

Leadership Matters: A Content Analysis of Israel-Hungary Relations (2017-2021)

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Abstract

Although formal diplomatic relations exist between Israel and Hungary since 1990s, there has been a recent attempt in cementing ties and fostering a strong bilateral cooperation. Especially with Benjamin Netanyahu's meeting with Viktor Orban in 2017, relations have taken on a new shape. Putting the influence of rising populism trend in global politics by aside, this study argues that leadership traits and mindsets have become another factor that led to this phenomenon, by which a good personal relationship between the two leaders have also emerged. In this study, such influence of leadership and similarities within this framework is examined through a content analysis of Netanyahu and Orban's speeches in the period between 2017 and 2021. As a qualitative approach is applied to the analysis, a quantitative analysis are also made for the sample speeches. Results from both analyses demonstrate that Netanyahu and Orban had similar leadership mindsets and traits in international politics, which allowed them to get closer and form a strong cooperation between Israel and Hungary within the last five years.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Relations between Israel and Hungary are rising in the last couple of years. Since restoration of diplomatic relations in the aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union, two countries have enjoyed good relations that cropped a strategic partnership. Relations have gained a different shape right after Benjamin Netanyahu met Viktor Orban in 2017 and became the first Israeli prime minister who visited Budapest since the formation of diplomatic relations. From this visit onwards, development of bilateral relations has further accelerated and contacts between the two states have intensified.

As a commonality, both sides are also having tensions with the European Union (EU). While Orban aims to undermine the EU's influence over Hungary's affairs and seeks external support for holding firm against Brussels, Israel, on the other side, sees Hungary as a strategic partner for consolidating its political position in the European theatre, particularly in efforts to weaken the pressure from the EU on the Palestinian issue.¹ Despite Orban had anti-Semitic statements against George Soros and the anti-semitic incidents are getting widespread in Hungary, Netanyahu-led Israel does not seem bothered to reconsider these relations and joins his Hungarian counterpart on his views about Soros.

Two leaders have a lot of commonalities regarding their domestic political constituencies as well. For instance, they are both categorized as populist leaders in the international media.² Both leaders are the longest-serving prime ministers of their countries. Both Netanyahu and Orban came

¹ Bálint Molnár, 'Israel and the Visegrád (V4) Group: Challenges and Opportunities', *Israel Journal of Foreign Affairs*, 19 July 2019, 1–19.

² Daniel Estrin, 'Israel's Netanyahu Embraces Populist Allies, Driving Opposition At Home', *NPR.Org*, accessed 4 May 2021, <https://www.npr.org/2019/04/07/710867480/israels-netanyahu-embraces-populist-allies-driving-opposition-at-home>, Joshua Brilliant, 'Israel's Uneasy Partnership with Central Europe's Populists Stirs Debate | Voice of America - English', accessed 4 May 2021, <https://www.voanews.com/middle-east/israels-uneasy-partnership-central-europes-populists-stirs-debate>, Edward Luce, 'Trump and Netanyahu's Global League of Populists', 30 January 2020, <https://www.ft.com/content/a6e6186a-4307-11ea-abea-0c7a29cd66fe>.

to power twice and once served as main opposition party leaders in national parliaments until they were re-elected in 2009 and 2010 consecutively. They are also leaders of right-wing parties of their countries and keep engaging with far-right political networks. Last but not least, Netanyahu and Orban are both skillful orators.

However, these commonalities in domestic and foreign policy agendas of the two leaders are understudied. I believe it is imperative to examine the personal side of the diplomatic ties for two reasons. First, this personal side is not something born out of good diplomatic relations but rather it enabled the increasingly growing cooperation between the two states. Namely, it was not an outcome but rather a reason for Israel-Hungary cooperation in the last years. Second, the rising influence of populism and illiberal democracies, especially after Donald Trump's election in the United States in 2016, brought the leaders and leadership question into the debate. For these reasons, this study will investigate each leader's profile through the lenses of several concepts that are relevant to leadership personalities and leadership style. In this effort, concepts like "distrusting others" and "need for affiliation" will be applied.

CHAPTER 2: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Hungarian Jewry has played a prominent role in the history of Israel-Hungary relations, which goes back to the middle of the 19th century. As known, Theodor Herzl, leading figure of the Zionist movement in the 19th century was born in Budapest,³ and the movement exerted to spread among the Hungarian Jews.⁴ After the Hungarian Jewry going through a suffering process of the First and Second World War, together with the Holocaust and the eroded number of Jewish demographics in the country, Hungary recognized the newly established State of Israel in 1949.⁵

Relations between the two states had an undulate nature since when Hungary joined the Soviet bloc to sever diplomatic relations with Israel following the Six-Day War in 1967. Until Hungary became the first country in the Soviet Bloc to renew diplomatic relations with Israel in 1989, two countries maintained their trade relations.⁶ Despite this positive rise in the mood after the re-establishment of diplomatic ties, bilateral relations between the two states have been stable until the second half of the 2010s. In this term, Israel perceived Hungary not just from the Eastern Europe but also as part of the “Balkans”⁷ which proceeded by a leap on investments in 2005, especially after Hungary became a member of the EU.⁸

³ Raphael Patai, *The Jews of Hungary: History, Culture, Psychology*. (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2015), p.300.

⁴ Isaiah Friedman, ‘The Austro-Hungarian Government and Zionism: 1897-1918’, *Jewish Social Studies* 27, no. 3 (1965): 147–67, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4466181>.

⁵ ‘2005 שנתון המסמכים הרשמיים (Yearbook of the Official Documents - 2005)’ (Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2005), https://mfa.gov.il/MFAHEB/ForeignRelations/Documents/shnaton_2005.pdf.

⁶ For a detailed background of these clandestine relations, please see: Yosef Govrin, ‘Milestones in Israel’s Relations with East-Central Europe and the Soviet Union: A Timeline’, *Israel Journal of Foreign Affairs* 12, no. 2 (4 May 2018): 209–28.

⁷ ‘ישראל מרחיבה קשריה בבלקאן ביקור סגן שר החוץ נוארף מסאלחה באלבניה, בוסניה-הרצגובינה והונגריה’ (Israel expands its ties in the Balkans: Deputy Foreign Minister Nawaf Masalha visits Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Hungary), accessed 20 April 2021, <https://mfa.gov.il/MFAHEB/PressRoom/Spokesman/2000/Pages/masalha3.aspx>.

⁸ ‘ראיון עם שר החוץ סילבן שלום – הביקור בהונגריה’ (Interview with Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom - Hungary Visit), accessed 20 April 2021, <https://mfa.gov.il/MFAHEB/PressRoom/Speeches/Pages/Silvan%20interview%20-%20Hungary%2010305.aspx>.

With the appointment of Avigdor Lieberman, a right-wing nationalist politician with a Soviet background as foreign minister in 2009, engagements have intensified, and political aspect of bilateral relations have begun to appear more. For instance, Hungary voted against the adoption of resolutions based on the Goldstone report on war crimes in 2008 Israeli operations in Gaza⁹ and officials from the two states gathered on the occasion of the International Holocaust Remembrance Day.¹⁰ Another interesting development during this term was that in his 2010 visit to Budapest, Lieberman also met with Viktor Orban, leader of the opposition at that time, along with the Hungarian officials.¹¹ This anecdote reveals how Israel-Hungary relations cannot be considered without Orban, whose first term as PM (1998-2002) also harbored initial stages of developing ties between the two states.

Before the historic visit of Netanyahu to Budapest in 2017, it can be said that the preceding years witnessed Israel's attempts to develop relations with Hungary apart from the EU framework. Yet, these relations were also shadowed with several occasions in terms of rising anti-Semitism in Hungary, which also led to tensions. In this regard, Hungarian Ambassador to Israel even summoned to the Israeli Foreign Ministry based on "deep concern over a series of antisemitic incidents and harsh statements in the Hungarian political arena" in 2014,¹² erection of a former

⁹ 'Report of UN Fact-Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict - GA Debate - Press Release', *Question of Palestine*, accessed 20 April 2021, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-201780/>.

¹⁰ פגישת שר החוץ ליברמן עם ראש ממשלת הונגריה, גורדון ביינאי, בבודפשט (Foreign Minister Lieberman Meets with Hungarian Prime Minister Gordon Bejnai in Budapest)', accessed 20 April 2021, https://mfa.gov.il/MFAHEB/PressRoom/Spokesman/2010/Pages/Fm_Liberman_mets_with_Hungarian_PM_270110.aspx.

¹¹ שר החוץ ליברמן יוצא לביקור בהונגריה (Foreign Minister Lieberman Visits Hungary)', accessed 20 April 2021, https://mfa.gov.il/MFAHEB/PressRoom/Spokesman/2010/Pages/FM_Lieberman_Hungary_250110.aspx.

¹² 'שגריר הונגריה זומן לשיחה במשרד החוץ' (The Hungarian Ambassador Was Summoned to the Foreign Ministry)', accessed 20 April 2021, https://mfa.gov.il/MFAHEB/PressRoom/Spokesman/2014/Pages/Hungarian_ambassador_summoned_to_Foreign_Ministry_130214.aspx.

Hungarian politician who was known with his anti-Semitic views,¹³ and a Hungarian mayor's claim that Israel was behind the 2015 terrorist attacks in Paris.¹⁴

Unlike the strong role of the Hungarian Jews in shaping bilateral relations, their emigration to Israel was not a significant matter at all. Once almost 1.000.000 Jews were living in Hungary at the beginning of the 20th century,¹⁵ atrocities in the WWI and the Holocaust in the WWII dramatically eroded the Hungarian Jewry and the Jewish population of Hungary remained at only 70,000 when Israel-Hungary relations were restored in 1989.¹⁶ Following the fall of the communist regime, Hungarian Jews were enthusiastic for emigration to Israel based on the fact that there is a freedom of movement together with the work of the flourishing Jewish youth organizations.¹⁷ However, compared to the Russian or Ukrainian Jews, the emigration of Hungarian Jews remained limited, which hardly exceeded 3,800.¹⁸

¹³ Hungary: Protesters prevent inauguration of the statue of an anti-Semite', *ynet*, 24 February 2016, <https://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-4770479,00.html>.

¹⁴ Hungarian mayor: "Israel is behind terrorist attacks in Paris"', *ynet*, 30 November 2015, <https://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-4733018,00.html>.

¹⁵ György Haraszti, 2010. Hungary: Hungary from 1918 to 1945. YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe.

¹⁶ András Kovács, 'Jews and Jewry in Contemporary Hungary: Results of a Sociological Survey', 2004.

¹⁷ Ráchel Surányi, 'The Complexity Inherent in Researching Migrant Identification: The Case of Hungarian Jews in Israel', *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism* 20, no. 1 (2020): 25–50.

¹⁸ Ibid.

CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1. Leadership in International Relations

Young defines leadership as the actions of individuals that endeavor to solve or avoid the collective action problems that hinder the efforts of setting common gains during bargaining processes.¹⁹ Unlike this problem-solving centered approach, Underdal is opt for a more hierarchical and influence-based approach “where one actor guides or directs the behavior of others towards a certain goal over a certain period of time.”²⁰ Leadership varies based on the agenda-setting and the negotiating phases of the process and they can also be various within these sub-definitions such as power-based, directional, and entrepreneurial.¹⁹

When it comes to look at leadership in politics, the difference between transactional and transformational leadership matters. According to Burns, the former kind of leadership is more rationality-oriented. As leaders approach followers with an eye to exchanging one thing to another, namely jobs for votes, or subsidies for campaign contributions, it is also responsive to citizens’ needs and wants.²¹ In contrast, the latter is responsive even to their followers’ unarticulated needs and aspirations as an attempt to shape public preferences and change the existing system. It occurs when “one or more persons engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to [a] higher level of motivation and morality.”²²

Although psychologies of agents in decision making processes are studied in foreign policy analysis, leaders, as agents and individuals, have long been dismissed in studying international

¹⁹ Oran R. Young, ‘Political Leadership and Regime Formation: On the Development of Institutions in International Society’, *International Organization* 45, no. 3 (ed 1991): 281–308.

²⁰ Arild Underdal, ‘Solving Collective Problems: Notes on Three Modes of Leadership’, in *Challenges of a Changing World: Festschrift to Willy Østreng on His 50th Birthday* (Norway: Fridtjof Nansen Institute, 1991).

²¹ James MacGregor Burns, *Leadership* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978), p.4.

²² *Ibid.*

relations. In this dismissed aspect, there is a great share of structural explanations which have dominated the theory field. Even though leaders were not completely neglected by scholars from neo-realist, neo-liberal and system-level constructivist tradition,²³ “foreign policy is typically seen as a product of international forces faced by states and their leaders,” by these approaches which have minimized the role of agency in international politics.²⁴

According to Byman and Pollack, systematic approaches were inaccurate in claims such as human nature is constant and individual-centric approaches cannot be parsimonious, and for these reasons, by examining political leaders like Hitler, Bismarck and Napoleon, they assert that “individuals play a central role in shaping international relations, including the causes of war, alliance patterns, and other areas.”²⁵ As a similar effort, Horowitz et al. investigated the relationship between leadership and the likelihood of interstate conflicts by examining dyads between 1875 and 2002.²⁶ Nevertheless, these analyses that aim to configure the role of individuals and leaders, still disregards other occasions outside of a realist framework due to their sole focus on the causes of war and conflict.

²³ For system-level approaches to leadership, please see: Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1979); Robert O. Keohane and Joseph Nye, *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1977); Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink (1998) ‘Norm Dynamics International and Political Change,’ *International Organization* 52 (4) (1998), pp. 887–917; Peter Katzenstein, (Ed.) *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996); Ted Hopf, *Social Construction of International Politics: Identities and Foreign Policy, Moscow, 1955 and 1999* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002);

²⁴ Juliet Kaarbo, ‘Personality and International Politics: Insights from Existing Research and Directions for the Future’, *European Review of International Studies* 4, no. 2+3 (2017): 20–38, p.22.

²⁵ Daniel L. Byman and Kenneth M. Pollack, ‘Let Us Now Praise Great Men: Bringing the Statesman Back In’, *International Security* 25, no. 4 (2001): 107–46, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3092135>.

²⁶ Michael Horowitz, Rose McDermott, and Allan C. Stam, ‘Leader Age, Regime Type, and Violent International Relations’, *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 49, no. 5 (2005): 661–85.

Post-Cold War international politics increased the capacity of leaders of states in foreign policy,²⁷ and new approaches were developed based on the idea that political leaders and personalities, can be an intervening variable in foreign policies, particularly facilitating dialogue or showing discontent.²⁸ In this regard, studies based on a political psychology approach are significant. Some scholars in this approach focus on how various personality structures in leaders can affect their usage of political influence in distinct ways, especially in foreign policy, by providing typologies or ideal types.²⁹

Among these scholars, Hermann is also known with her developing Leadership Trait Analysis (LTA), in order to explore how several personalities' traits, explain leaders' foreign policy preferences. For Hermann, leaders' choices of certain words reflect their personalities, and the real issue is "what percentage of the time in responding to interviewers' questions when leaders could exhibit particular words and phrases are they, indeed, used."³⁰ In LTA, leadership traits such as belief in ability control events, conceptual complexity, distrust of others, in-group bias, need for

²⁷ For example, Juliet Kaarbo, 'Prime Minister Leadership Styles in Foreign Policy Decision-Making: A Framework for Research', *Political Psychology* 18, no. 3 (1997): 553–81; Gianfranco Pasquino, 'The Five Faces of Silvio Berlusconi: The Knight of Anti-Politics', *Modern Italy* 12, no. 1 (February 2007): 39–54.

²⁸ Giampiero Giacomello, Federica Ferrari, and Alessandro Amadori, 'With Friends like These: Foreign Policy as Personal Relationship', *Contemporary Politics* 15, no. 2 (2009): 247–64, p.248.

²⁹ For example; Margaret Hermann, 'The Role of Leaders and Leadership in the Making of American Foreign Policy', in *The Domestic Sources of American Foreign Policy: Insights and Evidence*, ed. Charles W. Kegley and Eugene R. Wittkopf (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988); Margaret G. Hermann and Charles W. Kegley, 'Rethinking Democracy and International Peace: Perspectives from Political Psychology', *International Studies Quarterly* 39, no. 4 (1995): 511–33.; Margaret G. Hermann and Joe D. Hagan, 'International Decision Making: Leadership Matters', *Foreign Policy*, No. 110 Spring 1998: 124–137, 1998.; Margaret G. Hermann et al., 'Who Leads Matters: The Effects of Powerful Individuals', *International Studies Review* 3, no. 2 (1 June 2001): 83–131.; Margaret Hermann, 'Personality and Foreign Policymaking: A Study of 53 Heads of Government', in *Foreign Policy Decision Making: Perception, Cognition, and Artificial Intelligence*, ed. Donald A. Sylvan and Steve Chan (Praeger, 1984).

³⁰ Margaret G. Hermann, 'Assessing Leadership Style: A Trait Analysis', in *The Psychological Assessment of Political Leaders: With Profiles of Saddam Hussein and Bill Clinton*, ed. Jerrold M. Post (University of Michigan Press, 2005), 178–212.

power, self-confidence and task focus are calculated according to a coding scheme within a comparison of discourses among different leaders.³¹

When it comes to studies based on this approach, several works were published which included US presidents, European Prime Ministers, Soviet politburo members, Iranian, Israeli and Turkish leaders, as well as heads of international organizations such as the United Nations and the European Union.³² Besides, Kaarbo (1997) indicates that prime ministers as the leaders of parliamentary systems might differ from the presidents and presidential system leaders.

Despite all these studies that take leaders of Western democracies as case-studies on the one side and some other that studies authoritarian leaders on the other side (Korany, 1986) (Gunther, 1988), leaders of the states which are ruled with a system in between of two margins are not taken into consideration. However, though they have experienced a turn in which they also looked at agents and decision-making processes, analysis of leaders and leadership styles as a method of studying international relations is still relatively understudied.

3.2. Methodology

This project will implement content analysis method for analysis. When it comes to usage of content analysis in international relations, it involves developing “a set of procedures to make

³¹ Barış Kesgin, ‘Leadership Traits of Turkey’s Islamist and Secular Prime Ministers’, *Turkish Studies* 14, no. 1 (2013): 136–57.

³² For example: Scott Crichlow, ‘Idealism or Pragmatism? An Operational Code Analysis of Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres,’ *Political Psychology* 19(4) (1998): 683–706. Dyson, 2006 op. cit.; Kille and Scully op. cit.; Elena Mastors, ‘Gerry Adams and the Northern Ireland Peace Process,’ *Political Psychology* 21 (2000), pp. 839–846; Thomas Preston, *The President and his Inner Circle: Leadership Style and the Advisory Process in Foreign Affairs* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001); Femke Van Esch and Marij Swinkels, ‘How Europe’s Political Leaders Made Sense of the Euro Crisis: The Influence of Pressure and Personality,’ *West European Politics* 38(6) (2015), pp. 1203–1225; Klaus Brummer, ‘“Fiasco Prime Ministers”: Leaders’ Beliefs and Personality Traits as Possible Causes for Policy Fiascos,’ *Journal of European Public Policy* 23(5) (2016), pp. 702–717. Stephen Benedict Dyson and Libia Lorena Billordo, ‘Using Words as Data in the Study of the French Political Elite’, *Fr Polit French Politics* 2, no. 1 (2004): 111–23., Stephen Benedict Dyson, ‘“Stuff Happens”: Donald Rumsfeld and the Iraq War’, *Foreign Policy Analysis* 5, no. 4 (2009): 327–47., Stephen Benedict Dyson, *The Blair Identity Leadership and Foreign Policy* (Manchester; New York: Manchester University Press, 2009).

inferences from text.”³³ It is a method that systematically analyzes the content of communication through forms of oral and visual communication such as articles, websites, diaries, speeches, letters, interviews or even visual materials for the purpose of revealing manifest or latent inferences from the material.³⁴ For Kracauer, this division in inferences is also related to the method of content analysis, based on whether conducted through qualitative or quantitative methods. While quantitative methods are better for revealing manifest inferences, qualitative method is more suitable for the latent ones.³⁵

After some scholars prioritized quantitative methods³⁶ and they were criticized by some other scholars from different traditions of IR theory,³⁷ the second generation focused on the computer-assisted methods. Unlike the previous scholars, these researchers argue that computer-assisted quantitative methods should be complemented with qualitative methods.³⁸ For Pashakhanlou, merger of quantitative methods, which can provide precise accounts of the information that can be presented in an accessible way in tables or graphs, with qualitative ones that can help to unpack latent meaning and enhance the contextualization is a plausible option for content analysis-based research.³⁹ This can be enhanced further with computer-based methods.⁴⁰

³³ Robert Weber, *Basic Content Analysis* (SAGE Publications, Inc., 1990), p.19.

³⁴ Arash Heydarian Pashakhanlou, ‘Fully Integrated Content Analysis in International Relations’, *International Relations* 31, no. 4 (1 December 2017): 447–65, p.449.

³⁵ Siegfried Kracauer, ‘The Challenge of Qualitative Content Analysis’, *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, 16(4), 1952, pp. 631–42.

³⁶ Robert North, Ole Holsti, George Zaninovich and Dina Zinnes. *Content Analysis: A Handbook with Applications for the Study of International Crisis* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1963); Harold Lasswell and Nathan Leites (eds), *Language of Politics: Studies in Quantitative Semantics* (New York: George W. Stewart, 1949).

³⁷ Robert Jervis, ‘The Costs of the Scientific Study of Politics: An Examination of the Stanford Content Analysis Studies’, *International Studies Quarterly*, 11(4), 1967, pp. 366–393; Hedley Bull, ‘International Theory: The Case for a Classical Approach’, *World Politics*, 18(3), 1966, pp. 361–377.

³⁸ Andrew Bennett, ‘Found in Translation: Combining Discourse Analysis with Computer Assisted Content Analysis’, *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 43(3), 2015, pp. 984–97; Johan Eriksson and Giampiero Giacomello, ‘Content Analysis in the Digital Age: Tools, Functions, and Implications for Security’, in Jörg Krüger, Bertram Nickolay and Sandro Gaycken (eds) *The Secure Information Society: Ethical, Legal and Political Challenges* (London: Springer, 2013), pp. 137–48.

³⁹ Pashakhanlou, 453.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

CHAPTER 4: FOREIGN POLICIES OF TWO LEADERS

Based on Burns' definition in previous chapters, this study argues that Netanyahu and Orban is more suitable to be examined within the framework of *transformational leadership*. Despite they still act rationally and interest-based in international politics, they are still closer to be categorized as transformational leaders due to their willingness to shape public preferences and change the existing system in foreign policy making with a morality point of view included into their diplomacy. In order to understand the motivations behind this desire of transformation, it is necessary to look at both leaders' foreign policy styles.

4.1. Benjamin Netanyahu

Holding the prime ministerial seat for almost 15 years (1996-1999 & 2009-present), a record in the history of State of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu became an increasingly dominant politician in the country and evolved into a controversial figure with his personal political style, his luxurious lifestyle, and his family. In his political success, one should also take his transforming the right-wing politics in Israel and insisting on centralizing the ruling mechanism in his Likud party,⁴¹ thanks to his leadership capabilities, "particularly his oratorical skill, have allowed him to shape the parameters of "Israeliness" over the last few decades."⁴²

Since his first days of premiership, he was perceived as a politician who will bring American-style political ideas and reform the Israeli political system due to his experience in the United States. In this regard, just like in the case of US governance, Netanyahu has established an Israeli National Security Council (NSC) to help Prime Minister Office in decision-making

⁴¹ Yaffa Moskovich, 'Authoritarian Management Style in the Likud Party under the Leadership of Benjamin Netanyahu', *International Journal of Leadership Studies* 4, no. 2 (2009): 142–160.

⁴² Ilan Peleg, 'The Likud under Benjamin Netanyahu: Readjusting Revisionism to the 21st Century', in *Israel under Netanyahu: Domestic and Foreign Affairs*, ed. Robert Owen Freedman (Abingdon, Oxon ; New York, NY: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2020), 11–33, p.28.

processes on foreign affairs and security issues. This step was also in purpose of altering the old security decision-making process, which is dominated by the Defense Ministry and the security establishment.⁴³ Based on these indicators, it can be said that Netanyahu endeavored to extend the efficiency of the premiership office in Israel and transform it into a US President-like position. According to Peleg, Netanyahu's territorial-nationalistic foreign policy, and his leadership style fits well with the worldwide trend in the end of 2010s, which became especially visible with Trump presidency in the US, BrExit in the UK, rise of far-right in Europe and the ascendance of new elites in several smaller European states, such as Hungary and Poland.

In order to grasp Netanyahu's aforementioned effort in Israeli premiership, understanding his worldview and leadership is significant. For him, he serves not only as the leader of the Israeli state but acts as the leader of the worldwide Jewry. Accordingly, the Holocaust experience in the past occupies a key place in his narrative and he utilizes this experience for his leadership in foreign policy agenda. According to Leslie, Netanyahu thinks that "the memory of the Holocaust is not a fact-based historical record, but a permanent state of being."⁴⁴ Moreover, as one of his previous advisers said, what Netanyahu believes is that the Jewish people live amidst a hostile world that will never fully accept their presence in it and Israel should "never trust the outside world to protect [the Jewish people], because it won't."⁴⁵

Accordingly, this enables Netanyahu to claim a moral authority in his role and view himself as a "messianic" figure, which aims to save the Jewish people from a new Holocaust.⁴⁶ For Leslie,

⁴³ Ronen Hoffman, 'Israel's Foreign Policy Under Benjamin Netanyahu' (Foreign Policy Research Institute, July 2019).

⁴⁴ Jonathan G. Leslie, 'Netanyahu's Populism: An Overlooked Explanation for Israeli Foreign Policy', *SAIS Review of International Affairs* 37, no. 1 (2017): 75–82, p.78.

⁴⁵ Sarah Moughty, 'Eyal Arad: A "Messianic" Netanyahu', *FRONTLINE*, accessed 26 April 2021, <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/article/eyal-arad-a-messianic-netanyahu/>.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

this moral legitimacy effort is a feature of populists in foreign policy,⁴⁷ which showcases a crucial point in Netanyahu's mindset. Hawkins and Kaltwasser asserts that populism inherits a Manichaeian worldview,⁴⁸ in which there are only friends and foes, and opponents are not just people with different priorities but they are simply evil where compromise is impossible.⁴⁹

It can be said that, such worldview in Netanyahu's mindset motivates him to display a feverish opposition and deep hostility against Israel's adversaries. His foreign policy to Iran can be given as an example in this matter. For instance, Netanyahu is a staunch opponent of the nuclear deal signed between Iran and the great powers (US, UK, Russia, China, France and Germany), which is known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).⁵⁰ Within this attitude, he also depicts Iran as being on the wrong side of a moral divide with Israel and portrays the "humane" and "compassionate" Israel as a "force for good" in the world, whereas Iran and its proxies who are "steeped in blood" represents the "forces of terror".⁵¹

Furthermore, to strengthen this moral division and Manichean worldview, corruption of historical events and alternative narratives that are constructed for foreign policy purposes is another strategy of Netanyahu. In this purpose, he redefined the story of the Jewish holiday of Purim and instead of describing it the redemption of the Jews of Persia from destruction with the help of a Persian monarch, he claimed that there has been a Persian bloodlust for the Jews, one that continues now.⁵² As another example, Netanyahu even re-narrated the Holocaust story of the

⁴⁷ Leslie, 77.

⁴⁸ Kirk A. Hawkins and Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser, 'The Ideational Approach to Populism', *Latin American Research Review* 52, no. 4 (2017): 513–28, p.523.

⁴⁹ Cas Mudde, 'The Populist Zeitgeist', *Government and Opposition* 39, no. 4 (ed 2004): 541–63.

⁵⁰ 'Netanyahu Urges No Return to Iran Nuclear Deal', *Reuters*, 22 November 2020, <https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-iran-nuclear-israel-usa-idUKKBN2820N6>.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² T. O. I. staff, 'PM Tells Children Celebrating Purim: Persians Still Want to Kill Us', accessed 27 April 2021, <http://www.timesofisrael.com/pm-tells-celebrating-kids-persians-still-want-to-kill-us/>.

Jews and suggested that it was Haj Amin Al-Husseini, a Palestinian leader who first inspired the Nazi Final Solution to Hitler during a meeting between the two men in 1941.⁵³ This is a clear indicator of how he contextualizes the Israel-Palestine conflict as well as employs the Manichean worldview that stood on a moral division.

4.2. Viktor Orban

Just like Netanyahu in Israel, Orban holds the premier seat in his country for long years (1998-2002 & 2010-present) and made his mark on Hungarian politics, including foreign policy. In this effort, his charismatic features also played a key role, which has been widely discussed by several scholars.⁵⁴

Like Netanyahu, Orban can be also categorized as a politician that suits the worldwide trend in the end of 2010s following the Trump presidency in the US. However, Körösenyi extends this populism framework and conceptualizes Orban's leadership under the term "Plebiscitary Leadership" that "violates, limits, or overwrites bureaucratic norms", while relies on those norms at the same time in order to be able to exercise power.⁵⁵

Within this framework, which is inspired by Weber's concept of plebiscitary leader democracy (PLD), leadership and charismatic leadership in particular matters. Yet, plebiscitary leadership has more than what charismatic leadership constitutes. First, it is routinized and institutionalized variant of charismatic authority that helps the reproduction of charisma. Second,

⁵³ 'PM Netanyahu Addresses the 37th Zionist Congress 20 Oct 2015', accessed 27 April 2021, <https://mfa.gov.il/MFA/PressRoom/2015/Pages/PM-Netanyahu-addresses-the-37th-Zionist-Congress-20-Oct-2015.aspx>.

⁵⁴ Eszter Petronella Soós, 'Comparing Orbánism and Gaullism: The Gaullist Physiognomy of Orbán's Post-2010 Hungary', *Studia Politica: Romanian Political Science Review* 15, no. 1 (2015): 91–108; Takis S. Pappas, 'Populist Democracies: Post-Authoritarian Greece and Post-Communist Hungary', *Government and Opposition* 49, no. 1 (January 2014): 1–23; Takis S. Pappas, 'Are Populist Leaders "Charismatic"? The Evidence from Europe', *Constellations* 23, no. 3 (2016): 378–90.

⁵⁵ Ibid, p.287.

it is a variant of the charismatic authority that vitalizes legitimacy over the electoral victory instead of a democratic one.⁵⁶ These aspects of charismatic leadership also point a transformative leadership in foreign policy agenda.

According to Körösi, Orbán's charisma can be grounded on three qualities: *heroism*, *vision* and *responsibility*.⁵⁷ As heroism appears in his "freedom fight" against the IMF, Brussels and the flow of refugees in 2015 for the sake of the national sovereignty, his vision is shaped mostly by the 2008 financial crisis. For him, the crisis demonstrated the significance of nations rather than internationality, and "the West no longer shows the way out of the crisis, as the West is the crisis itself; therefore Hungary has to find its own solutions."⁵⁸ Lastly, responsibility appears especially in his mindset in which he refers to himself as a state leader and attributes a historical role to himself since "people, rather than institutions and principles, should govern, as 'decisions are never made by principles or institutions.'"⁵⁹ Given all these features, it can be said that the image that Orbán portrayed himself as a political leader is "above the parties" which represents the "national interests."⁶⁰

Such transformative aspect in foreign policy is also illustrated at Orbán's engagement with Christianity, which is similar to Netanyahu's perception of himself vis-à-vis the world Jewry. Lamour argues that Christianity is a key element around which Orbán's antagonistic narratives are structured. It is an element that enables Orbán to use of negativity and the context-based evolution of in-groups opposed to outgroups, along with forming positive ties with other figures of the radical

⁵⁶ Ibid, p.285.

⁵⁷ András Körösi, 'The Theory and Practice of Plebiscitary Leadership: Weber and the Orbán Regime', *East European Politics and Societies* 33, no. 02 (2019): 280–301, pp.288-89.

⁵⁸ Ibid, p.289.

⁵⁹ Ibid, p.288.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

right.⁶¹ The best examples of Orban's engagement with Christianity in his discourse are claims to run a Christian government⁶² and utilizing a "Christian-national idea" against the refugees during the migration crisis in 2015.⁶³ Based on Laclau's term⁶⁴, Lamour also comes to a conclusion that Christianity is a "nodal point" for Orban and his authority.⁶⁵

In fact, Orban's engagement with Christianity as part of his political narrative is not something recent. Stressing out the need for representing Christian values in public life that will stand higher than politics, Orban reveals how Christianity should play a role in Hungary's foreign policy vis-à-vis Europe in an article that he penned in 2007:

"We who took an active role in the new beginning of Eastern and Central Europe are well aware of this preserving power of Christianity, and therefore feel obliged to ask: why should we deprive Europe of all these good things? The question hangs above us: will the churches of Europe remain strong enough to represent in the structures of Europe the faith that has been evident in its individual countries for centuries? If we do not tell them, if we do not bear witness to the heritage of faith they are also part of, who will do it instead of us?"⁶⁶

⁶¹ Christian Lamour, 'Orbán Urbi et Orbi: Christianity as a Nodal Point of Radical-Right Populism', *Politics and Religion*, 1–27.

⁶² Julian Coman, 'The Pastor versus the Populist: Hungary's New Faith Faultline', *The Guardian*, 29 December 2019, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/dec/29/pastor-v-populist-viktor-orban-hungary-faith-faultline>.

⁶³ Liz Fekete, 'Hungary: Power, Punishment and the "Christian-National Idea"', *Race & Class* 57, no. 4 (1 April 2016): 39–53.

⁶⁴ Ernesto Laclau, *On Populist Reason* (Verso, 2005), p.163.

⁶⁵ Lamour, *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ Viktor Orbán, 'The Role and Consequences of Religion in Former Communist Countries', *European View* 6, no. 1 (1 December 2007): 103–9, p.108.

CHAPTER 5: COMMON POINTS IN FOREIGN POLICIES

5.1. Confrontation with the European Union

Perhaps one of the most significant commonalities in two leaders' foreign policy agendas is their opposition to the EU. Until 2014, when US-led Israel-Palestine peace talks failed, there has been a relatively stable pattern of relations between Israel and the EU. From that year on, the EU adopted a guideline for labelling products made in Israeli settlements in the occupied areas of the West Bank, because the area is not officially within the internationally recognized borders of Israel.

Against the EU's appearing as a normative power in the Israel-Palestine conflict,⁶⁷ and embarking a strategy to separate internationally recognized borders of Israel and the illegal settlements in the West Bank,⁶⁸ it is possible to see that Netanyahu gradually toughens his rhetoric against the EU. He is known with making statements by calling the EU as hypocrite and stating that "the European Union should be ashamed of itself."⁶⁹

Straining ties after this event led to Netanyahu's exploiting the internal divisions between EU member states, by strengthening ties with the leaders of illiberal governments in Hungary, Poland and other states in the Visegrad group. Additionally, Israel also took the advantage of EU's facing many other external crises such as civil wars in Libya and Syria, migration flows from North Africa, and the fight against the Islamic State group, which degraded the Israel-Palestine conflict in the list of priorities and narrowed down the room for influence against Israel.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Patrick Müller, 'Normative Power Europe and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: The EU's Peacebuilding Narrative Meets Local Narratives', *European Security* 28, no. 3 (3 July 2019): 251–67.

⁶⁸ Anders Persson, "'EU Differentiation" as a Case of "Normative Power Europe" (NPE) in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict', *Journal of European Integration* 40, no. 2 (23 February 2018): 193–208.

⁶⁹ 'Israel Suspends Contact with EU Bodies over Labelling of West Bank Produce', *The Guardian*, 29 November 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/nov/29/israel-suspends-contact-eu-bodies-labelling-west-bank-produce>.

⁷⁰ Hugh Lovatt, 'Occupation and Sovereignty: Renewing EU Policy in Israel-Palestine' (European Council on Foreign Relations, 2017).

Despite being a member of the EU, Hungary has been in a problematic relationship with the 27-nation bloc since Orban came to power in 2010. Having publicly declared his intention to build an "illiberal state,"⁷¹ however, Hungary has still remained an EU member state. Based on the pretext that Brussels is meddling in Hungary's internal affairs, he could be able to derive legitimacy in terms of popular support and build a populist rhetoric which grounds a heavy criticism against the EU.⁷²

Problems in the Hungary-EU relations went deeper especially after the refugee crisis in 2015. In 2015, the Hungarian Government built a barrier on its border, which became a "biopolitical symbol of the Hungarian government's hate campaign,"⁷³ and did not comply with European traditions and regulations. At the nadir of this campaign, Orbán also stated that the government would conduct a new national consultation on the crisis, followed by 'Stop Soros' package in 2018⁷⁴ that restricted tax regulations disadvantageous to humanitarian NGOs, amended the Hungarian Penal Code introducing the new offence of aiding illegal immigration.⁷⁵

In regards with breaching the international law which the EU promotes, there is also an interesting commonality of the governments ruled by the two leaders. Both Israel and Hungary implemented tough measures against a certain group of "unwanted" people (Palestinians and the refugees, consecutively) by building physical barriers. For instance, with the pretext of "security",

⁷¹ Csaba Tóth, 'Full Text of Viktor Orbán's Speech at Băile Tuşnad (Tusnádfürdő) of 26 July 2014', *The Budapest Beacon*, 29 July 2014, <https://budapestbeacon.com/full-text-of-viktor-orbans-speech-at-baile-tusnad-tusnadfurdo-of-26-july-2014/>.

⁷² Matthias Matthijs and R. Daniel Kelemen, 'Europe Reborn: How to Save the European Union From Irrelevance', *Foreign Affairs* 94, no. 1 (2015): 96–107, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24483222>.

⁷³ Attila Antal, *The Rise of Hungarian Populism: State Autocracy and the Orbán Regime* (Emerald Group Publishing, 2019), p.117.

⁷⁴ 'National Consultation on the "Soros Plan"', *The Orange Files*, 5 March 2018, <https://theorangefiles.hu/national-consultation-on-the-soros-plan/>.

⁷⁵ Bohus Péter and Zoltán Kovács, 'Hungary's Stop Soros Act given Green Light by Constitutional Court', 28 February 2019, https://index.hu/english/2019/02/28/hungary_s_stop_soros_act_given_green_light_by_constitutional_court/.

Israel has been constructing a wall that stretches for more than 700 kilometres through the Palestinian land inside the occupied West Bank since 2002, which became an apartheid symbol.⁷⁶ On the other side, Hungary built a high-tech border fence across the southern borders of the country within the same purposes against the refugee flow from the Middle East.⁷⁷

5.2. *Friendship with Trump*

Another salient intersecting point of the two leaders is their having good relations with Trump and his administration. During the Trump presidency, US-Israeli alliance witnessed an extraordinary phases in the history and the White House support to Israel gained a special status. In his term, Trump implemented many groundbreaking policies that favors Israel regarding the Palestine conflict and the Middle East. This included recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of Israel,⁷⁸ despite the eastern part of the city is under Israeli occupation and moving the US embassy in Tel Aviv to there⁷⁹, withdrawing from the Iran nuclear deal that Israel staunchly opposes⁸⁰, recognizing Golan Heights as part of Israel,⁸¹ and leading the establishment of diplomatic relations between Israel and some Arab countries like the UAE, Bahrain, Sudan and Morocco.⁸²

⁷⁶ Al Jazeera, 'Separation Wall - PalestineRemix', accessed 14 June 2021, <https://interactive.aljazeera.com/aje/PalestineRemix/wall.html>.

⁷⁷ Marton Dunai, 'Hungary Builds New High-Tech Border Fence - with Few Migrants in Sight', *Reuters*, 2 March 2017, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-hungary-fence-idUSKBN1692MH>.

⁷⁸ Mark Landler, 'Trump Recognizes Jerusalem as Israel's Capital and Orders U.S. Embassy to Move', *The New York Times*, 6 December 2017, sec. World, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/06/world/middleeast/trump-jerusalem-israel-capital.html>.

⁷⁹ Stephen Farrell, 'Why Is the U.S. Moving Its Embassy to Jerusalem?', *Reuters*, 7 May 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-israel-diplomacy-jerusalem-explai-idUSKBN1I811N>.

⁸⁰ Mark Landler, 'Trump Abandons Iran Nuclear Deal He Long Scorned', *The New York Times*, 8 May 2018, sec. World, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/08/world/middleeast/trump-iran-nuclear-deal.html>.

⁸¹ Mark Landler and David M. Halbfinger, 'Trump, With Netanyahu, Formally Recognizes Israel's Authority Over Golan Heights', *The New York Times*, 25 March 2019, sec. U.S., <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/25/us/politics/benjamin-netanyahu-donald-trump-meeting.html>.

⁸² 'Morocco Latest Country to Normalise Ties with Israel in US-Brokered Deal', *BBC News*, 10 December 2020, sec. Africa, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-55266089>.

However, beyond these agreements and policies, the US president and the Israeli premier developed a special relationship that is grounded on strong personal ties. On many occasions, two leaders have publicly praised each other and their friendship that serves the alliance. For instance, Netanyahu shared his photos with Trump in his election campaign posters,⁸³ described him as there has never been a greater friend in the White House⁸⁴ and embraced Trump's "fake news" rhetoric against the media.⁸⁵ On the other side, Trump glorified Netanyahu as a "great" man in sending a birthday message to the Israeli premier,⁸⁶ and promoted his friendship with Netanyahu in a public phone call to him as a component that enabled the emergence of Arab-Israeli normalization deals.⁸⁷ Despite representing different styles, it should also be stressed out that they preferred celebrity-like leadership taken their social media profiles into account.⁸⁸

Meanwhile, Orban-led Hungary has also developed a special relationship with Trump administration. For instance, Orban is known with praising Trump's campaign and glorifying his "America First" expression by stating that he has been thinking precisely the same with the US president: "We say the same: 'Hungary first, and then everyone else'," he said.⁸⁹ In parallel with

⁸³ T. O. I. staff, 'Netanyahu Uses Trump in Election Campaign Poster', accessed 2 June 2021, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/netanyahu-uses-trump-in-election-campaign-posters/>.

⁸⁴ Benjamin Netanyahu, 'Thank you my dear friend President @realDonaldTrump The Jewish State has never had a greater friend in the White House. I look forward to our meeting at the UN to advance a historic Defense Treaty between the United States and Israel.', *Twitter*, accessed 2 June 2021, <https://twitter.com/netanyahu/status/1172911807402565632>.

⁸⁵ Daoud Kuttab, 'Executive Overreach and Its Disastrous Results: The Case of Trump and Netanyahu', *Palestine-Israel Journal of Politics, Economics, and Culture* 24, no. 3/4 (2019): 175–180.

⁸⁶ T. O. I. staff, "'You Are Great!': Trump's Handwritten Praise for Ally Netanyahu on 70th Birthday", accessed 2 June 2021, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/you-are-great-trump-congratulates-ally-netanyahu-on-70th-birthday/>.

⁸⁷ 'Trump Asks Netanyahu If "sleepy Joe" Could Have Secured Sudan Deal - The Jerusalem Post', accessed 2 June 2021, <https://www.jpost.com/us-elections/trump-asks-netanyahu-if-sleepy-joe-could-have-secured-sudan-deal-646763>.

⁸⁸ Narmina Abdulaev and Baruch Shomron, 'Celebrity Politicians as Health-Promoting Role Models in the Media: The Cases of Vladimir Putin, Donald Trump, and Benjamin Netanyahu', *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society*, 12 October 2020.

⁸⁹ Daniel Lippman, Lili Bayer, and Theodor Meyer, "'America First' Meets 'Hungary First,' but White House Wary of Love Fest", *POLITICO*, accessed 14 June 2021, <https://politi.co/2JgHa6Z>.

Trump, Orbán also embraced his “fake news” rhetoric against the mainstream media reports and the political opponents who promote these media outlets pertaining his domestic policies.⁹⁰ It is also reported that pro-Orbán media in Hungary portrayed then-US presidential candidate Joe Biden as a Communist and Marxist, while Peter Szijjarto, foreign minister of the Orbán Government also accused Biden of hypocrisy and echoed corruption allegations about Biden’s son regarding his business in Ukraine.⁹¹

5.3. Opening New Pages with Putin’s Russia

A third common point in both leaders is their having good relations with Russia and particularly with its president Vladimir Putin. With the Arab Spring, in which the post-Cold War order of the MENA region was entirely forced to change, two countries noticed the opportunity for the betterment of bilateral relations and ultimately this even evolved into never-before-seen cooperation between two capitals, especially after the Syrian Civil War. Although two countries had disputes over Russia’s alliance choices in the civil war, they managed to get over them. While Israel’s deteriorating relations with former US President Obama can at first glance be considered as a supportive factor for preserving relations with Russia, it should be noted that this persistent stance vis-à-vis Russia has continued even during the presidency of Donald Trump, which brought completely fresh air to US-Israeli ties.⁹²

With the Syrian Civil War and the Russian intervention to the war in 2015, Netanyahu intensified its contacts with Putin, to the extent that he paid nine visits to Russia between October

⁹⁰ Vlagyislav Makszimov, ‘Hungarian PM Orbán Accuses EPP of Spreading Fake News’, *Www.Euractiv.Com*, 5 May 2020, <https://www.euractiv.com/section/future-eu/news/hungarian-pm-orban-accuses-epp-of-spreading-fake-news/>.

⁹¹ ‘Hungary’s “Trump before Trump” PM Orbán Faces US Reset – EURACTIV.Com’, accessed 14 June 2021, <https://www.euractiv.com/section/central-europe/news/hungarys-trump-before-trump-pm-orban-faces-us-reset/>.

⁹² Fatih Şemsettin Işık, ‘Israel’s Rapprochement with Russia in the Post-Cold War Era (1991-2011): A Diaspora Effect?’ (MA Thesis, Istanbul Şehir University, 2019).

2015 and September 2018. These meetings turned out to be fruitful, and two countries could establish a military coordination system, which enabled Israel to fly through Russian-controlled airspace in Syria, while Israel agreed not to interfere in the Syrian civil war in return.⁹³ Despite several crises emerged since the emergence of this military coordination, two countries could manage the tensions, thanks to the developing friendship between Putin and Netanyahu.

Just like in the case of Netanyahu-Trump relationship, it is not surprising that Netanyahu also tried to showcase his relationship with Putin in his election campaign in 2019, on a billboard with the photo of two leaders shaking hands. This is also interpreted as a step to winning Russian-speaking Jews in Israel, which make up some 12 percent of the 6.3 million eligible voters in Israel.⁹⁴ Starting 2009 onwards, when Netanyahu came to power in Israel, Putin has built a rhetoric for the same community in Israel, claiming that the sizeable Russian Jewish community is something that unites the two countries like no other country.⁹⁵ According to an expert on Russia's foreign policy in the Middle East, the political position of Putin can be described as "the most pro-Israel, pro-Jewish leader Russia had ever seen."⁹⁶

In Orbán's prime ministry, Hungary has also developed good relations with Russia. For some scholars, this is even regarded as a period that Hungary pivoted towards Russia, especially Orbán's tendency to illiberal democracy in the last decade.⁹⁷ One of the determining factors that shaped Orbán's "Eastern opening" is also due to the progress in economic relations between the

⁹³ Zvi Magen, 'Russia and Israel', in *Israel under Netanyahu: Domestic and Foreign Affairs*, ed. Robert Owen Freedman (Abingdon, Oxon ; New York, NY: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2020).

⁹⁴ T. O. I. staff, 'Netanyahu Said Pushing for Pre-Election Putin Trip to Israel', accessed 9 June 2021, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/netanyahu-said-pushing-for-pre-election-putin-trip-to-israel/>.

⁹⁵ Evan Gottesman, 'The Decline and Fall of Putin's Favorite Israeli Politician | Opinion', *Haaretz.Com*, accessed 9 June 2021, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/elections/.premium-the-decline-and-fall-of-putin-s-favorite-israeli-politician-1.6805944>.

⁹⁶ Dmitri Trenin, *What Is Russia up to in the Middle East?* (Cambridge, UK ; Medford, MA, USA: Polity, 2018), p.72.

⁹⁷ Clute Matthew, 'Illiberal Partners? Understanding Orbán's Pivot to Russia', (2018), accessed 5 June 2021,.

two countries. For instance, during his visit to Moscow in January 2013, Orban expressed his support for the South Stream pipeline that plans to transport Russian gas to Central and Western Europe, despite being a project that is criticized by the EU.⁹⁸ He also stated that Russia is a country that will play a special role in Hungary's energy sector and becoming a destination for Hungarian exports.⁹⁹ Despite making statements that Hungary, as an EU member, respects for Ukraine's territorial integrity,¹⁰⁰ Orban also followed a less confronting and critical approach vis-a-vis Russia's annexation of Crimea by even declaring that "Hungary is not a part of the Russian–Ukrainian conflict."¹⁰¹

This empathy of Orban towards Russia turned into a sympathy especially after Trump came to power in the US. Next month after Trump sworn in, it is not a coincidence that Orban denounced "a strong anti-Russian atmosphere" in the West and glorified Russia in regards with its significance in global economic prosperity at a joint press conference with Putin in 2017.¹⁰² On another occasion, he also claimed that disparaging Putin like he is the devil became a signifier of becoming a good European today, adding "it needs to be recognized that Putin has made his country great again and that Russia is once again a player on the world stage."¹⁰³

As a consequence of these commonalities in foreign policy agendas, together with several other factors that were evaluated in the previous chapters, one can expect that Israel and Hungary

⁹⁸ Juraj Marušiak, 'Russia and the Visegrad Group – More than a Foreign Policy Issue', *International Issues & Slovak Foreign Policy Affairs* 24, no. 1–2 (2015): 28–46, p.36.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ 'Fidesz: Hungary Supports Preserving Ukraine's Territorial Integrity', *Daily News Hungary*, 6 July 2014, <https://dailynewshungary.com/fidesz-hungary-supports-preserving-ukraines-territorial-integrity/>.

¹⁰¹ Margit Feher, 'Hungary Not Part of Russia-Ukraine Conflict, Premier Orban Says', *Wall Street Journal*, 3 March 2014, sec. Emerging Europe Real Time, <https://blogs.wsj.com/emergingEurope/2014/03/03/hungary-not-part-of-russia-ukraine-conflict-premier-orban-says/>.

¹⁰² 'EU's Orban and Ally Putin Cement Closer Ties', *Www.Euractiv.Com*, 3 February 2017, <https://www.euractiv.com/section/global-europe/news/eus-orban-and-ally-putin-cement-closer-ties/>.

¹⁰³ 'Vladimir Putin and Viktor Orban's Special Relationship | DW | 18.09.2018', *DW.COM*, accessed 7 June 2021, <https://www.dw.com/en/vladimir-putin-and-viktor-orbans-special-relationship/a-45512712>.

develops a special relationship. In the next chapter, emergence of this relationship starting by 2017, when Netanyahu became the first Israeli PM who visited Budapest in the history. After a brief description of the events, content analysis of the two leaders' speeches will be examined.

CHAPTER 6: ISRAEL-HUNGARY RELATIONS IN 2017-2021

Even though relations between Israel and Hungary has gone through a volatile process in the post-Soviet period, this tide became more stable and leaned towards an increasingly positive status with 2017 onwards. With Hungary's holding the rotational presidency of the Visegrad Group, initial signals for the launch of a new period between the two countries have appeared. As a matter of fact, the Group held its first summit with Israel in July 2017,¹⁰⁴ and it has also coincided with Netanyahu's becoming the first Israeli PM who visited Budapest since 1989, when the diplomatic relations were restored.¹⁰⁵

It is stark example of how Netanyahu had willingness to carry out his Budapest visit, despite Orban praised Hungary's interwar leader Miklos Horthy, a Hitler ally, and used an image of George Soros in an anti-immigration billboard campaign,¹⁰⁶ and these actions were slammed by several Israeli politicians.¹⁰⁷ In addition, a foreign ministry statement by Israel highlighted that Soros "continuously undermines Israel's democratically elected governments by funding organisations that defame the Jewish state and seek to deny it the right to defend itself."¹⁰⁸

The visit was also historic due to Netanyahu's uttering his criticism towards the EU in an EU member state's capital. Complaining about the EU's policy on the Israeli-Palestinian issue. Netanyahu blamed the organization with following double-standards. "The European Union is the

¹⁰⁴ 'Achievements of the 2017/18 Hungarian Presidency of the Visegrad Group.', 2018, <https://www.visegradgroup.eu/download.php?docID=367>.

¹⁰⁵ 'PM Netanyahu Arrives in Hungary on Official Visit 17 July 2017', accessed 15 June 2021, <https://mfa.gov.il/MFA/PressRoom/2017/Pages/PM-Netanyahu-arrives-in-Hungary-on-official-visit-17-July-2017.aspx>.

¹⁰⁶ Marton Dunai, 'Hungary's Orban Welcomes Netanyahu, Vows to Fight Anti-Semitism', *Reuters*, 18 July 2017, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-hungary-israel-idUSKBN1A312O>.

¹⁰⁷ Yair Lapid, 'Mr. Netanyahu, Don't Go to Hungary!', 5 July 2017, <http://blogs.timesofisrael.com/pm-netanyahu-dont-go-to-hungary/>.

¹⁰⁸ 'Israel Backtracks on Hungary Criticism, Hits out at Soros', *France 24*, 10 July 2017, <https://www.france24.com/en/20170710-israel-backtracks-hungary-criticism-hits-out-soros>.

only association of countries in the world that conditions the relations with Israel, which gives it technology, on political conditions. The only ones! Nobody does it,” he said.¹⁰⁹ For some, this statement manifested that Israel regards the Visegrád Group “as an answer to the West’s critical stance on Israel.”¹¹⁰

While relations began to grow by 2017, Orban also paid a visit to Israel as the first Hungarian prime minister in July 2018. One of the most interesting aspect of his visit is the fact that it is only Netanyahu who welcomed the Hungarian prime minister and anti-Netanyahu political factions, even President Reuven Rivlin himself, took a frosty attitude towards Orban.¹¹¹ This reveals how Israel-Hungary relations in the last five years are strongly related with personal relations between the leaders.

This attitude towards Orban has also embraced by the right-wing media in Israel and Orban-led Hungary is praised in terms of offering a good living for the Jewish diaspora there. For instance, Eli Hazan, Foreign Affairs Director of Netanyahu’s Likud Party, wrote an op-ed in the right-wing Mida website in Israel. Welcoming Orban’s visit to Israel, Hazan refused the anti-Semitism allegations on Orban and stated that Hungary have been waging a struggle against “Soros and the far-left organizations he funds.”¹¹² On the other side, Hungarian Foreign Minister also

¹⁰⁹ Barak Ravid, ‘On Netanyahu’s Orders: Israel’s Foreign Ministry Retracts Criticism of Anti-Semitism in Hungary and Slams George Soros’, *Haaretz.Com*, accessed 15 June 2021, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/israel-retracts-criticism-of-hungary-s-anti-soros-campaign-1.5492668>.

¹¹⁰ Adi Kantor and Sharon Malka, ‘To What Extent Is the European Union United? Emerging Tensions between Eastern and Western Europe’, *INSS*, accessed 15 June 2021, <https://www.inss.org.il/publication/extent-european-union-united-emerging-tensions-eastern-western-europe/>.

¹¹¹ Deutsche Welle (www.dw.com), ‘Viktor Orban Says “Jews Can Feel Safe” in Hungary during Israel Visit | DW | 19.07.2018’, *DW.COM*, accessed 16 June 2021, <https://www.dw.com/en/viktor-orban-says-jews-can-feel-safe-in-hungary-during-israel-visit/a-44748908>.

¹¹² ‘ברוך הבא ויקטור: אורבן הוא ידיד אמת של ישראל והיהודים (Welcome Victor: Orban Is a True Friend of Israel and the Jews)’, *מידה*, 17 July 2018, <https://mida.org.il/2018/07/17/ברוך-הבא-ויקטור-אורבן-הוא-ידיד-אמת-של-ישראל-והיהודים/>.

mentioned the significance of having good relations with Israel, in efforts to protect “the Judeo-Christian heritage of Europe.”¹¹³

It can be said that the year 2019 was a leap point in this positive trend between the two states. After US decided to move its Israel embassy into Jerusalem, whose status is disputed according to the United Nations, Hungary has also followed the footsteps of the Trump administration and began to manifest its eagerness to relocate its diplomatic missions into Jerusalem as well. In this regard, Hungary opened a trade office in Jerusalem with an official diplomatic status during Foreign Minister Szijjártó’s visit, which became the first European diplomatic mission in the city.¹¹⁴ During the ceremony, Netanyahu also pointed the same aspect of this diplomatic move which reveals how “Hungary is leading right now to change the attitude in Europe toward Jerusalem,”¹¹⁵ that is still agreed by the Hungarian officials as well.¹¹⁶

In fact, the following years witnessed Hungary’s efforts to follow the same attitude and demonstrate a different attitude in the EU in issues related with Israel-Palestine conflict. For instance, contrary to the 27-nation bloc which opposes the illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank and planned to issue a joint statement condemning the US decision to no longer consider Israeli settlements as illegal, was blocked by Hungary in November 2019.¹¹⁷ Moreover, Hungary has also backed Israel against the International Criminal Court’s decision to launch a probe into

¹¹³ ‘Szijjártó: Hungary Committed to Protecting Judeo-Christian Heritage’, *Hungary Today*, 1 June 2018, <https://hungarytoday.hu/szijarto-hungary-committed-to-protecting-judeo-christian-heritage/>.

¹¹⁴ Raphael Ahren, ‘In First for EU State, Hungary Opens Diplomatic Trade Office in Jerusalem’, accessed 16 June 2021, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/in-first-for-eu-state-hungary-open-diplomatic-trade-office-in-jerusalem/>.

¹¹⁵ Herb Keinon, ‘Hungary Opens “First European Diplomatic Mission in Jerusalem in Decades”’, *The Jerusalem Post / JPost.Com*, accessed 16 June 2021, <https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/hungary-opens-first-european-diplomatic-mission-in-jerusalem-in-decades-583929>.

¹¹⁶ Eldad Beck, “‘Hungary Is Leading the Change in EU Stance on Jerusalem’”, *Www.Israelhayom.Com*, 11 March 2021, <https://www.israelhayom.com/2021/03/11/hungary-is-leading-the-change-in-eu-stance-on-jerusalem/>.

¹¹⁷ Raphael Ahren, ‘Budapest Blocks Joint EU Statement Condemning US Shift on Settlements’, 19 November 2019, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/budapest-blocks-joint-eu-statement-condemning-us-shift-on-settlements/>.

alleged Israeli war crimes¹¹⁸ and rebuked the EU's opposition to the US-led Palestine Peace plan, also known as the "Deal of the Century."¹¹⁹

In the meantime, an interesting remark regarding the improving bilateral relations appeared. Hungary's State Secretary Vince Szalay-Bobrovniczky, close ally of Orbán said that the two leaders "belong to the same political family."¹²⁰ Hence, one needs to ask what made them to be framed within the same family that goes beyond the strengthening ties. It needs also to be examined to what extent leadership features of the two leaders affect such momentum in relations. The next chapter of this study focuses on similarities and differences between Netanyahu and Orbán.

¹¹⁸ T. O. I. staff, 'Backing Israel, Hungary Says It Opposes Potential ICC Probe of Jewish State', 11 January 2020, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/backing-israel-hungary-says-it-opposes-potential-icc-probe-of-jewish-state/>.

¹¹⁹ Raphael Ahren, 'Bucking EU Position, Hungary Expresses Support for Trump Peace Plan', 5 February 2020, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/bucking-eu-position-hungary-expresses-support-for-trump-peace-plan/>.

¹²⁰ Jacob Magid, 'Senior Hungarian Official: Netanyahu and Orbán Belong to Same Political Family', accessed 16 June 2021, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/senior-hungarian-official-netanyahu-and-orban-belong-to-same-political-family/>.

CHAPTER 7: CONTENT ANALYSIS FOR TWO LEADERS

This study aims to explore the mindset behind the two prime ministers in terms of how they perceive, consider and perform the leadership. In this effort, several speeches of the two leaders in certain platforms on domestic and foreign policy issues are examined. Within this examining, content analysis will be applied for the selected sample of speeches from both a qualitative and quantitative approach. In terms of qualitative approach, significant parts of each selected speech will be highlighted in order to reflect how similar leadership mindset matters for the development of Israel-Hungary relations. This analysis will be supported with a quantitative inquiry, through the ProfilerPlus program, which was launched for the aim of leadership trait analysis.¹²¹

Because this study covers the period between 2017 and 2021, speeches are selected within this period accordingly. As another criteria, selection process for the speeches also became different due to several limitations and circumstances that are peculiar to each leader. Before describing those differences, it should be noted that five speeches of the two leaders were elected for each year covered within this study.

For Netanyahu, his speeches at the United Nations General Assembly are selected for several reasons. First, these speeches reflect his oratory skills at best. After he set up an anti-terrorism institute in the United States in memory of his brother Yonathan, who were killed in a military operation in 1976, Netanyahu became very famous as an articulate English speaker appearing in the US televisions in debates on Israel-Palestine conflict.¹²² As a result, he was also

¹²¹ Nick Levine and Michael D Young (2014) “Leadership Trait Analysis and Threat Assessment with Profiler Plus”. Proceedings of ILC 2014 on 8th International Lisp Conference, Montreal, QC, Canada — August 14 - 17, 2014. Association for Computing Machinery.

¹²² ‘Benjamin Netanyahu, Israel’s Unseated Long-Term Leader’, *BBC News*, 13 June 2021, sec. Middle East, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-18008697>.

appointed Israel's permanent representative at the UN in New York in 1984, which enabled him to get familiar with the UN platform.

Second, his speeches in the UN carry significant signals regarding the prospective roadmap for Israel's foreign policy afterwards. For instance, his famous "red line" speech in September 2012, which called on the international community for taking action to prevent Iran from making a nuclear bomb, indirectly triggered the Obama Administration, whose relations were at odds with Netanyahu, to accelerate unofficial talks with Iran in 2013. Since these talks became official, Israel has staunchly opposed the negotiations with Iran and the JCPOA. Another groundbreaking speech was in 2020, when he announced that more Arab and Muslim countries after the UAE and Bahrain will be joining the normalization wave with Israel.¹²³ In fact, Morocco and Sudan, followed this path in the next months.¹²⁴

When it comes to Orban, a relatively different approach has been followed. First, unlike Netanyahu, Orban is a politician that appears less in international platforms. In other words, except the platforms within the EU, the audience during his speeches is mostly domestic. Moreover, he speaks in English less than in his Israeli counterpart, who enjoys strong oratory skills to address the audience at the US and particularly the Jewish-Americans. For these reasons, the sample speeches for Orban is selected among those he did in Hungarian for the domestic audience (Table 1). Following a qualitative content analysis of these selected speeches, a quantitative analysis via the ProfilerPlus program will be applied in the next part.

¹²³ T. O. I. staff, 'Full Text of Benjamin Netanyahu's Address to the 2020 UN General Assembly', accessed 17 June 2021, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/full-text-of-benjamin-netanyahus-address-to-the-2020-un-general-assembly/>.

¹²⁴ Steve Holland, 'Morocco Joins Other Arab Nations Agreeing to Normalize Israel Ties', *Reuters*, 10 December 2020, <https://www.reuters.com/article/israel-usa-morocco-int-idUSKBN28K2CW>.

Table 1: Date, Location and Occasions of the Speeches

Netanyahu	Orban
19/09/2017, New York: UN General Assembly ¹²⁵	15/03/2017, Budapest: Anniversary of the 1848 Revolution ¹²⁶
27/09/2018, New York: UN General Assembly ¹²⁷	28/07/2018, Tusnádfürdő: Bálványos Summer Open University and Student Camp ¹²⁸
13/07/2019, Jerusalem: An interview with TIME Magazine ¹²⁹	10/02/2019, Budapest: State of the Nation Address ¹³⁰
27/09/2020, Online: UN General Assembly ¹³¹	16/02/2020, Budapest: State of the Nation Address ¹³²
27/09/2021, Jerusalem: Last speech as PM in the Knesset ¹³³	15/02/2021, Budapest: Address to the Hungarian parliament ¹³⁴

7.1. Qualitative Analysis

When sample speeches of each leader scanned through, it is seen that some themes within those speeches are common. These commonalities enable us to realize the similar mindset of those leaders in terms of leadership and performing it in the international arena. This similarity does not necessarily exclude the differences between those mindsets. Nevertheless, commonalities of the

¹²⁵ ‘PM Netanyahu Addresses the United Nations General Assembly 19 September 2017’, accessed 21 June 2021, <https://mfa.gov.il/MFA/PressRoom/2017/Pages/PM-Netanyahu-addresses-the-United-Nations-General-Assembly-19-September-2017.aspx>.

¹²⁶ ‘Viktor Orbán’s Speech on the Anniversary of the 1848 Revolution’, *Viktor Orbán’s Speech on the Anniversary of the 1848 Revolution*, accessed 21 June 2021, <https://parizs.mfa.gov.hu/page/viktor-orbans-speech-on-the-anniversary-of-the-1848-revolution-15-march-2017-budapest>.

¹²⁷ ‘PM Netanyahu Addresses UN General Assembly 27 September 2018’, accessed 21 June 2021, <https://mfa.gov.il/MFA/PressRoom/2018/Pages/PM-Netanyahu-addresses-UN-General-Assembly-27-September-2018.aspx>.

¹²⁸ ‘Prime Minister Viktor Orbán’s Speech at the 29th Bálványos Summer Open University and Student Camp – Miniszterelnok.Hu’, accessed 21 June 2021, <https://miniszterelnok.hu/prime-minister-viktor-orbans-speech-at-the-29th-balvanyos-summer-open-university-and-student-camp/>.

¹²⁹ ‘Read the Transcript of TIME’s Interview With Benjamin Netanyahu’, *Time*, accessed 21 June 2021, <https://time.com/5623021/benjamin-netanyahu-time-transcript/>.

¹³⁰ ‘Prime Minister Viktor Orbán’s “State Of The Nation” Address - FULL SPEECH | Visegrád Post’, 11 February 2019, <https://visegradpost.com/en/2019/02/11/prime-minister-viktor-orbans-state-of-the-nation-address-full-speech/>.

¹³¹ ‘PM Netanyahu Addresses UNGA 29 September 2020’, accessed 21 June 2021, <https://mfa.gov.il/MFA/PressRoom/2020/Pages/PM-Netanyahu-addresses-UNGA-29-September-2020.aspx>.

¹³² ‘Prime Minister Viktor Orbán’s “State of the Nation” Address – Miniszterelnok.Hu’, accessed 21 June 2021, <https://miniszterelnok.hu/prime-minister-viktor-orbans-state-of-the-nation-address-4/>.

¹³³ ‘Netanyahu’s Final Speech Transcript as Prime Minister of Israel (English Translation)’, accessed 21 June 2021, <https://www.rev.com/blog/transcripts/netanyahus-final-speech-transcript-as-prime-minister-of-israel>.

¹³⁴ ‘Prime Minister Viktor Orbán’s Address to the Hungarian Parliament before the Start of Daily Business – Miniszterelnok.Hu’, accessed 21 June 2021, <https://miniszterelnok.hu/prime-minister-viktor-orbans-address-to-the-hungarian-parliament-before-the-start-of-daily-business-6/>.

themes between the two sets of selected speeches per each prime minister, can become a factor that shaped the rising trend in bilateral relations between Hungary and Israel.

The greatest commonality of the speeches as a result of the leaders' mindset is their telling about an imaginary but threatening war, which requires struggle with solidarity and their leadership, predictably. For Orban, this war is waged against the EU and the EU-led groups, while Netanyahu's war is mostly against Iran and his allies within the Middle East gathered as "the radical Islamists." Unlike the war for the sake of national sovereignty in the former, the latter represents a war against total destruction of Israel:

"In defence of our independence and national sovereignty, we must bravely fight the battles that lie ahead of us. We must stop Brussels: we must protect our borders; we must prevent the resettlement of migrants; we must make the networks that receive their funding from abroad transparent; we must keep the right to regulate taxes, wages and household utility charges here at home." (Orban, 2017)

"Thirty years after the fall of communism, on the eve of a pan-European parliamentary election, Europe finds itself in the position that we must stand up again for our Hungarian identity, for our Christian identity, protect our families and communities, and also protect our freedom. We, too, could do with some peace, but from the Internationale we also know that they will never rest; because – and again I quote them – "This is the final struggle". (Orban, 2019)

I believe that Hungary is a strong country. This is why it has stood its ground well during the pandemic. It is a strong country because it has bravely stood up and won the battles which it fought in Brussels to protect its interests. (Orban, 2021)

Iran vows to destroy my country every day, including by its chief of staff the other day. Iran is conducting a campaign of conquest across the Middle East and Iran is developing ballistic missiles to threaten the entire world. (Netanyahu, 2017)

And Israel will do whatever it must do to defend itself against Iran's aggression. We will continue to act against you in Syria. We will act against you in Lebanon. We will act against you in Iraq. We will act against you whenever, and wherever. We must act to defend our state and to defend our people. (Netanyahu, 2018)

I want to continue performing the great mission of my life, guaranteeing the existence, the security and the prosperity of the State of Israel. I have undertaken this mission out of boundless commitment to the State of Israel for my parents' home. As a

fighter and commander in Sayeret Matkal, I embarked on many missions beyond enemy lines. (Netanyahu, 2021)

Another commonality is that both leaders keep referring to the past as a lesson that the “enemies” should not forget and take into consideration during the fight in order to understand that they are bounded to be defeated. This effort carries the aim to draw legitimacy and righteousness within this imaginary war being waged:

“Those who won battles and campaigns against us eventually lost the war. The Tartars are gone without a trace, the enormous Ottoman Empire wasted away, the Habsburg Empire evaporated, and the Soviet colossus simply perished. Enormous empires, where is your sting now?” (Orban, 2017)

“I’m a historian’s son, I have to ask: I ask it not merely as a historian’s son, as a Jew, as a citizen of the world, as someone who has lived through the 20th century- have these European leaders learned nothing from history? Will they ever wake up?” (Netanyahu, 2018)

Lastly, two leaders also preferred to address the diaspora groups beyond their borders, as a sign which manifests their perceptions regarding the authority and mission that they endure against the “enemies.” As Orban highlights the presence of 15 million Hungarians by adding the diaspora into the 10 million population within the national borders (2018 and 2019), Netanyahu also underlines the bonds with the Jewish diaspora and how Israel is actually their homeland under his authority in almost every speech he made during the selected years of this study.

Having said that, there are also minor differences between the two leaders. For instance, Orban is more blatant in expressing how leadership matters in forming good relations, regardless of the ideology that his counterpart represents:

“Whether or not you like its president, whether or not you sympathise with his political regime, one thing is certain: we need a stable Turkey protecting us against the uncontrolled rising tide of migrant masses. We can say the same of Israel: without Israel a geographical area of radical Islam would develop, which Europe could only see as a threat. So it is in our interest for these countries to remain stable, and to have stable political regimes and leaders. (...) Let me take a complex thought and simplify it: we must

face up to the fact that Europe's leaders are inadequate, and that they've been unable to defend Europe against immigration.” (Orban, 2018)

On the other side, Netanyahu enjoys portraying of himself as an efficient leader by revealing the secrets and hidden truths for the international audience thanks to his effective intelligence network from the field. In his speech at 2018, he claimed that Iran lied about his intentions for the nuclear energy and there has been a secret nuclear facility in Tehran, “a secret atomic warehouse for storing massive amounts of equipment and material for Iran’s secret nuclear weapons program.” He continued his disclosure activities also in 2020, by revealing the secret missile factory of Hezbollah in Beirut. “Hezbollah is keeping a secret arms depot. This secret arms depot, right here, is adjacent, a meter away, from a gas company,” he said.

With this qualitative analysis in mind, a quantitative analysis to support the similarity of mindsets and leadership skills between the two leaders will also be explained. In this analysis, the extent that leadership traits of the two leaders, such as need for power or need for affirmation, resemble in each other, will be examined.

7.2. Quantitative Analysis

This study used the Leadership Trait Analysis (LTA) to profile two leaders. According to this method, certain words uttered by a leader reflect specific personality traits and the frequency of those words in their speeches manifests the significance of underlying personality traits.¹³⁵ Through ProfilerPlus, a program developed for the quantitative coding process, frequency of the word or phrase within the speeches of leaders is taken as the unit of analysis and that frequency is also measured based on the length of the text. Measurements are employed according to certain traits that belong to the leadership skills. According to Hermann, these traits include:

¹³⁵ Hermann, 2005.

1. An individual's general distrust or suspiciousness of others
2. The tendency to focus on problem solving
3. The belief that one can influence or control what happens
4. The intensity with which a person holds an in-group bias
5. Self-confidence
6. Conceptual complexity
7. The need for power and influence.¹³⁶

As a contribution to Hermann's approach, this study also adopted Winter's approach and his "need for affiliation" concept. This term is defined as the author's objective of establishing, maintaining, or restoring positive affective relations with another person in the speeches.¹³⁷ In other words, eight leadership traits is investigated within this study.

Table 2: LTA + Need For Affiliation Results¹³⁸

Leader	DIS (1)	TASK (2)	BACE (3)	IGB (4)	SC (5)	CC (6)	PWR (7)	nAFF (8)
Netanyahu	0,15374	0,46136	0,423	0,19066	0,30328	0,54662	0,26832	29
Orban	0,118	0,67326	0,38114	0,15536	0,43686	0,56362	0,3126	41,2

After ten sample speeches (five for each) processed in the ProfilerPlus, the data shows that there is a similarity of leadership mindsets and traits for Netanyahu and Orban. Such similarity between the two leaders also does not necessarily exclude the differences. For instance, in the

¹³⁶ Hermann, 1999.

¹³⁷ David G. Winter, 'Manual for Scoring Motive Imagery in Running Text (and Related Materials)', 2016.

¹³⁸ DIS -- Distrust score, TASK -- Task score, BACE -- Belief in Ability to Control Events score, IGB -- Ingroup Bias score, SC -- Self-Confidence score, CC -- Conceptual Complexity score, PWR -- Need for Power score, nAFF - Need for Affiliation score.

sample speeches he made between 2017 and 2021, Orban seems to pay more attention to having positive affective relations with his counterparts than Netanyahu (8).

In fact, as described in the qualitative analysis, Orban revealed that he is a pragmatist in establishing personal relations with the leaders of countries that serve Hungary's interest, regardless of having sympathy with that leader's ideology. Other two distinguishing traits are self-confidence (5) and the tendency to focus on problem solving (2). While the former term reflects the author's understanding of "self-importance, or image of his or her ability to cope adequately with objects and persons in the environment," the latter refers to "the relative emphasis on interactions with others when dealing problems as opposed to focusing on the feelings and needs of relevant and important constituents."¹³⁹ The reason why Orban had a greater score might be sourced his drawing himself a leadership image based on the objective of "nation-building" in the post-Communist era. Hence, Orban's perception of his leadership makes Hungary as a country that struggles with challenges on the route of building a nation (problem-solving) and gains confidence with the achievements (self-confidence). In fact, in every selected speech in 2017-2021, Orban refers to nation-building process that Hungary goes through:

"Our business is with the building of a nation, not with the jostling of pint-sized parties. And seen from the vantage point of the Hungarian nation, we have a choice between two paths: we can choose the one leading to the wide gate of national greatness, or the one that leads to the swamp of hatred." (2017)

"I can express what we've done as transforming the process of unifying the nation into a process of nation building. The dress rehearsal for this was held in April this year. The results demonstrate that Hungarian nation building is succeeding." (2018)

"In summary, allow me to bid you farewell by inviting everyone to defend and to build our country. Our police officers and soldiers are protecting the borders with firm hands. Our officers are building a new Hungarian army at maximum speed." (2019)

¹³⁹ 'Output Help', accessed 20 June 2021, <https://profilerplus.org/Profiler/OutputHelp>.

However, two leaders share more than what they differ. Their score for the remaining five traits are very close or nearly the same. As discussed in the qualitative analysis, these score reflect the similar leadership mindset between the two leaders. Even though Netanyahu speaks less self-confidently than Orban in his speeches, this does not prevent him to believe that he can control the events (3). Moreover, his distrust of others (1) and in-group bias (4) is slightly greater than Orban. These might be because the devastating experience of the Holocaust and the significance of the Israeli state's survival against the re-emergence of such experience.

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION

This study aimed to discuss why Israel and Hungary developed good relations after 2017. Despite official relations were established in the aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union, these relations used to be more volatile than it is in the last five years. In this regard, it is argued that good personal relations, similar leadership mindsets and traits of the two leaders, Netanyahu and Orban, became a significant contributor to the developing ties between the two countries. Ultimately, this study discovered that the process in the last years could not be adequately explained without considering the leadership and “first image” aspect of the relations.

One might still claim that leadership matters less than the phenomenon in global politics and populism could have been a sufficient framework to explain the fostering ties between Israel and Hungary. Although this argument can seem persuasive given the fact that both Netanyahu and Orban had good relations with populist leaders in global politics, it has still shortcomings. For instance, even though two statesmen mention similar threats to themselves, there are many differences in terms of the reaction given and populism cannot explain all of these factors. In other words, changing patterns of leadership over time for Netanyahu and Orban is not necessarily related to the rising populism in global politics.

Moreover, there is a transformation of the concept of the leadership. As the case of this study argued, similar kinds of leadership traits can be a motivating factor for two states that reconcile and open a new page in their relationship. This might be related to the leaders’ acting more comfortably towards their counterparts who are coming from the same mentality, rather than those who have an ideological affinity. Namely, ideological affiliation does not necessarily shape similar rhetoric among leaders, but how they perceive leadership, as well as the way that adopted in performing leadership can also bring about similar discourses.

Such a new contextualization of leadership in foreign policy paves the way for examining various cases in the field of international politics. For instance, a comparison of good personal relations between the statesmen in two different cases can be studied for enlightening the impact of leadership in the strength of bilateral relations. In order to have a better analysis of such impact, relations between two countries that either one or two of them are not categorized as populist democracies can be studied. Lastly, as an increasingly strong actor within the Central and Eastern Europe, Israel's relations with other Visegrad Group countries can be examined and the impact of leadership on the formation of good relations can be studied. Nonetheless, the achievement of such studies goes through the way of increasing interest in adequately understanding the leadership in international politics and its influence in making foreign policy agenda.

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