

Christian Power Europe: Hungary's Strategic Narrative of Europe's Role in a Post-Liberal World

By
Benedek Kovacs

Submitted to
Central European University
Department of International Relations

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in International Relations

Supervisor: Professor Xymena Kurowska

Budapest, Hungary
2020

Abstract

The European liberal order has been upended by the swift rise of radical right-wing leaders, movements, and ideas across the continent. Contrary to claims that these ‘populist’ and ‘nationalist’ movements are idealess and anti-internationalist, recent developments suggest that the radical right articulate their own visions of international cooperation and world order. This paper analyzes how Viktor Orbán, Hungary’s right-wing prime minister, is trying to discursively reshape Europe’s role in the world. It does so through the conceptual framework of strategic narrative, which envisions international politics as a narrative struggle over shared meaning. Orbán’s strategic narrative of European cooperation and world order is reconstructed through a close reading of his annual speeches at the Bálványos Summer University and Student Camp since 2010. It is shown that the prime minister’s narrative conjures up a Christian Power Europe, which must act in the world according to the following core norms: stability, Christian liberty, national democracy, the rule of morality, and respect for sovereignty and cultural traditions. In opposition to Normative Power Europe, this narrative legitimizes Christian-flavored illiberalism as the means to make Europe great again on the world stage. The narrative reflects both mainstream ideas about international relations and the ideas of the transnational ‘New Right,’ a rising intellectual and political project with roots in Western illiberal thought.

Table of Contents

Introduction: Challenge from the Right	1
Chapter One: Scholarship & Contribution	4
1.1 The Radical Right: Populism or Philosophy?	4
1.2 The Hungarian Case and Strategic Narrative	6
1.3 The View from Tusványos.....	11
Chapter Two: Orbán’s Strategic Narrative	13
2.1 System.....	13
2.2 Identity.....	16
2.3 Policy.....	18
Chapter Three: Resonance with the New Right.....	21
3.1 Liberal Globalism vs. Conservative Traditionalism	22
3.2 The Centrality of Birth-Culture	24
3.3 Cultural Geopolitics and the Toppling of Liberal Rule	26
Conclusion: Christian Power Europe	28
Table One: Orbán’s Multi-Level Narrative of Europe in the World.....	30
Bibliography	31

Introduction: Challenge from the Right

Almost two decades ago, Ian Manners proclaimed that the European Union should be deemed a ‘normative power,’ a global actor that has the ability to shape international politics through the diffusion of norms.¹ Highlighting its history of peace, hybrid political form, and constitutional commitment to universal principles, Manners contended that the EU was programmed to act in the world according to five key norms: peace, liberty, democracy, the rule of law, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.² He claimed that these norms were being spread around the world, intentionally and unintentionally, by the liberal character of the EU and redefining what was considered normal in international affairs. The notion of a Normative Power Europe (NPE) continues to occupy the minds of EU scholars today.³

In recent years, striking political developments have shattered optimism about the EU’s global role as a beacon of liberal norms. Radical right-wing leaders, movements, and ideas have emerged in force across Europe, upending domestic political orders and challenging expectations of an ever-closer union.⁴ Matteo Salvini’s League has become the third largest party in Italy’s national parliament and Italy’s number one representative in the European Parliament. Marine Le Pen’s National Rally has emerged as one of France’s most prominent political parties, coming in first place in both the 2015 regional elections and the 2019 European elections. Alternative for Germany has emerged as Germany’s third largest party in parliament and its largest force in opposition. These are just glimpses of a broader shift to the Right. Given these political upsets, it

¹ Ian Manners, “Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?” *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* 40, no. 2 (2002): 235–58, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-5965.00353>.

² Manners, “Normative Power Europe,” 242.

³ Zsuzsa Anna Ferenczy, “Green Power? European Normative Influence on Chinese Environmental Policy,” *Australian and New Zealand Journal of European Studies* 11, no. 1 (May 2019): 18–40, https://cesaa.org.au/_content/uploads/2019/05/Zsuzsa-Anna-Ferenczy.pdf; Charlotte Wagnsson and Maria Hellman, “Normative Power Europe Caving In? EU under Pressure of Russian Information Warfare,” *Journal of Common Market Studies* 56, no. 5 (July 2018): 1161–1177, <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.12726>.

⁴ K. Biswas, “How the Far Right Became Europe’s New Normal,” *New York Times*, February 4, 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/04/opinion/far-right-europe-austria.html>; Cas Mudde, “The Far Right May Not Have Cleaned up, but Its Influence Now Dominates Europe,” *Guardian*, May 28, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/may/28/far-right-european-elections-eu-politics>.

is uncertain whether the liberal norms outlined by Manners will continue to diffuse from the normative body of the EU. Illiberalism is quickly becoming part of Europe's new normal.

How are the forces of the radical right influencing Europe's role in the world? Liberal analysts argue that they are seeking to dismantle European cooperation.⁵ Such accounts consider the radical right to be "fundamentally incompatible with European integration" due to their rejection of liberal values, xenophobic inclinations, and backwards commitment to sovereignty.⁶ The radical right's anti-EU and anti-immigration rhetoric represent, for liberal onlookers, clear-cut evidence of their contempt for internationalism. The only exception to this rule, in the liberal narrative, is the radical right's supposed embrace of closer relations with Vladimir Putin's Russia.⁷ Ultimately, many analysts claim that the ideas of the radical right can be boiled down to a resentful form of populism-nationalism, which is "emotional and pre-ideological."⁸

Recent developments suggest that there is more to the story. Radical right-wing actors are swapping ideas, forging connections, and backing each other's policies.⁹ They are even forming institutionalized coalitions such as the European Parliament's Identity and Democracy umbrella party. Furthermore, they are marketing their own brand of internationalism and pan-European cooperation along illiberal lines. Some commentators stress that these visions are inherently contradictory, opportunistic, and lacking in normative foundations.¹⁰ Others highlight that the radical right draw on civilizational ideas with deep roots in Western political thought.¹¹

⁵ Susi Dennison and Pawel Zerka, "The 2019 European Election: How Anti-Europeans Plan to Wreck Europe and What Can Be Done to Stop It," *European Council on Foreign Relations*, February 2019, https://www.ecfr.eu/specials/scorecard/the_2019_european_election.

⁶ Heather Grabbe and Stefan Lehne, "Can the EU Survive Populism?" *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, June 14, 2016, <https://carnegieeurope.eu/2016/06/14/can-eu-survive-populism-pub-63804>.

⁷ Adrienne Klasa, Valerie Hopkins, Guy Chazan, Henry Foy, and Miles Johnson, "Russia's Long Arm Reaches to the Right in Europe" *Financial Times*, May 23, 2019, <https://www.ft.com/content/48c4bfa6-7ca2-11e9-81d2-f785092ab560>.

⁸ Ivan Krastev and Stephen Holmes, "Explaining Eastern Europe: Imitation and Its Discontents," *Journal of Democracy* 29, no. 3 (July 2018): 117–128, doi:10.1353/jod.2018.0049.

⁹ Jacopo Barigazzi, "Orbán, Salvini Flirt with Alliance after EU Election," *POLITICO*, May 2, 2019, <https://www.politico.eu/article/orban-salvini-flirt-with-alliance-after-eu-election/>.

¹⁰ Heather Grabbe and Stefan Lehne, "Could an Illiberal Europe Work?" *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, October 11, 2018, <https://carnegieeurope.eu/2018/10/11/could-illiberal-europe-work-pub-77463>.

¹¹ Florian Bieber, "How Europe's Nationalists Became Internationalists," *Foreign Policy*, November 30, 2019, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/11/30/how-europes-nationalists-became-internationalists/>; Vibeke Schou Tjalve and Minda Holm, "Visions of an Illiberal World Order? The National Right in Europe, Russia and the US," *Norwegian Institute of International Affairs*, (November 2018): 1-16, <https://nupi.brage.unit.no/nupi-xmlui/handle/11250/2571158>.

Either way, it is becoming clear that the radical right are beginning to project a new narrative of international cooperation and world order.

This paper seeks to contribute to these discussions by analyzing the narrative efforts of Viktor Orbán, Hungary's 'bad-boy' prime minister. Liberal media often cast Orbán as a leading light of the European radical right. Several variations of their story are in circulation. For some, Orbán is an illiberal ideologue who is dispersing a diabolical blend of nationalism, populism, and authoritarianism across the European Union.¹² For others, he is one troubling case of a broader tide of right-wing nationalism and populism washing over Central and Eastern Europe.¹³ The prime minister has even been called the European Union's "greatest political challenge."¹⁴ Despite this widespread fanfare, few have investigated the nature of Orbán's influence.

This paper will explore how Mr. Orbán is trying to reshape the meaning of European cooperation and world order. It will do so through the framework and method of strategic narrative, which posits that political actors seek to influence the international system through narrative projection. Drawing on Orbán's speeches at the Bálványos Summer University and Student Camp since 2010, this paper will discursively analyze his narrative of Europe's role in the world. It will first break down the narrative into its system, identity and policy components. Then, it will reanalyze Orbán's narrative in terms of its resonance with the ideas of the New Right (NR), a transnational intellectual and political project that has been emphasized by recent scholarship in international theory. Before diving into the analysis, however, this paper will provide an overview of the relevant literature on radical right-wing internationalism, strategic narratives in international affairs, and Orbán's illiberal politics.

¹² Elisabeth Zerofsky, "Viktor Orbán's Far-Right Vision for Europe," *New Yorker*, January 7, 2019, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2019/01/14/viktor-orbans-far-right-vision-for-europe>.

¹³ Philip Oltermann, "Can Europe's New Xenophobes Reshape the Continent?" *Observer*, February 3, 2018, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/feb/03/europe-xenophobes-continent-poland-hungary-austria-nationalism-migrants>.

¹⁴ Patrick Kingsley, "As West Fears the Rise of Autocrats, Hungary Shows What's Possible," *New York Times*, February 10, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/10/world/europe/hungary-orban-democracy-far-right.html>.

Chapter One: Scholarship & Contribution

1.1 The Radical Right: Populism or Philosophy?

Scholars of political science and international relations have begun to acknowledge and investigate the international offerings of the emerging radical right, particularly in the European context. One strand of comparative political literature has focused on the foreign policy of the ‘populist radical right’ (PRR).¹⁵ Building off the work of Cas Mudde, these scholars have looked at the rising generation of right-wing parties as a political family characterized by populism, nationalism, and authoritarianism.¹⁶ Accordingly, they have largely sought to outline how the foreign policy of PRR parties revolve around the conceptual nexus of populism-nationalism. For example, Verbeek and Zaslove have examined the Lega Nord’s influence on Italy’s foreign policy during their time in coalition government in the 2000s.¹⁷ Based on that case, they argue that PRR parties do, in fact, support international cooperation when it serves their populist agenda. Going one step further, Escartin has explored how PRR-led governments promote informal and illiberal Europeanisation that revolves around preferences such as migration control and security policy.¹⁸ Additionally, Söderbaum, Spandler, and Pacciardi have made the case that populist governments support regionalism when it resonates with ‘frames’ such as anti-liberalism, threatened identity, and popular sovereignty.¹⁹

Over the past couple of years, a number of political theorists have called for a new approach to researching the international agenda of the ascendant radical right.²⁰ They claim that

¹⁵ Adrià Rivera Escartin, “Populist challenges to EU foreign policy in the Southern Neighbourhood: an informal and illiberal Europeanisation?” *Journal of European Public Policy*, (2020): 1-20, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2020.1712459>; Bertjan Verbeek and Andrej Zaslove, “The Impact of Populist Radical Right Parties on Foreign Policy: The Northern League as a Junior Coalition Partner in the Berlusconi Governments,” *European Political Science Review* 7, no. 4 (November 2015): 525–46, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1755773914000319>.

¹⁶ Cas Mudde, *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

¹⁷ Verbeek and Zaslove, “The Northern League.”

¹⁸ Escartin, “Populist challenges to EU foreign policy.”

¹⁹ Fredrik Söderbaum, Agnese Pacciardi and Kilian Spandler, “Contestations of the Liberal International Order: A Populist Script of Regional Cooperation,” Paper for the GGS Annual Conference, (December 2019): 1-37, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/337772345_Contestations_of_the_Liberal_International_Order_A_Populist_Script_of_Regional_Cooperation.

²⁰ Rita Abrahamsen, Jean-François Drolet, Alexandra Gheciu, Karin Narita, Srdjan Vucetic, and

these varied right-wing actors belong to a diverse but coherent intellectual and political project, which most readily travels under the name of the ‘New Right’ (NR). The NR, according to this scholarly strand, wield a distinct theory or philosophy, which has deep roots in Western illiberal thought. Pushing back against the tendency to peer at contemporary right-wing ideas through the lens of populism-nationalism, these theorists claim that the NR project their own form of internationalism, which has been “disciplined and narrated out of the mainstream of IR.”²¹ For example, Drolet and Williams argue that the NR project an alternative international system based on culturally grounded ethno-politics and regional orders.²² Orellana and Michelsen, on the other hand, see the New Right as ‘norm entrepreneurs’ who are striving to redefine international relations as a free competition among sovereign nations defined by their birth-cultures.²³ Additionally, Abrahamsen et al. claim that the NR wield a particular critique of globalization, which makes enemies out of liberal elites, institutions, and their affiliated agents.²⁴

The perspective of international theory offers an important and underutilized lens for looking at the challenge of the emerging radical right. As the above-mentioned theorists artfully highlight, the NR are actively promoting pretty sophisticated ideas about international relations that have long lineages in Western political thought. It is thus no longer enough to condense NR ideas into the framework of ‘thin-centered’ populism or nationalism. Given their complexity and historical depth, the NR’s intellectual offerings should not be scrutinized with the assumptions of shallowness and aberrance that sometimes inform liberal accounts, both journalistic and scholarly. This is not to say that contemporary manifestations of the radical right do not display incoherence, contradiction or resentment. They certainly do. However, NR movements and

Michael Williams, “Confronting the International Political Sociology of the New Right,” *International Political Sociology* 14, no. 1 (March 1, 2020): 94–107, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ips/olaa001>; Jean-François Drolet and Michael C. Williams, “Radical Conservatism and Global Order: International Theory and the New Right,” *International Theory* 10, no. 3 (November 2018): 285–313, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S175297191800012X>; Pablo de Orellana and Nicholas Michelsen, “Reactionary Internationalism: The Philosophy of the New Right,” *Review of International Studies* 45, no. 5 (December 2019): 748–67, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210519000159>.

²¹ Orellana and Michelsen, “Reactionary Internationalism,” 749.

²² Drolet and Williams, “Radical Conservatism,” 303.

²³ Orellana and Michelsen, “Reactionary Internationalism,” 765.

²⁴ Abrahamsen et al., “Confronting the International,” 99.

leaders also take inspiration from long-running intellectual currents. Their challenge to the liberal world order is underpinned by sophisticated critiques of liberal elites, institutions, and norms.

That being said, important pieces are missing from accounts of the international theory of the New Right. First off, empirics are sorely needed to come to terms with how the NR's thinking is reflected in the visions of particular political actors. Devoid of such grounding, the theory-minded approach will be unable to capture the intricacies and contradictions of the NR. There is another important piece missing from this approach: communication. According to the theory-based literature, one of the fundamental characteristics of the NR is their relentless desire to shape the public mind. The NR believe in the importance of metapolitics, the social diffusion of ideas that can act as a primer for revolutionary change.²⁵ They see politics as a perpetual battle of ideas that must be waged aggressively in fields such as education and public communication. Therefore, they prioritize initiatives such as publishing houses, journals, and schools, as well as the deft use of social media. To fully appreciate the NR's challenge, it is critical that scholars explore not only their floating ideas but their communicative forms.

1.2 The Hungarian Case and Strategic Narrative

This paper seeks to contribute to the budding literature on the radical right's international agenda in two ways. Firstly, it will offer up an interesting and illustrative case study by exploring how one of Europe's most infamous right-wing figures, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, is seeking to reshape international relations. Specifically, it will explore his vision of European cooperation and world order. In this way, it will provide empirical nourishment to the theory-minded literature. Secondly, this paper will bring political communication into the debate through the conceptual framework of strategic narrative. It will draw on a set of Orbán's major speeches about global politics, reconstruct his strategic narrative of Europe cooperation and world order, and analyze how this narrative reflects the international philosophy of the NR.

²⁵ Abrahamsen et al., "Confronting the International," 96.

The strategic narrative approach will allow for an appreciation of the prime minister's ideas *and* how he structures and communicates them to particular audiences.

Orbán was partly selected due to the widespread characterization of him in liberal circles as a ringleader of the European radical right.²⁶ According to such accounts, he is a highly influential political leader who is spawning imitators across the region and beyond. Some even depict him as the regional representative of a menacing authoritarian geopolitical bloc composed of strongmen such as President Vladimir Putin, Chinese President Xi Jinping, and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.²⁷ The prime minister was also selected, however, because of his affiliation with the NR in the relevant literature. Back in 2008, Bozóki painted a compelling picture of how the political transformation of Orbán and Fidesz in the 2000s heralded the rise of the New Right in Hungary.²⁸ Taking this assertion seriously, this paper will move beyond the fanfare of media-driven accounts and explore how Orbán is seeking to strategically influence the international system.

As is the case with other right-wing politicians, much of the literature on Viktor Orbán's ideas falls into the conceptual basket of populism-nationalism.²⁹ Taking this framework for granted, most scholars have sought to explain the particularities of Orbán's populist discourse. Enyedi, for example, claims that Fidesz exhibits a 'paternalistic populism,' which elevates the role of elites and the state in organizing society.³⁰ Ádám and Bozóki contend that Orbán's regime deploys a form of ethnonationalist populism that has remolded Christianity into a national shape

²⁶ Kingsley, "Rise of Autocrats"; Oltermann, "Europe's New Xenophobes"; Volker Wagener, "Opinion: Orbán Remains Leader of the Intractable Eastern EU," *Deutsche Welle*, April 9, 2018, <https://www.dw.com/en/opinion-orban-remains-leader-of-the-intractable-eastern-eu/a-43302889>; Zerofsky, "Viktor Orbán's Far-Right Vision."

²⁷ Robert Kagan, "The strongmen strike back," *Washington Post*, March 24, 2019, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/opinions/wp/2019/03/14/feature/the-strongmen-strike-back/>.

²⁸ András Bozóki, "Consolidation or Second Revolution? The Emergence of the New Right in Hungary," *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics* 24, no. 2 (April 2008): 191-231, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13523270802003046>.

²⁹ Zoltán Ádám and András Bozóki, "State and Faith: Right-wing Populism and Nationalized Religion in Hungary," *Intersections: East European Journal of Society and Politics* 2, no. 1 (2016): 98-122, <https://www.cceol.com/search/article-detail?id=443588>; Zsolt Enyedi, "Paternalist Populism and Illiberal Elitism in Central Europe," *Journal of Political Ideologies* 21, no. 1 (January 2, 2016): 9-25, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13569317.2016.1105402>; Emilia Palonen, "Performing the Nation: The Janus-Faced Populist Foundations of Illiberalism in Hungary," *Journal of Contemporary European Studies* 26, no. 3 (July 3, 2018): 308-21, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14782804.2018.1498776>; Myra A. Waterbury, "Populist Nationalism and the Challenges of Divided Nationhood: The Politics of Migration, Mobility, and Demography in Post-2010 Hungary," *East European Politics and Societies*, (January 2020), <https://doi.org/10.1177/0888325419897772>.

³⁰ Enyedi, "Paternalist Populism."

to legitimize its rule.³¹ Similarly, Palonen argues that Orbán fills the political shell of populism with exclusionary rhetoric such as revolution, illiberalism, and Christian democracy to generate support.³² Additionally, Waterbury highlights how Orbán government's populist nationalism caters to a divided transborder nation with multiple external constituencies.³³

Beyond populism and nationalism, a handful of scholars have investigated how right-wing elites in Hungary have constructed geopolitical narratives to influence national and international politics. Korkut, for example, has shown how Hungary's right-wing elites have deployed the discursive construction of Eurasianism to generate anti-Western resentment and boost their influence over society.³⁴ Similarly, Balogh has illustrated how Hungary's elites have used Eurasianism to geopolitically reorient Hungary towards Turkey, Russia, and Central Asia.³⁵ In a more recent piece, Balogh has outlined how Hungarian elites have reimagined and redeployed the narrative of Central Europe in the wake of various European crises to promote their interests and confront the West.³⁶

In lockstep with the literature on geopolitical narratives in Hungary, this paper will investigate Orbán's narrative of European cooperation and world order. However, it will use the conceptual framework of strategic narrative, which has been developed at the intersection of international relations and communication to shed light on how political actors seek to influence the international system through consciously deployed narratives.³⁷ On the one hand, strategic narrative offers a perspective on international relations. To adopt this approach is to envision international politics as a competitive field in which actors communicate strategically to influence

³¹ Ádám and Bozóki, "State and Faith."

³² Palonen, "Performing the Nation."

³³ Waterbury, "Populist Nationalism."

³⁴ Umut Korkut, "Resentment and Reorganization: Anti-Western Discourse and the Making of Eurasianism in Hungary," *Acta Slavica Iaponica* 38, (2017): 71-90, <https://www.ceeol.com/search/article-detail?id=587217>.

³⁵ Péter Balogh, "Returning to Eurasia from the heart of Europe? Geographical metanarratives in Hungary and beyond," In *Beyond Transition? Memory and Identity Narratives in Eastern and Central Europe*, ed. Barbara Törnquist-Plewa, Niklas Bernsand and Eleonora Narvselius, (Lund University, 2015), 191–208.

³⁶ Péter Balogh, "The Revival of 'Central Europe' among Hungarian Political Elites: Its Meaning and Geopolitical Implications," *Hungarian Geographical Bulletin* 66, no. 3 (October 5, 2017): 191–202, <https://doi.org/10.15201/hungeobull.66.3.1>.

³⁷ Alister Miskimmon Ben O'Loughlin, and Laura Roselle, ed., *Forging the World: Strategic Narratives and International Relations*, (University of Michigan Press, 2017); Alister Miskimmon, Ben O'Loughlin, and Laura Roselle, *Strategic Narratives: Communication Power and the New World Order*, (New York: Routledge, 2013).

one another. This perspective relies on a couple of key assumptions. The first is the power of communication in international affairs. According to the creators of strategic narrative, communication is an increasingly potent tool for gaining influence in a world defined by networked societies that rely on mass and social media.³⁸ The second key assumption is that people make sense of the world through narratives. According to this logic, political actors actively seek to shape peoples' common sense through narratives that serve their interests.³⁹

Strategic narrative also involves a particular approach to discourse analysis. Firstly, the approach contends that a defining feature of narratives is their sense of temporal movement, which is facilitated by tools such as setting, plot, and events.⁴⁰ This aids in the identification of narrative products. Secondly, it identifies three types of strategic narratives that circulate in international affairs: international *system narratives* that “outline how the world is structured, who the main players are, and how the system should function”; *identity narratives* that depict an actor's proper role in the international system; and *policy narratives* that describe “how an actor views the appropriate response to address a political challenge or crisis.”⁴¹ This provides a structure for analyzing strategic narratives. Finally, the approach outlines a tripartite cycle of narrative communication: formation, projection, and reception.⁴² This allows analysts to the aims, diffusion, and impact of a particular narrative.

The strategic narrative lens is highly relevant for looking at the New Right because of their belief in shaping common sense. This attachment is inspired by the NR's interpretation and adoption of the ideas of Antonio Gramsci, the famous Italian Marxist philosopher of the early 20th century. Gramsci believed that societies rely on a particular “mode of thinking and acting,” which is reflected in language, “common sense,” and folklore/religion.⁴³ He argued that lasting

³⁸ Miskimmon, O'Loughlin, and Roselle, *Strategic Narratives*, 2.

³⁹ Miskimmon, O'Loughlin, and Roselle, *Strategic Narratives*, 2.

⁴⁰ Miskimmon, O'Loughlin, and Roselle, *Strategic Narratives*, 6-7.

⁴¹ Alister Miskimmon and Ben O'Loughlin, “Russia's Narratives of Global Order: Great Power Legacies in a Polycentric World,” *Politics and Governance* 5, no. 3 (2017): 112, <https://doi.org/10.17645/pag.v5i3.1017>.

⁴² Miskimmon and O'Loughlin, “Russia's Narratives,” 112.

⁴³ Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, Translated by Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith, (New York: International Publishers, 1971), 626-627.

revolutionary change could be achieved through a “war of position,” a protracted struggle through which a movement could deliberately activate and reshape a society’s common sense in line with its worldview.⁴⁴ In the 1970s, the French New Right (Nouvelle Droite) took on and developed this notion of struggle over sense, which they call metapolitics.⁴⁵ According to Alain de Benoist, one of the leading figures of NR, “metapolitical action attempts, beyond political divisions and through a new synthesis, to renew a transversal mode of thought and, ultimately, to study all areas of knowledge in order to produce a coherent worldview.”⁴⁶ The perspective and strategy of metapolitics has remained a distinguishing element of the NR’s project to date. At the heart of metapolitics lies the belief that socio-political change can be generated through the public mind. The NR seek to shape this mind through communication and cultural activism. Strategic narrative offers a sharp lens with which to analyze communicative efforts to influence worldviews.

The metapolitical perspective can be clearly identified in Orbán’s thought and action. Back in 1987, the prime minister wrote his master’s thesis on Gramscian metapolitics and the emergence of civil society in Solidarity-era Poland.⁴⁷ He highlighted how Solidarity had emerged from the everyday to reshape social life and create the space for civil society in the country. It is a piece of work that clearly indicates his interest in the power of grassroots activism and cultural mobilization. Perhaps more relevant, however, is how Orbán and his party have sought to influence the course and composition of Hungarian culture and civil society, in opposition and in government. Greskovits has precisely illuminated how Orbán and his party strategically steered Hungarian civil society to the Right during the 2000s through the organization of grassroots

⁴⁴ Gramsci, “Selections,” 651-652.

⁴⁵ Abrahamsen et al., “Confronting the International.”

⁴⁶ Alain de Benoist and Charles Champetier, “The French New Right in the Year 2000,” *Telos*, (Spring 1999): 117, <http://journal.telospress.com/content/1999/115/117.full.pdf+html>.

⁴⁷ Viktor Orbán, “Társadalmi önszerveződés mozgalom a politikai rendszerben (a lengyel példa)” (Social movement for self-organization in a political system, the Polish example), Budapest: ELTE, Accessed May 24, 2020, <http://2010-2015.miniszterelnok.hu/attachment/0017/szakdolgozat.pdf>.

‘civic circles.’⁴⁸ Additionally, Bozóki has shown how Orbán’s government has sought to aggressively control cultural production since assuming power in 2010.⁴⁹ It is clear that Orbán and Fidesz are seeking to shape society’s common sense in a strategic manner as part of their political project. This paper will make the case that these efforts are not merely domestic. Orbán is actively seeking to shape the meaning of international relations through strategic narratives.

1.3 The View from Tüsványos

This paper will reconstruct Orbán’s strategic narrative of European cooperation and world order through a close reading of his annual speeches at the Bálványos Summer University and Student Camp. Colloquially known as Tüsványos, the camp is a forum for cooperation in the Carpathian basin that takes place each summer in Baile Tusnad, Romania. Since Fidesz first organized the event in 1990, it has grown into a widely attended and televised spectacle, which offers Orbán the chance to project his political agenda to the greater Hungarian nation and any international audiences tuning in. Each summer, the prime minister delivers a keynote speech in which he spends 30-40 minutes narrating the global political scene and its implications for Hungary, the region, and Europe as a whole. In 2014, Orbán infamously declared his mission to build an ‘illiberal state’ at Tüsványos, sparking liberal outrage on an international level.⁵⁰

Tüsványos is an interesting example of metapolitical action. It is an informal, quasi-political gathering attended by individuals from across the social spectrum. Guests range from high-level governments officials to university students. The camp’s program includes musical performances and cultural activities, as well as political discussions. Orbán describes Tüsványos

⁴⁸ Béla Greskovits, “Rebuilding the Hungarian right through conquering civil society: the Civic Circles Movement,” *East European Politics* 36, no. 2 (January 2020): 247-266, <https://doi.org/10.1080/21599165.2020.1718657>.

⁴⁹ Andras Bozóki, “Mainstreaming the Far Right. Cultural Politics in Hungary,” *Revue d’études comparatives Est-Ouest* 47, no. 4 (2016): 87-116, <https://doi.org/10.4074/S0338059916004046>.

⁵⁰ Rick Lyman and Alison Smale, “Defying Soviets, Then Pulling Hungary to Putin,” *New York Times*, November 7, 2014, <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/08/world/europe/viktor-orban-steers-hungary-toward-russia-25-years-after-fall-of-the-berlin-wall.html>; Gideon Rachman, “Viktor Orban’s Illiberal World,” *Financial Times*, July 30, 2014, <https://www.ft.com/content/bbdb6b6f-c12a-3b38-95d2-0244260ce753>.

as a “a free university space, where you can speak about politics differently.”⁵¹ He claims that, each year, the event provides an opportunity for audiences to adopt a goal-oriented “mode of thinking” and “synchronize our watches, or rather, to jointly set a direction for our actions.”⁵² Orbán seeks to mold the public’s mode of thinking and acting through Tüskésszentgyörgy.

In the following chapter, Orbán’s strategic narrative will be split into its system, identity, and policy strands. The system strand will outline Orbán’s vision of the shifting world order as it relates to Europe. The identity strand will focus on Orbán’s narrative of European identity, cooperation, and leadership in the world. Finally, the policy strand will delve into the solutions Orbán proposes for Europe in the face of numerous global challenges. In the third chapter, Orbán’s narrative will be reflected on in terms of its resonance with the international theory of the NR. Note: the speech excerpts were translated from Hungarian to English by the author.

⁵¹ Viktor Orbán, “Orbán Viktor beszéde a XXVII. Bálványosi Nyári Szabadegyetem és Diáktáborban” (Viktor Orbán’s speech at the 27th Bálványos Free Summer University and Student Camp), Delivered on July 23, 2016, <http://www.miniszterelnok.hu/orban-viktor-eloadasa-a-xxvii-balvanyosi-nyari-szabadegyetem-es-diaktaborban/>.

⁵² Viktor Orbán, “Orbán Viktor beszéde a XXIV. Bálványosi Nyári Szabadegyetemen és Diáktáborban” (Viktor Orbán’s speech at the 24th Bálványos Free Summer University and Student Camp), Delivered on July 27, 2013, http://2010-2015.miniszterelnok.hu/beszed/a_kormany_nemzeti_gazdasagpolitikat_folytat.

Chapter Two: Orbán's Strategic Narrative

2.1 System

The validity of eternal truths has collapsed. States thought to be strong have become weak. States thought to be weak have become strong. In the Western world, it's clear to see that our old way of life, formed over many decades, is simply unsustainable.⁵³

According to Orbán, the world order is being radically rearranged. This assertion provides the setting for nearly all of his Tüsványos speeches and the strategic narrative of European cooperation derived from them. He sees the current period as one of systemic change resembling those that took place after the 20th century's biggest crises: WWI, WWII, and the Cold War.⁵⁴ The global financial crisis, according to Orbán, has sparked the dawn of a new age in which "Europe, or rather the Western world, our civilization, needs to face the fact that it will regress on the world economic map to where it was 150 years ago."⁵⁵ According to his narrative, the West has rejected its moral foundations and set loose an unhinged form of speculative capitalism that has wreaked havoc on Europe.

While the West is falling, the Rest are rising. The biggest stars in Orbán's narrative are China and India, as well as Singapore, Russia, and Turkey.⁵⁶ He believes that these non-Western countries are taking the global economy by storm and setting the terms of competition in a new geopolitical age. For students of international relations, this should be a familiar story. Since the late 2000s, analysts of global politics have declared that a new world order is upon us.⁵⁷ The rise

⁵³ Viktor Orbán, "Orbán Viktor beszéde a XXII. Bálványosi Nyári Szabadegyetemen és Diáktáborban" (Viktor Orbán's speech at the 22nd Bálványos Free Summer University and Student Camp), Delivered on July 23, 2011, <http://2010-2015.miniszterelnok.hu/beszed/siker-es-allamot-csak-akkor-lehet-felepiteni-ha-eros-nemzet-all-mogotte>.

⁵⁴ Orbán, "XXII"; Viktor Orbán, "Orbán Viktor beszéde a XXV. Bálványosi Nyári Szabadegyetemen és Diáktáborban" (Viktor Orbán's speech at the 25th Bálványos Free Summer University and Student Camp), Delivered on July 28, 2014, <http://2010-2015.miniszterelnok.hu/beszed/a-munkaalapu-allam-korszaka-kovetkezik>.

⁵⁵ Viktor Orbán, "Orbán Viktor beszéde a XXI. Bálványosi Nyári Szabadegyetemen és Diáktáborban" (Viktor Orbán's speech at the 21st Bálványos Free Summer University and Student Camp), Delivered on July 24, 2010, <http://2010-2015.miniszterelnok.hu/beszed/a-nyugati-tipusu-kapitalizmus-kerult-valsagba>.

⁵⁶ Orbán, "XXI"; Orbán, "XXV."

⁵⁷ Daniel W. Drezner, "The New New World Order," *Foreign Affairs* 86, (March/April 2007): 34–46, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2007-03-01/new-new-world-new-world-ordernew-world-order>; Azar Gat, "The Return of Authoritarian Great Powers," *Foreign Affairs* 86, (July/August 2007): 59–70, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/china/2007-07-01/return-authoritarian-great-powers>; Fareed Zakaria, *The Post-American World: And The Rise Of The Rest*, Penguin Books Limited, 2008.

of Brazil, Russia, India and China (the BRICs) has been portrayed by many as a watershed moment in the onset of a more power-diffuse, multipolar world. Orbán speaks to the same story. However, unlike conventional narratives, he praises the superior competitiveness of illiberal states. His argument is that non-Western, illiberal states are proving more capable of managing the human and material flows of a globalized world due to their commitment to cultural integrity and state strength.

Disorder breeds competition in Orbán's narrative world. He believes that power centers are waging a war of position in this moment of global transition. Three clashing powers take center stage in his story: The United States, China, and Russia. Between China and the United States, Orbán favors the former because it "has a fourfold demographic advantage, internal stability, and a technologically advanced and modern economy."⁵⁸ He characterizes the United States as a declining power, which is trying to counter China's advantage by bending the rules of the international game. Orbán depicts Russia, on the other hand, as insecure and misunderstood. The prime minister argues that Russia is constantly seeking a buffer zone due to its historically informed sense of vulnerability.⁵⁹ According to his logic, the conflict in Ukraine is merely Russia's instinctive response to a violation of its sense of security. This story should also be familiar to IR enthusiasts. Orbán's call for a pragmatic, geopolitical approach to Russia resembles those of political realists such as Mearsheimer and Kissinger.⁶⁰ Unlike such accounts, however, Orbán considers Russia to be an enduring great power with fraternal-cultural ties to the West.

⁵⁸ Viktor Orbán, "Orbán Viktor beszéde a XXIX. Bálványosi Nyári Szabadegyetem és Diáktáborban" (Viktor Orbán's speech at the 29th Bálványos Free Summer University and Student Camp), Delivered on July 28, 2018, <http://www.miniszterelnok.hu/orban-viktor-beszede-a-xxix-balvanyosi-nyari-szabadegyetem-es-diaktaborban/>.

⁵⁹ Orbán, "XXIX."

⁶⁰ Henry Kissinger, "To settle the Ukraine crisis, start at the end," *Washington Post*, March 5, 2014, https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/henry-kissinger-to-settle-the-ukraine-crisis-start-at-the-end/2014/03/05/46dad868-a496-11e3-8466-d34c451760b9_story.html; John J. Mearsheimer, "Why the Ukraine Crisis Is the West's Fault: The Liberal Delusions That Provoked Putin," *Foreign Affairs* 93, no. 5 (September/October 2014): 77-89, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24483306>.

According to Orbán, Europe is also being reordered. Western Europe is in a state of decline, in his narrative, while Central Europe is rising with confidence and purpose.⁶¹ His main point of reference, again, is the financial crisis. He claims that Western countries such as Belgium, France, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain, as well as the United States, are buckling under the weight of massive debt.⁶² They are members of an irresponsible and immoral Western bloc, he argues, which is reaping the consequences of an unhinged, consumption-driven approach to economic development. Meanwhile, he contends that the states of Central Europe are managing the crisis responsibly and paving the way for their historic rise. Backed by a rebalanced Germany, Central Europe will be the engine of the European Union's economy in the years to come, according to the prime minister.⁶³

There is one more crucial piece of Orbán's system-level narrative: mass migration. According to his story, North Africa's bastions of stability have fallen, the "defensive line has visibly collapsed, and North Africa can no longer defend Europe from the relentless, massive crowds of people."⁶⁴ He argues that hundreds of millions of immigrants currently threaten the cultural integrity of Europe. In the face of this existential threat, he narrates, three regional powers take center stage: Turkey, Israel, and Egypt. For Orbán, these states represent Europe's last line of defense. The prime minister warns that "if any of these three countries lose their stability, there will be serious security consequences for the whole of Europe."⁶⁵ His guiding argument is that mass migration is the product of liberal universalism and its disregard for cultural, economic, and political boundaries.

⁶¹ Viktor Orbán, "Orbán Viktor beszéde a XXIII. Bálványosi Nyári Szabadegyetemen és Diáktáborban" (Viktor Orbán's speech at the 23rd Bálványos Free Summer University and Student Camp), Delivered on July 28, 2012, http://2010-2015.miniszterelnok.hu/beszed/a_jo_romaniai_dontes_tavolmaradni_az_urnaktol.

⁶² Orbán, "XXII"; Orbán "XXIII."

⁶³ Orbán, "XXIII."

⁶⁴ Viktor Orbán, "Orbán Viktor beszéde a XXVI. Bálványosi Nyári Szabadegyetem és Diáktáborban" (Viktor Orbán's speech at the 26th Bálványos Free Summer University and Student Camp), Delivered on July 25, 2015, http://2010-2015.miniszterelnok.hu/beszed/orban_viktor_eloadasa_a_xxvi_balvanyosi_nyari_szabadegyetem_es_diaktaborban.

⁶⁵ Orbán, "XXIX."

2.2 Identity

Let's look at Europe, think about the fact that Europe was once a great civilization, a world-shaping power center. This was so because it had the courage to think, to act, and because it undertook great things.⁶⁶

Orbán nostalgically refers to Europe as a once-great civilization and world-shaping power. In his narrative, civilizations derive their power from a number of resources. For one, they rely on faith and moral stability.⁶⁷ He argues that people must believe in a civilizational project and build a shared understanding of good vs. bad, a moral order. Orbán claims that Europe has lost both its civilizational drive and its guiding value system. Furthermore, he sees civilizations as spiritual constructs, which rely on four main sources of energy: religion, art, research, and business.⁶⁸ In Orbán's narrative, Europe has rejected its Christian foundations, censored its artistic spirit, fallen behind the United States and China in terms of research, and replaced its business spirit with bureaucracy and regulation.⁶⁹ For Europe to be great again, the prime minister argues that it must revive its civilizational spirit.

Orbán also wields a narrative of the European Union. He depicts the EU as a once-effective alliance that has lost its common sense and capacity to act globally. The EU has become a regional player, he continues, which plays second fiddle to great powers such as the United States and Russia in far-flung places of instability like the Middle East.⁷⁰ In its current state, Orbán claims that the EU's room to maneuver is restricted to its immediate neighborhood. He highlights that the EU has been unable to defend its external borders, its citizens, and its internal integrity in the face of migration, terrorism, and Britain's exit from the community.⁷¹ According to the prime minister, these failures are due to the influence of misguided federalists who seek to construct a United States of Europe.⁷² His key argument is that the EU is composed

⁶⁶ Orbán, "XXIX."

⁶⁷ Orbán, "XXI."

⁶⁸ Orbán, "XXIX."

⁶⁹ Orbán, "XXIX."

⁷⁰ Orbán, "XXVII."

⁷¹ Orbán, "XXVII."

⁷² Orbán, "XXVI."

of distinct nations that cannot be molded together or stepped over through institutional centralization. He believes in a union of strong, unhindered nation-states. This does not mean that he rejects European cooperation outright. He simply believes that a “successful European response will mean the sum of successful national responses.”⁷³

Europe is not singular in Orbán’s narrative; it is split into Western and Central halves. Western Europe is characterized by its immoral, undemocratic, and overindulged history. Central Europe, on the other hand, is defined by its moral, democratic, and battle-hardened experience. Orbán draws the boundary between those (Western) states that were colonizers and those (Central) states that never succumbed to the imperialistic urge.⁷⁴ In his narrative, the immoral identity of Western Europe can be traced throughout the 20th century. A central feature of this identity is fear. He argues that Western Europe was so fearful of nationalism, due to its experience with fascism, that it cooperated with undemocratic forces (the communists) to enable the suppression of the masses in Central Europe.⁷⁵ Orbán claims that, over time, Western Europe developed a political culture based on the following logic: “it’s not popular power that needs to be realized through politics, but the power of values and institutions.”⁷⁶ While conceding that the liberal logic has its appeal, he stresses that the entrenchment of fear-induced politics ultimately generated an unaccountable and unrepresentative system in the West.

Orbán’s Central Europe is a region unburdened by the weight of history. Unlike Western Europe, it does not carry a legacy of empire, moral compromise, or a fear of the masses. Due to its unblemished conscience, narrates Orbán, the region is forward-looking and self-confident. It is composed of freedom-loving nations, which passionately protect their Christian cultures, their borders, their strategic industries and markets, and their national sovereignty.⁷⁷ Central Europe also has “better instincts.”⁷⁸ Orbán explains that Western Europe lived for many years under a

⁷³ Orbán, “XXIV.”

⁷⁴ Orbán, “XXIII.”

⁷⁵ Orbán, “XXIII.”

⁷⁶ Orbán, “XXIII.”

⁷⁷ Orbán, “XXIX.”

⁷⁸ Orbán, “XXIII.”

welfare-based model that was inherently unsustainable. This welfare model, he argues, created the illusion that individual politicians and parties do not matter, that only values and institutions are needed to ensure the integrity of the system.⁷⁹ On the other hand, he claims that Central Europe has always understand the decisive importance of leadership in politics. It never grew accustomed to the illusory good life, nor did it accept the logic of institutions over people, he continues. In Orbán's narrative, Central Europe represents the future of Europe.

2.3 Policy

Europe must figure something out...so that our Christian-rooted civilization can occupy a place on the global economic and military map that offers us security and prosperity.⁸⁰

What must Europe do in a disordered world to regain its rightful role as a great power?

First off, Orbán argues that it must balance between powers and increase its geopolitical capital. Highlighting America's relative decline and wavering commitment to Europe, he claims that Europe needs additional allies. Russia is central in this picture. In his earlier speeches, Orbán argued that Europe needs to forge a system of close cooperation with Russia due to its compatible identity and vast economic resources.⁸¹ Since then, he has toned down his language. He now advocates for a more refined Russia policy on the European level that allows for states to chart their own paths. According to Orbán, the EU is conducting a "primitive Russia policy" driven by sanctions and security threats.⁸² He stresses that while Poland and the Baltic states feel threatened by Russia, other European states have different ideas. Orbán proposes that NATO and the EU provide more sensitive states with special security guarantees while allowing others to cooperate closely with Russia for the sake of economic development.⁸³

⁷⁹ Orbán, "XXIII."

⁸⁰ Orbán, "XXI."

⁸¹ Orbán, "XXI"; Orbán, "XXIII."

⁸² Orbán, "XXIX."

⁸³ Orbán, "XXIX."

Orbán's narrative calls for ambitious EU enlargement. He considers the integration of the Western Balkans to be essential for European security.⁸⁴ Over the past few years, for example, the Hungarian government has repeatedly called on the EU to speed up accession negotiations with Serbia and Montenegro, and to initiate negotiations with Albania and North Macedonia.⁸⁵ Serbia is the "key state" in the region, according to Orbán's narrative, which should be fast-tracked into the European community.⁸⁶ His characterization of Serbia mirrors that of Russia: it is a stable, culturally compatible state with great economic potential. Because of this, he believes that Serbia should be Europe's primary interlocutor in the region. Illustratively, the Hungarian government expended great effort to fill the post of commissioner for neighborhood and enlargement in the recently established European Commission.⁸⁷

Orbán's policy narrative calls on Europe to bolster its defenses. While acknowledging that America's presence in Europe is important and that NATO-level cooperation should be strengthened, the prime minister stresses that this is inadequate in an era of fluctuating power relations.⁸⁸ For several years now, he has been advocating for the creation of a European army.⁸⁹ He also believes that Europe must develop world-class intelligence capabilities, which are "the number one prerequisite for our security."⁹⁰ In terms of external defense, Orbán claims that Europe must fortify its relations with Turkey, Israel, and Egypt.⁹¹ For him, these three countries act as sovereign shields against mass migration and terrorism from the South. Turkey is the most important of the three. Orbán claims that "you can like or dislike the president, you can sympathize or not with the political system, but one thing is clear: we need a stable Turkey,

⁸⁴ Orbán, "XXVIII."

⁸⁵ About Hungary, "Commissioner Várhelyi on EU enlargement: We need to speed up accession for the Western Balkans," <http://abouthungary.hu/eu-enlargement/>.

⁸⁶ Viktor Orbán, "Orbán Viktor beszéde a XXVIII. Bálványosi Nyári Szabadegyetem és Diáktáborban" (Viktor Orbán's speech at the 28th Bálványos Free Summer University and Student Camp), Delivered on July 22, 2017, <http://www.miniszterelnok.hu/orban-viktor-beszede-a-xxviii-balvanyosi-nyari-szabadegyetem-es-diaktaborban/>.

⁸⁷ Deutsche Welle, "Von Der Leyen's European Commission Complete after Final Nominee Accepted," *Deutsche Welle*, May 24, 2020, <https://www.dw.com/en/von-der-leyen's-european-commission-complete-after-final-nominee-accepted/a-51305296>.

⁸⁸ Orbán, "XXVIII."

⁸⁹ Deutsche Welle, "Visegrad Countries Urge EU to Build a Common Army," *Deutsche Welle*, August 26, 2016, <https://www.dw.com/en/visegrad-countries-urge-eu-to-build-a-common-army/a-19507603>.

⁹⁰ Orbán, "XXVII."

⁹¹ Orbán, "XXIX."

which defends us from uncontrolled flows, mass migration.”⁹² He argues that Europe should forge a historic compromise with Turkey that appreciates the country’s role as a major economic, political, and security actor.⁹³

Orbán’s narrative calls on Europe to address the issue of mass migration at its source. He staunchly believes that Europe must stop attempting to export democracy to problematic places such as Libya, Syria, and Iraq.⁹⁴ Europe’s trigger-happy approach to the Middle East, according to the prime minister, has ignored the importance of stability and border integrity. This recklessness, he continues, has left Europe exposed to unregulated migratory waves and the specter of terrorism which haunts them. Instead of exporting democracy, he claims that Europe should export stability. Firstly, it should work to return all illegal immigrants to their rightful homes outside of the European Union.⁹⁵ Secondly, Europe should, according to Orbán, help vulnerable states regain their sovereign capacity, especially as it relates to border controls.⁹⁶

In the prime minister’s eyes, this moment of global systemic change offers Central Europe the chance to play a key role in Europe’s international relations. Orbán argues that the region is best placed to balance between East and West. Central Europe should assume the critical mission, he narrates, of mediating between Europe and Russia to enhance the competitiveness of Western civilization.⁹⁷ He emphasizes, however, that the region must learn from its history and avoid becoming a buffer zone. Orbán also believes that Central Europe should mediate with China and MENA powers. Hungary has hosted several high-level meetings between China and CEE states (e.g. the 17+1 platform) and promoted regional involvement in China’s Belt and Road Initiative. Additionally, under the aegis of the Visegrad 4, Hungary organized prime ministerial-level meetings with Israel and Egypt, two of Orbán’s supposed bastions of stability in the Middle East.

⁹² Orbán, “XXIX.”

⁹³ Orbán, “XXVIII.”

⁹⁴ Orbán, “XXVII.”

⁹⁵ Orbán, “XXVIII.”

⁹⁶ Orbán, “XXVIII.”

⁹⁷ Orbán, “XXI”; Orbán, “XXIII.”

Chapter Three: Resonance with the New Right

An initial reading of Orbán's strategic narrative reveals his basic ideas about the international system and Europe's role in it. On the one hand, he speaks to several mainstream discussions in international relations. Like many analysts, he prophesizes the coming of a new world order based on the rapid economic growth of non-Western powers such as China and India. He promotes a political realist approach to international relations based on cool-headed pragmatism and an appreciation for great power (geo)politics. Like Manners, he reflects on Europe as a normative or moral power that should act in the world according to a set of particular values. Additionally, Orbán talks a good deal about the EU's effectiveness and capacity to act, a popular topic of discussion among EU watchers. Finally, like many onlookers, he reflects on America's wavering commitment to Europe in the context of the rising Rest.

By adopting a different perspective, however, more radical ideas come to light. Namely, Orbán's narrative reflects the international theory of the transnational New Right. Drolet and Williams, Orellana and Michelsen, and Abrahamsen et al. have begun to artfully outline the contours of the NR's ideas about the international realm.⁹⁸ By looking at their works collectively, one can draw out a number of themes, which can be said to structure the New Right's alternative internationalism. Three core themes stand out. Firstly, the NR envisage global politics as a *systemic struggle* between the forces of liberal globalization and conservative traditionalism. Secondly, the NR redefine international relations around the primacy of *birth-cultural identities*. Thirdly, the NR articulate an *illiberal policy agenda* based on cultural geopolitics and the dismantling of liberal institutions, elites, and norms. In the three sections to follow, Orbán's narrative will be reread with these themes in mind.

⁹⁸ Abrahamsen et al., "Confronting the International"; Drolet and Williams, "Radical Conservatism"; Orellana and Michelsen, "Reactionary Internationalism."

3.1 Liberal Globalism vs. Conservative Traditionalism

Abrahamsen et al. contend that the New Right look at international politics through the “prism of an overarching divide between a stratum of national (and increasingly global) elites wielding the power and ethos of managerial liberalism, and those dispersed and embattled forces within and across states that stand against them.”⁹⁹ Inspired by managerial class sociology, first developed in the 1930s, the NR argue that the driving force behind globalization is a growing class of transnational elites or experts.¹⁰⁰ These liberal elites, believe the NR, have harnessed the tools of mass organization and bureaucratic expansion to entrench their social power and managerial rule. Globalization is, for the NR, a process of uprooting power from grounded communities that has left traditional cultures behind and generated politico-economic dislocation and resentment.¹⁰¹ The NR contend that cosmopolitan ideals, international migration and liberal interventionism are interlinked elements of the self-serving logic of managerial liberalism.¹⁰² They believe that all peoples have the right to defend their cultures and traditions in the face of the relentless liberal drive for managerial supremacy.

Orbán’s narrative started bearing the sharper teeth of the NR around 2013/2014. During this time, he moved from criticizing Western immorality and incompetence to challenging liberalism as an elite political project. In his earlier speeches, Orbán focused more heavily on the emerging geopolitical competition between the West and the Rest, as well as the challenges presented by the 2008 financial crisis. His central point was that Western states had abandoned their Christian morals, let speculative capitalism run wild, and set themselves on a path of historic decline.¹⁰³ From 2013 on, his Tüsványos speeches become saturated with critiques of managerial elites, institutions, and the logic of liberalism. Orbán begins to challenge liberalism as a failed ideological project that has been unable to serve the national interest, protect public

⁹⁹ Abrahamsen et al., “Confronting the International,” 99.

¹⁰⁰ Abrahamsen et al., “Confronting the International,” 97.

¹⁰¹ Abrahamsen et al., “Confronting the International,” 98-99.

¹⁰² Abrahamsen et al., “Confronting the International,” 98.

¹⁰³ Orbán, “XXI”; Orbán “XXII.”

wealth, and defend against indebtedness.¹⁰⁴ The global competition between the West and the Rest is increasingly portrayed in his narrative as a systemic struggle between liberal states and illiberal states. He claims that “societies built on the principles of liberal democratic state organization are not likely to maintain their global competitiveness over the decades to come.”¹⁰⁵

His narrative of Europe has also progressively fallen under the divide of liberal globalism vs. conservative traditionalism. In the context of the 2015 migration crisis, especially, Orbán began to paint Europe as a continent split between two warring factions. On the one hand, he narrates, you have the forces that seek to maintain the integrity of European and national cultures.¹⁰⁶ On the other hand, he continues, you have the political Left and Brussels-based interest groups that are interested in taking apart the national framework, undermining nation-state sovereignty, and doing away with national identity.¹⁰⁷ His narrative increasingly pits the liberal managerial elites of Brussels against the inter-national defenders of traditional cultures and bounded nation-states.

For Orbán, instability, mass migration, and financial ruin are the chaotic consequences of liberal ideology. Liberal intervention in the name of democracy promotion, he argues, has generated instability in Iraq, Libya, and Syria, and enabled the unobstructed flow of human masses across borders.¹⁰⁸ Liberal elites, he continues, are trying use this opportunity to replenish Europe’s dwindling workforce with immigrants.¹⁰⁹ Liberal elites and immigrants of incompatible civilizational stock thus form, in his mind, a nexus of rootless interests that have no respect for national continuity or state sovereignty. Orbán’s system-level narrative has, over time, become fixed on an epic struggle between the forces of liberal globalism and conservative traditionalism.

¹⁰⁴ Orbán, “XXV.”

¹⁰⁵ Orbán, “XXV.”

¹⁰⁶ Orbán, “XXVI.”

¹⁰⁷ Orbán, “XXVI.”

¹⁰⁸ Orbán, “XXVII.”

¹⁰⁹ Orbán, “XXVII.”

3.2 The Centrality of Birth-Culture

According to Orellana and Michelsen, the New Right seek to remold international relations around the primacy of particular identities. Drawing on late nineteenth-century French nationalists and 1930s reactionary philosophy, the NR centralize the notion of birth-culture.¹¹⁰ This is the idea that national identities are derived from immutable and primordial cultures, which can only be accessed through birth.¹¹¹ International relations, according to the NR, should revolve around the will of ethno-polities defined by their unchanging birth-cultures. This means both confrontation and cooperation. On the one hand, the NR define liberal international norms and migration as existential threats to the integrity of cultured polities. Yet the NR also “defend a particularist internationalism, which allows for those nations who wish to remember their culture to determine what is right for themselves.”¹¹² This is accompanied by a set of “distinctive civilizational discourses,” which provide a framework for illiberal unity in diversity.¹¹³

The centrality of birth-culture permeates nearly all aspects of Orbán’s strategic narrative. For him, nations are the fundamental building blocks of world order. They are self-sustaining entities, which endow states with strength and purpose.¹¹⁴ The issue of mass migration best reflects what Orbán means by nationality. Immigration is an age-defining challenge, according to him, because it threatens the natural composition of national cultures. For him, “the survival or disappearance of European nations” is currently at stake.¹¹⁵ His idea is that those born elsewhere, in Muslim lands, carry with them an incompatible culture that is corrosive to European identity. He believes that “if people representing different goals find themselves in the same system, country, there won’t be integration, but chaos.”¹¹⁶ Birth thus lies at the heart of his notion of national-cultural identity.

¹¹⁰ Orellana and Michelsen, “Reactionary Internationalism,” 745-755.

¹¹¹ Orellana and Michelsen, “Reactionary Internationalism,” 745-755.

¹¹² Orellana and Michelsen, “Reactionary Internationalism,” 762.

¹¹³ Abrahamsen et al., “Confronting the International,” 102.

¹¹⁴ Orbán, “XXII.”

¹¹⁵ Orbán, “XXVI.”

¹¹⁶ Orbán, “XXIII.”

Birth-culture is also the glue that holds Orbán's idea of Europe together. In his narrative, Europe is more than the EU, more than a political alliance or set of institutions. It is a cultural achievement, a civilization. He claims that Europe, in its optimal civilizational form, is composed of distinct nations linked by their commitment to a set of cultural traditions derived from Christianity.¹¹⁷ For Orbán, the idea of a United States of Europe is an unnatural and unrealistic rejection of the shared birth-cultural foundations of European cooperation.¹¹⁸ He believes that the EU should be a pragmatic, decision-making forum, which serves the collective interests of its ethno-polities, not liberal ideology. For him, "The goal of European culture is that the people born in it live in peace, security, freedom and prosperity, according to their own beliefs and values."¹¹⁹ These indigenous beliefs, according to Orbán, are defined against those of liberals and their agents (immigrants), who are plotting to turn birth-cultural Europe into a "Muslimized Europe."¹²⁰

In Orbán's narrative, Central Europe is a model of birth-cultural integrity and cultural regionalism. Central Europe is a distinct cultural territory, according to the prime minister, which differs from Western Europe.¹²¹ In the face of liberal pressure, he declares that states of the region have the right to defend their Christian cultures, strategically important industries, and borders, and to reject immigration and the ideology of multiculturalism.¹²² Central Europe's "path is that of an alliance of free nations," which believe in life beyond globalization.¹²³ Orbán's imagined Central European paradise is one in which nations are defined by their eternal and undiluted birth cultures. These nations are, in turn, shepherded by strong, sovereign states and their charismatic leaders. He argues that the region represents the future of Europe as a whole.

¹¹⁷ Orbán, "XXI."

¹¹⁸ Orbán, "XXVI."

¹¹⁹ Orbán, "XXIII."

¹²⁰ Orbán, "XXIII."

¹²¹ Orbán, "XXIX."

¹²² Orbán, "XXIX."

¹²³ Orbán, "XXIX."

3.3 Cultural Geopolitics and the Toppling of Liberal Rule

In a setting of systemic struggle, the New Right propose an illiberal policy agenda for the revival of nation-states and civilizations. Firstly, they promote a cultural variation of geopolitics. In the NR's imagined world, ethno-polities should band together and form regional orders on the basis of cultural affinity.¹²⁴ One example of this geopolitical thinking is Alexander Dugin's vision of 'Eurasia.'¹²⁵ He sees conservative traditionalism as a force that can bind Europe and Russia together in the face of globalization and its central engine, the United States. Secondly, the NR seek to bring down the liberal ruling class to liberate nation-states with the promise of unrestricted sovereignty. In this way, the NR borrow from neoliberalism's logic of creative destruction.¹²⁶ They contend that the dismantling of normative and institutional constraints in fields such as trade, migration, and human rights will allow nation-states to engage in productive, free competition.

The key driver of Orbán's narrative of European external action is cultural geopolitics. He argues that Europe should seek allies on the basis of cultural compatibility. Europe must link up with Russia and Serbia, he narrates, because they are Christian powers that can be smoothly integrated into European civilization.¹²⁷ At the same time, Orbán argues that Europe should cooperate with non-Christian countries to ensure cultural separation. Turkey, Egypt and Israel are particularly important in his story because they act as civilizational buffers. He argues that Europe should support the stability of these states so that they can police the boundaries of a threatening Muslim territory. Orbán also believes in culturally motivated international intervention. Over the past few years, Hungary has urged Europe to commit resources to international development efforts targeting external Christian communities.¹²⁸ The government

¹²⁴ Drolet and Williams, "Radical Conservatism," 303.

¹²⁵ Drolet and Williams, "Radical Conservatism," 303-4.

¹²⁶ Orellana and Michelsen, "Reactionary Internationalism," 757.

¹²⁷ Orbán, "XXIII."

¹²⁸ Prime Minister's Office, "Supporting Christian communities is a priority goal," Published on February 20, 2020, <https://www.kormany.hu/en/prime-minister-s-office/news/supporting-christian-communities-is-a-priority-goal>.

has created the ‘Hungary Helps’ program as a vehicle for channeling financial assistance to vulnerable Christian communities in Ethiopia, Nigeria, Iraq, Syria.¹²⁹

Orbán’s narrative revolves around a resounding rejection of liberal managerial politics. He believes that the liberal EU project restricts the ability of nations to properly compete in a globalized environment. On the economic front, Orbán argues that decisive state action prevented the complete collapse of Western markets during the 2008 financial crisis.¹³⁰ He believes that strong states will provide the conditions for economic stability and job creation in the future. In the European context, he declares that states should free themselves from the bureaucratic constraints of Brussels: “we need jobs and we need to implement tax reduction everywhere. We need to dismantle bureaucratic regulations and encourage job creation and investment, rather than the politics of austerity.”¹³¹

On the cultural front, Orbán believes that the EU is ill-equipped to deal with the challenge of mass migration because “it has principles, but it doesn’t have actual sovereignty.”¹³² His idea is that the EU will never possess such independent sovereignty because nation-states are, and should be, the ultimate guardians of sovereign power. Nonetheless, Orbán does not claim that the EU should be abandoned. He sees value in the alliance as a coordinator of national interests, often in the field of defense. However, to become effective once again, he claims that the EU must be transformed through concerted political struggle. In advance of the European Parliamentary elections of 2019, Mr. Orbán asked the Hungarian nation to “demonstrate that there is an alternative to liberal democracy, called Christian democracy, and that the liberal elite can be replaced with a Christian democratic elite.”¹³³ His hope is for a root-and-branch replacement of the liberal European establishment.

¹²⁹ About Hungary, “Hungary Helps,” <http://abouthungary.hu/hungary-helps/>.

¹³⁰ Orbán, “XXI.”

¹³¹ Viktor Orbán, “Orbán Viktor beszéde a XXX. Bálványosi Nyári Szabadegyetem és Diáktáborban” (Viktor Orbán’s speech at the 30th Bálványos Free Summer University and Student Camp), Delivered on July 27, 2019, <http://www.miniszterelnok.hu/orban-viktor-beszede-a-xxx-balvanyosi-nyari-szabadegyetem-es-diaktaborban/>.

¹³² Orbán, “XXVI.”

¹³³ Orbán, “XXIX.”

Conclusion: Christian Power Europe

Orbán projects a strategic narrative of European cooperation and world order that is relatively coherent and, in many ways, internationalist. His narrative engages with several mainstream discussions about international politics. Firstly, it speaks to widespread ideas about a new world order driven by non-Western states such as the BRICs. Secondly, it promotes well-trodden realist ideas about balance-of-power (geo)politics as the optimal basis for European external action. Thirdly, it relates to notions of NPE by defining Europe as a more-than-political, moral project. Finally, it draws on neoliberal ideas about freeing economies from the constraints of bureaucracy to enhance competitiveness and enable development. At the same time, Orbán's narrative contains radical elements. It reflects the international theory of the New Right. His narrative looks at the world through the prism of a systemic struggle between liberal globalism and conservative traditionalism. It promotes the reorientation of international relations around the will of nation-states defined by their birth-cultures. Finally, it promotes an illiberal policy agenda of cultural geopolitics and the dethroning of liberal elites. These narrative layers (Basic and New Right) and their system, identity, and policy components are illustrated in Table One.

The complexity of Orbán's narrative indicates that there is more to the story than nationalism or populism. He connects a string of important events to create a relatively coherent story about global politics that looks very different from the story of democracy vs. dictatorship often circulated by liberal media. It is particularly interesting and concerning that, over time, his basic narrative takes on more and more material from the international theory of the New Right. While starting off from realist geopolitical foundations, it progressively centralizes radical and divisive themes from the NR. The story of the West vs. the Rest is filled with new (Right) meaning. Realist geopolitics are injected with the primacy of birth-culture. The neoliberal logic of creative destructive is fused together with cultural competition. The issue of mass migration, in particular, has allowed Orbán to pit liberal managerial elites against Christian nationalist patriots on existential, civilizational terms.

Bringing the layers of his narrative together, it can be argued that Orbán projects his own vision of Normative Power Europe, albeit with different normative foundations. In a world transitioning from liberal order to something decidedly illiberal, he declares that Europe must assume the mantle of Christian Power Europe (CPE), which acts in the world according to the following core norms: stability, Christian liberty, national democracy, the rule of morality, and respect for sovereignty and cultural traditions. In Orbán's narrative, CPE must link up with other Christian lands, such as Russia and Serbia, to increase its size and competitiveness. It must cooperate with amenable non-Christian states, which can effectively man the borders between civilizations. To enable this, the EU must become a pragmatic project, shorn of its liberal ambitions. It needs to be liberated into an alliance of strong nation-states, inspired by the Central European model, which work to halt migration/terrorism, compete unencumbered in the global economy, and defend against the vagaries of great power competition.

Orbán's strategic narrative, as expressed in his speeches at Tusványos since 2010, indicates that the radical right are neither idealess, nor anti-internationalist. His deployment of mainstream IR concepts contradicts the claim that right-wing populists are aberrant reflections of the past. Additionally, his narrative suggests that the international theory of the New Right is resonating on the level of national politics in Europe. This paper is, obviously, a small-scale graduate assignment that is very limited in its scope and scale. Accordingly, it does not seek to make sweeping claims or establish some type of causal relationship. However, it does suggest that Christian Power Europe is an alternative, right-wing vision of Europe's role in the world. As the radical right continue to make political gains across the continent, it would certainly be valuable to explore the presence and influence of CPE, as well as other right-wing strategic narratives, on a broader level. Should this paper spark scholarly curiosity in this research area, it will have proved successful.

Table One: Orbán's Multi-Level Narrative of Europe in the World

	System	Identity	Policy
Orbán's Basic Narrative	World in disorder – West vs. Rest, multipolarity; Europe in disorder – West vs. Central; Mass migration is a defining threat.	Europe was once a great power, now a regional actor; EU was once an effective alliance, now incompetent; W. Europe is the past–fearful, immoral, unaccountable; C. Europe is the future–confident, moral, accountable.	Realpolitik – balancing between power centers, esp. Russia; Enlargement – EU integration of the Western Balkans; Defense – EU military/intelligence cooperation, supporting stable MENA states, external border management; C. European leadership – mediating East and West.
New Right Reflections	World split – liberal West vs. illiberal Rest; Europe split – rootless Brussels elites vs. national patriots; Liberal chaos reigns – instability, mass migration, terrorism.	Europe can be a powerful Christian civilization; EU can be an alliance of grounded nation-states; C. Europe is a model of cultural integrity.	Cultural geopolitics – integrate Christian territories, support Christian communities, keep others separated; EU transformation – dismantle regulations, ensure nation-state sovereignty, replace liberal elites with illiberal elites.
Synthesis: Christian Power Europe (CPE)	In a messy world in which liberalism is failing, →	Europe must embrace its Christian normative foundations →	and act according to five norms: Stability, Christian liberty, national democracy, the rule of morality, respect for sovereignty and traditions.

Bibliography

- About Hungary. “Commissioner Várhelyi on EU enlargement: We need to speed up accession for the Western Balkans.” <http://abouthungary.hu/eu-enlargement/>.
- About Hungary. “Hungary Helps.” <http://abouthungary.hu/hungary-helps/>.
- Abrahamsen, Rita, Jean-François Drolet, Alexandra Gheciu, Karin Narita, Srdjan Vucetic, and Michael Williams. “Confronting the International Political Sociology of the New Right.” *International Political Sociology* 14, no. 1 (March 1, 2020): 94–107. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ips/olaa001>.
- Ádám, Zoltán and András Bozóki. “State and Faith: Right-wing Populism and Nationalized Religion in Hungary.” *Intersections: East European Journal of Society and Politics* 2, no. 1 (2016): 98–122. <https://www.ceeol.com/search/article-detail?id=443588>.
- Antoniades, Andreas, Alister Miskimmon, and Ben O’Loughlin. “Great Power Politics and Strategic Narratives.” Working Paper No. 7, Centre for Global Political Economy, University of Sussex, 2010. <http://sro.sussex.ac.uk/id/eprint/12302/>.
- Balogh, Péter. “Returning to Eurasia from the heart of Europe? Geographical metanarratives in Hungary and beyond.” In *Beyond Transition? Memory and Identity Narratives in Eastern and Central Europe*, edited by Barbara Törnquist-Plewa, Niklas Bernsand and Eleonora Narvselius, 191–208. Lund University, 2015.
- Balogh, Péter. “The Revival of ‘Central Europe’ among Hungarian Political Elites: Its Meaning and Geopolitical Implications.” *Hungarian Geographical Bulletin* 66, no. 3 (October 5, 2017): 191–202. <https://doi.org/10.15201/hungeobull.66.3.1>.
- Barigazzi, Jacopo. “Orbán, Salvini Flirt with Alliance after EU Election.” *POLITICO*, May 2, 2019. <https://www.politico.eu/article/orban-salvini-flirt-with-alliance-after-eu-election/>.
- Bieber, Florian. “How Europe’s Nationalists Became Internationalists.” *Foreign Policy*, November 30, 2019. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/11/30/how-europes-nationalists-became-internationalists/>.
- Biswas, K. “Opinion | How the Far Right Became Europe’s New Normal.” *New York Times*, February 4, 2020. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/04/opinion/far-right-europe-austria.html>.
- Bozóki, András. “Consolidation or Second Revolution? The Emergence of the New Right in Hungary.” *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics* 24, no. 2 (April 2008): 191–231. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13523270802003046>.
- Bozóki, Andras. “Mainstreaming the Far Right. Cultural Politics in Hungary.” *Revue d’études comparatives Est-Ouest* 47, no. 4 (2016): 87–116. <https://doi.org/10.4074/S0338059916004046>.
- Cabinet Office of the Prime Minister. “Serbia and Hungary must act together to defend their borders.” Published on February 9, 2018. <http://www.miniszterelnok.hu/serbia-and-hungary-must-act-together-to-defend-their-borders/>.

- de Benoist, Alain, and Charles Champetier. "The French New Right in the Year 2000." *Telos*, (Spring 1999): 117-144.
<http://journal.telospress.com/content/1999/115/117.full.pdf+html>.
- de Orellana, Pablo and Nicholas Michelsen. "Reactionary Internationalism: The Philosophy of the New Right." *Review of International Studies* 45, no. 5 (December 2019): 748–67.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210519000159>.
- Dennison, Susi, and Pawel Zerka. "The 2019 European Election: How Anti-Europeans Plan to Wreck Europe and What Can Be Done to Stop It." *European Council on Foreign Relations*, February 2019. https://www.ecfr.eu/specials/scorecard/the_2019_European_election.
- Deutsche Welle. "Von Der Leyen's European Commission Complete after Final Nominee Accepted." *Deutsche Welle*, May 24, 2020. <https://www.dw.com/en/von-der-leyen-s-european-commission-complete-after-final-nominee-accepted/a-51305296>.
- Deutsche Welle. "Visegrad Countries Urge EU to Build a Common Army." *Deutsche Welle*, August 26, 2016. <https://www.dw.com/en/visegrad-countries-urge-eu-to-build-a-common-army/a-19507603>.
- Drezner, Daniel W. "The New New World Order." *Foreign Affairs* 86, (March/April 2007): 34–46. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2007-03-01/new-new-world-new-world-ordernew-world-order>.
- Drolet, Jean-François and Michael C. Williams. "Radical Conservatism and Global Order: International Theory and the New Right." *International Theory* 10, no. 3 (November 2018): 285–313. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S175297191800012X>.
- Enyedi, Zsolt. "Paternalist Populism and Illiberal Elitism in Central Europe." *Journal of Political Ideologies* 21, no. 1 (January 2, 2016): 9–25.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13569317.2016.1105402>.
- Escartin, Adria` Rivera. "Populist challenges to EU foreign policy in the Southern Neighbourhood: an informal and illiberal Europeanisation?" *Journal of European Public Policy*, (2020): 1-20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2020.1712459>
- Ferenczy, Zsuzsa Anna. "Green Power? European Normative Influence on Chinese Environmental Policy." *Australian and New Zealand Journal of European Studies* 11, no. 1 (May 2019): 18-40. https://cesaa.org.au/_content/uploads/2019/05/Zsuzsa-Anna-Ferenczy.pdf.
- Gat, Azar. "The Return of Authoritarian Great Powers." *Foreign Affairs* 86, (July/August 2007): 59–70. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/china/2007-07-01/return-authoritarian-great-powers>.
- Grabbe, Heather and Stefan Lehne. "Can the EU Survive Populism?" *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, June 14, 2016. <https://carnegieeurope.eu/2016/06/14/can-eu-survive-populism-pub-63804>.
- Grabbe, Heather and Stefan Lehne. "Could an Illiberal Europe Work?" *Carnegie Endowment for*

- International Peace*, October 11, 2018. <https://carnegieeurope.eu/2018/10/11/could-illiberal-europe-work-pub-77463>.
- Greskovits, Béla. "Rebuilding the Hungarian right through conquering civil society: the Civic Circles Movement." *East European Politics* 36, no. 2 (January 2020): 247-266. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21599165.2020.1718657>.
- Gramsci, Antonio. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. Translated by Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith. New York: International Publishers, 1971.
- Kagan, Robert. "The strongmen strike back." *Washington Post*, March 24, 2019. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/opinions/wp/2019/03/14/feature/the-strongmen-strike-back/>.
- Kingsley, Patrick. "As West Fears the Rise of Autocrats, Hungary Shows What's Possible." *New York Times*, February 10, 2018. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/10/world/europe/hungary-orban-democracy-far-right.html>.
- Kissinger, Henry. "To settle the Ukraine crisis, start at the end." *Washington Post*, March 5, 2014. https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/henry-kissinger-to-settle-the-ukraine-crisis-start-at-the-end/2014/03/05/46dad868-a496-11e3-8466-d34c451760b9_story.html.
- Klasa, Adrienne, Valerie Hopkins, Guy Chazan, Henry Foy, and Miles Johnson. "Russia's Long Arm Reaches to the Right in Europe" *Financial Times*, May 23, 2019. <https://www.ft.com/content/48c4bfa6-7ca2-11e9-81d2-f785092ab560>.
- Korkut, Umut. "Resentment and Reorganization: Anti-Western Discourse and the Making of Eurasianism in Hungary." *Acta Slavica Iaponica* 38, (2017): 71-90. <https://www.cceol.com/search/article-detail?id=587217>.
- Krastev, Ivan, and Stephen Holmes. "Explaining Eastern Europe: Imitation and Its Discontents." *Journal of Democracy* 29, no. 3 (July 2018): 117-128. doi:10.1353/jod.2018.0049.
- Lyman, Rick and Alison Smale. "Defying Soviets, Then Pulling Hungary to Putin." *New York Times*, November 7, 2014. <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/08/world/europe/viktor-orban-steers-hungary-toward-russia-25-years-after-fall-of-the-berlin-wall.html>.
- Manners, Ian. "Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?" *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* 40, no. 2 (2002): 235-58. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-5965.00353>.
- Mearsheimer, John J. "Why the Ukraine Crisis Is the West's Fault: The Liberal Delusions That Provoked Putin." *Foreign Affairs* 93, no. 5 (September/October 2014): 77-89. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24483306>.
- Miskimmon, Alister, Ben O'Loughlin, and Laura Roselle, ed., *Forging the World: Strategic Narratives and International Relations*. University of Michigan Press, 2017.

- Miskimmon, Alister, Ben O'Loughlin, and Laura Roselle. *Strategic Narratives: Communication Power and the New World Order*. New York: Routledge, 2013.
- Miskimmon, Alister, and Ben O'Loughlin. "Russia's Narratives of Global Order: Great Power Legacies in a Polycentric World." *Politics and Governance* 5, no. 3 (2017): 111–20. <https://doi.org/10.17645/pag.v5i3.1017>.
- Mudde, Cas. *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- Mudde, Cas. "The Far Right May Not Have Cleaned up, but Its Influence Now Dominates Europe." *Guardian*, May 28, 2019. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/may/28/far-right-european-elections-eu-politics>.
- Oltermann, Philip. "Can Europe's New Xenophobes Reshape the Continent?" *Observer*, February 3, 2018. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/feb/03/europe-xenophobes-continent-poland-hungary-austria-nationalism-migrants>.
- Orbán, Viktor. "Orbán Viktor beszéde a XXI. Bálványosi Nyári Szabadegyetemen és Diáktáborban" (Viktor Orbán's speech at the 21st Bálványos Free Summer University and Student Camp). Delivered on July 24, 2010. http://2010-2015.miniszterelnok.hu/beszed/a_nyugati_tipusu_kapitalizmus_kerult_valsagba.
- Orbán, Viktor. "Orbán Viktor beszéde a XXII. Bálványosi Nyári Szabadegyetemen és Diáktáborban" (Viktor Orbán's speech at the 22nd Bálványos Free Summer University and Student Camp). Delivered on July 23, 2011. http://2010-2015.miniszterelnok.hu/beszed/sikeres_allamot_csak_akkor_lehet_felepiteni_ha_eros_nemzet_all_mogotte.
- Orbán, Viktor. "Orbán Viktor beszéde a XXIII. Bálványosi Nyári Szabadegyetemen és Diáktáborban" (Viktor Orbán's speech at the 23rd Bálványos Free Summer University and Student Camp). Delivered on July 28, 2012. http://2010-2015.miniszterelnok.hu/beszed/a_jo_romaniai_dontes_tavolmaradni_az_urnaktol.
- Orbán, Viktor. "Orbán Viktor beszéde a XXIV. Bálványosi Nyári Szabadegyetemen és Diáktáborban" (Viktor Orbán's speech at the 24th Bálványos Free Summer University and Student Camp). Delivered on July 27, 2013. http://2010-2015.miniszterelnok.hu/beszed/a_kormany_nemzeti_gazdasagpolitikat_folytat.
- Orbán, Viktor. "Orbán Viktor beszéde a XXV. Bálványosi Nyári Szabadegyetem és Diáktáborban" (Viktor Orbán's speech at the 25th Bálványos Free Summer University and Student Camp). Delivered on July 28, 2014. http://2010-2015.miniszterelnok.hu/beszed/a_munkaalapu_allam_korszaka_kovetkezik.
- Orbán, Viktor. "Orbán Viktor beszéde a XXVI. Bálványosi Nyári Szabadegyetem és Diáktáborban" (Viktor Orbán's speech at the 26th Bálványos Free Summer University and Student Camp). Delivered on July 25, 2015. http://2010-2015.miniszterelnok.hu/beszed/orban_viktor_eloadasa_a_xxvi._balvanyosi_nyari_szabadegyetem_es_diaktaborban.
- Orbán, Viktor. "Orbán Viktor beszéde a XXVII. Bálványosi Nyári Szabadegyetem és

- Diáktáborban” (Viktor Orbán’s speech at the 27th Bálványos Free Summer University and Student Camp). Delivered on July 23, 2016. <http://www.miniszterelnok.hu/orban-viktor-cloadasa-a-xxvii-balvanyosi-nyari-szabadegyetem-es-diaktaborban/>.
- Orbán, Viktor. “Orbán Viktor beszéde a XXVIII. Bálványosi Nyári Szabadegyetem és Diáktáborban” (Viktor Orbán’s speech at the 28th Bálványos Free Summer University and Student Camp). Delivered on July 22, 2017. <http://www.miniszterelnok.hu/orban-viktor-beszede-a-xxviii-balvanyosi-nyari-szabadegyetem-es-diaktaborban/>.
- Orbán, Viktor. “Orbán Viktor beszéde a XXIX. Bálványosi Nyári Szabadegyetem és Diáktáborban” (Viktor Orbán’s speech at the 29th Bálványos Free Summer University and Student Camp). Delivered on July 28, 2018. <http://www.miniszterelnok.hu/orban-viktor-beszede-a-xxix-balvanyosi-nyari-szabadegyetem-es-diaktaborban/>.
- Orbán, Viktor. “Orbán Viktor beszéde a XXX. Bálványosi Nyári Szabadegyetem és Diáktáborban” (Viktor Orbán’s speech at the 30th Bálványos Free Summer University and Student Camp). Delivered on July 27, 2019. <http://www.miniszterelnok.hu/orban-viktor-beszede-a-xxx-balvanyosi-nyari-szabadegyetem-es-diaktaborban/>.
- Orbán, Viktor. “Társadalmi önszerveződés mozgalom a politikai rendszerben (a lengyel példa)” (Social movement for self-organization in a political system, the Polish example). Budapest: ELTE, Accessed May 24, 2020. <http://2010-2015.miniszterelnok.hu/attachment/0017/szakdolgozat.pdf>.
- Palonen, Emilia. “Performing the Nation: The Janus-Faced Populist Foundations of Illiberalism in Hungary.” *Journal of Contemporary European Studies* 26, no. 3 (July 3, 2018): 308–21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14782804.2018.1498776>.
- Prime Minister’s Office. “Supporting Christian communities is a priority goal.” Published on February 20, 2020. <https://www.kormany.hu/en/prime-minister-s-office/news/supporting-christian-communities-is-a-priority-goal>.
- Rachman, Gideon. “Viktor Orban’s Illiberal World.” *Financial Times*, July 30, 2014. <https://www.ft.com/content/bbdb6b6f-c12a-3b38-95d2-0244260ce753>.
- Söderbaum, Fredrik, Agnese Pacciardi and Kilian Spandler. “Contestations of the Liberal International Order: A Populist Script of Regional Cooperation.” Paper for the GGS Annual Conference, (December 2019): 1-37. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/337772345_Contestations_of_the_Liberal_International_Order_A_Populist_Script_of_Regional_Cooperation.
- Tjälve, Vibeke Schou and Minda Holm. “Visions of an Illiberal World Order? The National Right in Europe, Russia and the US.” *Norwegian Institute of International Affairs*, November 2018. <https://nupi.brage.unit.no/nupi-xmlui/handle/11250/2571158>.
- Verbeek, Bertjan and Andrej Zaslove. “The Impact of Populist Radical Right Parties on Foreign Policy: The Northern League as a Junior Coalition Partner in the Berlusconi Governments.” *European Political Science Review* 7, no. 4 (November 2015): 525–46. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1755773914000319>.
- Wagener, Volker. “Opinion: Orban Remains Leader of the Intractable Eastern EU.” *Deutsche*

Welle, April 9, 2018. <https://www.dw.com/en/opinion-orban-remains-leader-of-the-intractable-eastern-eu/a-43302889>.

Wagnsson, Charlotte and Maria Hellman. "Normative Power Europe Caving In? EU under Pressure of Russian Information Warfare." *Journal of Common Market Studies* 56, no. 5 (July 2018): 1161-1177. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.12726>.

Waterbury, Myra A. "Populist Nationalism and the Challenges of Divided Nationhood: The Politics of Migration, Mobility, and Demography in Post-2010 Hungary." *East European Politics and Societies*, (January 2020). <https://doi.org/10.1177/0888325419897772>.

Zakaria, Fareed. *The Post-American World: And The Rise Of The Rest*. Penguin Books Limited, 2008.

Zerofsky, Elisabeth. "Viktor Orbán's Far-Right Vision for Europe." *New Yorker*, January 7, 2019. <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2019/01/14/viktor-orbans-far-right-vision-for-europe>.