can within the framework of international aid. Our view is that the best way to help is to channel resources directly to the churches of persecuted communities. In our view this is how to produce the best results, this is how resources can be used to the full, and this is how there can be a guarantee that such resources are indeed channelled to those who need them. And as we are Christians, we help Christian churches and channel these resources to them. I could also say that we are doing the very opposite of what is customary in Europe today: we declare that trouble should not be brought here, but assistance must be taken to where it is needed.

Dear Friends,

Our approach is that the right thing to do is to act virtuously, rather than just talk about doing so. In this way we avoid doing good things simply in order to burnish our reputation: we avoid doing good things out of calculation, as good deeds must come from the heart, and for the glory of God. Yet now it is my duty to talk about the facts of good deeds. My justification, the reason I am telling you all this, is to prove to us all that politics in Europe is not necessarily helpless in the face of the persecution of Christians. The reason I am talking about some good deeds is that they may serve as an example for others, and may induce others to also perform good deeds. So please consider everything that I say now in this light. In 2016 we set up the Deputy State Secretariat for the Aid of Persecuted Christians, which – in cooperation with churches, non-governmental organisations, the UN, The Hague and the European Parliament – liaises with and provides help for persecuted Christian communities. We listen to local Christian leaders and to what they believe is most important, and then do what we have to. From them I have learnt that

the most important thing we can do is provide assistance for them to return home to resettle in their native lands. We Hungarians want Syrian, Iraqi and Nigerian Christians to be able to return as soon as possible to the lands where their ancestors lived for hundreds of years. This is what we call Hungarian solidarity – or, using the words you see behind me: “Hungary helps”. This is why we decided to help rebuild their homes and churches; and thanks to Hungarian Interchurch Aid, in Iraq, Syria and Lebanon we also build community centres. We have launched a special scholarship programme for young people raised in Christian families suffering persecution, and I am pleased to welcome some of those young people here today. I am sure that after their studies in Hungary, when they return to their communities, they will be active, core members of those communities. And we are also working in cooperation with the Pázmány Péter Catholic University on the establishment of a Hungarian-founded university. The Hungarian government has provided aid of 580 million forints for the rebuilding of damaged homes in the Iraqi town of Tesqopa, as a result to which we hope that hundreds of Iraqi Christian families who now live as internal refugees may be able to return to their homes. We likewise support the activities of the Syriac Catholic Church and the Syriac Orthodox Church. I should also mention something which perhaps does not sound particularly special to a foreigner, but, believe me, here in Hungary is unprecedented, and I can’t even remember the last time something like it happened: all parties in the Hungarian National Assembly united to support adoption of a resolution which condemns the persecution of Christians, supports the Government in providing help, condemns the activities of the organisation called Islamic State, and calls upon the International Criminal Court to launch proceedings in response to the persecution, oppression and murder of Christians.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

When we support the return of persecuted Christians to their homelands, the Hungarian people is fulfilling a mission. In addition to what the Esteemed Bishop has outlined, our Fundamental Law constitutionally declares that we Hungarians recognise the role of Christianity in preserving nationhood. And if we recognise this for ourselves, then we also recognise it for other nations; in other words, we want Christian communities returning to Syria, Iraq and Nigeria to become forces for the preservation of their own countries, just as for us Hungarians Christianity is a force for preservation. From here I also urge Europe’s politicians to cast aside politically correct modes of speech and cast aside human rights-induced caution. And I ask them and urge them to do everything within their power for persecuted Christians.

Soli Deo gloria!

Budapest Declaration

October 13, 2017

Budapest, Hungary

INTERNATIONAL CONSULTATION ON CHRISTIAN PERSECUTION

1 *Express* their deepest solidarity with the Christians and other religious minority groups that are being persecuted all around the world.

2 *Welcome and support* all activities of government agencies, ecclesiastical, and non-governmental organisations that speak up for the persecuted religious minorities of the world, with special regard to Christians.

3 *Commend* the efforts of the Government of Hungary in helping persecuted Christians and other religious minorities, as well as any similar measures taken by other governments.

4 *Condemn* all actions that aim to deny or restrict the exercise of fundamental human rights with a special emphasis on the violation of freedom of religion.

5 *Urge* the international community to advocate and stand up for persecuted religious minorities, and use all potential lawful means against groups that commit atrocities against Christians and other religious minorities.

6 *Emphasise* that the barbaric acts committed by the terrorist organisation that calls itself Islamic State, or by any other similar terrorist organisation and militia are considered as genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes, therefore the countries of the world bear a responsibility to put an end to such crimes and put the persons responsible for them on trial before a court of law.

7 *Promote* strengthening the role of the Special Envoy for the promotion of freedom of religion or belief outside the EU.

¹³⁷ “Budapest Declaration - International Conference on the Persecution of Christians.”

8 *Call on* the European Union to review the effectiveness of restrictive measures with the prospect of amending them, keeping in mind the interest of the civil population of the affected countries.

9 *Call on* the political decision makers and opinion leaders of the world to endeavour to facilitate the free exercise of religion in the crisis regions where Christians and other religious minorities are persecuted, in order to ensure international peace and security, with a special focus on the Middle East, Africa and different regions of Asia.

10 *Call on* the governments and international organisations of the world to seek long term solutions aimed at ending the persecution of Christians and other religious communities to ensure that the exercise of all human rights, including the free exercise of religion according to Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, is respected.

11 *Call for* urgent reconstruction of schools and other means of infrastructure to make it possible for Christians and other persecuted religious minorities to stay or return to the land of their ancestors.

12 *Call for* the support of political, economic, and security solutions enabling Christians and refugees of other religious minorities to return to their homelands.

13 *Urge* a joint action of the governments of the world and international institutions to end the atrocities committed against Christians and other religious minorities and in accordance with that goal implement immediate practical measures.

Appendix Item V: Topoi Schemes in Nationalist Rhetoric

Item 1.1—Aristotelian Topoi¹³⁸

Topos	Principle and <i>Example</i>
Topos of Opposites	If the contrary of a predicate belongs to the contrary of a subject, then this predicate belongs to this subject. <i>'If the war causes us all this damage, then we should make peace.'</i>
Topos of Definition	<i>'If someone believes that evil is related to the gods, then he believes in the existence of the gods.'</i>
Topos of Syllogism that starts with something specific and concludes with something general	<i>'If some human beings do not trust their horses to people who do not protect the horses of other human beings, then they cannot trust their salvation to people who do not succeed in saving other human beings.'</i>
Topos of the Consequential	If an act has both good and bad consequences, then on the basis of the good/bad consequences this act can be exhorted/blamed. <i>'If one is educated, then he can be wise. If one is educated, the others envy him.'</i>
Topos of Cause	If the cause exists, then so does the effect. If the cause does not exist, then there is no effect.
Topos of the Aftermath	<i>'If someone is exiled and can live as he wants, then he is considered to be a happy person.'</i>
Topos that accepts as a cause something that is not a cause	<i>'Dimadis considers that Demosthenes' politics was harmful because after his governance the war began.'</i>

Item 1.2—DHA Topoi¹³⁹

Topos	Warrant
Topos of advantage or usefulness	If an action under a specific relevant point of view will be useful, then one should perform it.
Topos of uselessness or disadvantage	If one can anticipate that the prognosticated consequences of a decision will not occur, then the decision has to be rejected.
Topos of threat or Topos of danger	If there are specific dangers or threats, one should do something against them
Topos of humanitarianism	If a political action or decision does or does not conform to human rights or humanitarian convictions and values, then one should or should not perform or make it.
Topos of burden or weighing down	If a person, an institution or a country is burdened by specific problems, one should act in order to diminish those burdens.

¹³⁸ Wodak and Boukala, "European Identities and the Revival of Nationalism in the European Union," 96.

¹³⁹ Wodak and Boukala, 97.

Topos of finance	If a specific situation or action costs too much money or causes a loss of revenue, one should perform actions that diminish those costs or help to avoid/ mitigate the loss.
Topos of reality	Because reality is as it is, a specific action/decision should be performed/made.
Topos of numbers	If the numbers prove a specific claim, a specific action should be performed/not be carried out.

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