

Article

Imago Dei and Peoplehood: Comparative Rhetorics of Racialization in Orthodox and Jewish Public Discourse

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Abstract

This article examines how sacred vocabularies from Orthodox Christianity and Judaism function in racialised public discourse in Poland and Ukraine between 2020 and 2025. It asks how terms such as imago Dei/tselem Elohim, neighbour-love and chesed, holiness/purity, suffering/martyrdom, and exile/return are mobilised across pulpit, policy, and platform communication. Drawing on a corpus of 23 publicly available texts, the study applies comparative rhetorical discourse analysis informed by Burke's concepts of identification and logology and Pernot's account of the religious dimension of rhetoric, alongside a coding scheme focused on topoi, metaphors, frames, appeals, and boundary work. The findings show convergences in dignity claims, memorial warning, and care rhetoric under conditions of war and displacement but also clear divergences: Jewish discourse more often mobilises peoplehood as a rhetoric of continuity and communal protection, whereas Orthodox discourse more often ties sacred language to national-historical self-location, ecclesial autonomy, and opposition to *ruskii mir* ("Russian world"). Across the retained corpus, dog-whistle-like discourse appears mainly as an object of quotation or denunciation, while explicit counter-speech is widespread. The article concludes that sacred language remains an active rhetorical resource for defining dignity, injury, solidarity, and belonging, although its function varies across arenas, traditions, and the corpus's asymmetries.

Keywords: rhetoric of religion; racialization; Orthodox Christianity; Judaism; peoplehood; memory politics; migration and displacement; public discourse; digital mediation; Eastern Europe



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1. Introduction

1.1. Problematization and Research Gap

This article examines how sacred vocabularies from Orthodox Christianity and Judaism circulate in contemporary racialised and racially coded public discourse, and what rhetorical work these vocabularies perform when communities speak about inclusion, exclusion, dignity, threat, injury, and belonging. The focus is not theology in general but the public life of specific sacralized terms and clusters of terms—imago Dei/tselem Elohim, love of neighbour and chesed, holiness/purity, suffering/martyrdom, and exile/return—when they are mobilised in sermons and pastoral addresses, in institutional statements

and communiqués, and in digitally mediated public communication. The article is therefore concerned with circulation and uptake: who uses these terms, in which arena, under which pressures, and with what argumentative effects.

The 2020–2025 period is analytically important because platform-mediated publics intensify the recontextualization of public language, collapse previously distinct audiences, and accelerate the movement of utterances across settings and genres (Marwick and boyd 2011). One salient example is the renewed civilizational frame of “Christian Europe” in contemporary European political rhetoric. Scholarship on civilisationism shows how far-right and national-conservative actors often mobilise Christianity less as a confessional doctrine than as a marker of heritage, moral order, and supranational belonging, thereby drawing a boundary between a putatively homogeneous European-Christian “us” and allegedly incompatible outsiders (Brubaker 2017; Cerrone 2023; Wolkenstein 2023).

Across Eastern Europe and beyond, migration and civilizational-threat narratives have likewise supplied durable rhetorical templates for boundary-making. Research on migration discourse demonstrates how refugees and migrants are repeatedly framed through metaphors such as “waves,” “floods,” and “invasion,” as well as through broader imaginaries of disorder, burden, and inassimilability (Montagut and Moragas-Fernández 2020; Taylor 2021). In the Polish case specifically, official political discourse has produced sharply differentiated representations of non-EU migrants across the crises of 2015–2016, 2021, and 2022, revealing how state actors discursively distinguish between desirable and undesirable mobility in ways closely tied to Europe, borders, and belonging (Laurent and Thevenin 2024). These templates matter here because sacred terms can be recruited either to moralise exclusion or to contest it in the name of shared dignity.

At the same time, the period has been marked by renewed struggles over memory, including Holocaust remembrance, memory politics, and the public interpretation of antisemitism. In the European context, antisemitism is increasingly treated not only as a historical legacy but also as a present-tense legal, educational, and civic problem (Dudek 2024; European Commission 2024). Policy-oriented work by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and UNESCO likewise links antisemitism education to Holocaust education, democratic culture, and human rights frameworks (OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and UNESCO 2018). Parallel scholarship on digital Holocaust memory shows that archives, museums, and platform infrastructures now help shape what becomes visible, authoritative, and publicly narratable in remembrance cultures (Pfanzer 2015; Manca 2021).

The research gap addressed in this article is not simply that there is too little work on religion and exclusion. Rather, the gap is comparative and infrastructural. Existing discussions still tend to treat Orthodox and Jewish public discourse in separate scholarly silos, to privilege one arena at a time, most often institutional politics or platform controversy, and to oscillate between doctrinal readings of what a tradition teaches and sociological descriptions of what a group does. What remains underdeveloped is a comparative account of how sacred terms themselves function as portable rhetorical resources across pulpit, policy, and platform: resources that can authorise dignity claims, communal solidarity, or boundary-making under conditions of racialization. In the present study, that question is pursued through a corpus concentrated on antisemitism, migration and displacement, memory politics, and selected instances of civilizational rhetoric in Poland and Ukraine (see Table 1; Appendix A).

Table 1. Descriptive Composition of the Analysed Corpus (2020–2025).

Panel A. Distribution by Year and Arena				
Year	Pulpit (n)	Policy (n)	Platform (n)	Total (n)
2020	0	1	2	3
2021	1	1	1	3
2022	1	4	2	7
2023	0	2	0	2
2024	0	3	2	5
2025	1	1	1	3
Total	3	12	8	23
Panel B. Distribution by tradition and arena				
Tradition	Pulpit (n)	Policy (n)	Platform (n)	Total (n)
Orthodox Christian	3	5	1	9
Jewish	0	7	7	14
Total	3	12	8	23
Panel C. Distribution by language				
Language	n			
Polish	2			
Ukrainian	7			
Russian	0			
English	14			
Total	23			
Panel D. Distribution by topical tags (non-exclusive)				
Topical tag	n (items tagged)			
Antisemitism	11			
Anti-Romani racism	0			
Migration/displacement	7			
“Christian Europe”/civilizational rhetoric	3			
Memory politics/memory ethics	10			

1.2. Definitions and Conceptual Boundaries

“Race” is an unstable and often indirect category in Eastern European contexts, where social classification is frequently articulated through idioms of nation, ethnicity, religion, civilisation, and geopolitics rather than through explicit Anglophone-style race talk. For that reason, this article foregrounds racialization rather than race as such. Recent scholarship on the eastern part of the European Union argues that race and racialization remain analytically relevant even where public discourse appears to prefer other labels, while related work on ethnicity in Europe shows that ethnicity often functions as a node through which religious, cultural, national, and racialised forms of difference are negotiated (Kalmar 2023; van der Tol and Becker 2024). Following Yuval-Davis et al. (2017), racialization is understood here as the discursive and practical construction of quasi-naturalised boundaries between collectivities in ways that stabilise hierarchy and unequal power relations.

This definition is especially important for Eastern Europe because it permits analytical continuity between overt racial language and culturally coded exclusions that perform

similar sorting work. Contemporary European exclusion often operates through cultural and civilizational vocabularies rather than through explicit biological racism. Scholarship on civilisationism and cultural Christianity shows how Christianity can be mobilised less as a confessional commitment than as a marker of heritage, order, and supranational belonging, especially in opposition to groups cast as civilisationally incompatible with Europe (Brubaker 2017; Hennig and Hidalgo 2021; Wolkenstein 2023). In this article, therefore, racialization does not require explicit racial naming; it refers more broadly to processes through which difference is stabilised, moralised, and made politically consequential through hierarchies of belonging.

This clarification is especially important because Eastern Europe is sometimes treated as marginal to the history of race, as if racialization belonged primarily to Atlantic slavery, Western European colonialism, or Black–white relations in the United States. The present article uses racialization in a broader discourse-analytic sense. It refers to processes through which collectivities are represented as naturally, culturally, religiously, or civilisational differences that organise power, belonging, vulnerability, and exclusion. In this sense, racialization is highly relevant to Eastern European contexts, where difference is often articulated through nation, ethnicity, religion, civilisation, security, and geopolitical loyalty rather than through an explicit biological-race vocabulary.

The article uses *peoplehood* to designate a repertoire of collective belonging that is not reducible to either religion as a private belief or the nation as a modern state form. In Jewish contexts, Reinhartz (2014) describes peoplehood as a mode of unity among dispersed Jews, organised around shared identity and action, while also stressing that the term is internally complex, contested, and partly aspirational. That tension is precisely what makes peoplehood rhetorically productive in contested publics. In the present study, the term is used analytically to describe a recurrent mode of communal self-description, continuity, and protective solidarity in the Jewish materials. By contrast, *civilizational Christianity* refers here to discursive moves that treat Christianity less as a lived faith than as a cultural boundary marker that defines who properly belongs to Europe or the nation. This civilizational logic is not identical to Orthodox political theology, but it can intersect with Orthodox-majority settings where church–nation entanglements remain historically deep and politically salient (Gauthier 2022; Hennig and Hidalgo 2021; Wolkenstein 2023). In the present corpus, this rhetoric appears chiefly in national-historical and anti-imperial forms rather than as a fully developed populist “Christian Europe” discourse in the West European sense.

Civilisational logic and Orthodox Christian political theology are therefore treated here as overlapping but analytically distinct formations. A civilizational framework operates at the macro-political level: it presents societies as large historical-cultural blocs and emphasises continuity, collective identity, cultural boundaries, sovereignty, and geopolitical competition. Within such a framework, Orthodoxy may function as a marker of heritage, moral vocabulary, historical memory, national continuity, or social cohesion, even when the primary aims are strategic, nationalist, or state-centred rather than ecclesial. Orthodox Christian political theology, by contrast, emerges from theological reflection on authority, moral order, Church–state relations, and salvation. It cannot be reduced to nationalism or geopolitics. The two intersect in Orthodox-majority contexts because church history, national memory, and state formation have often been deeply entangled; however, the state’s civilizational agenda should not be treated as identical with Orthodox theology itself.

In this article, *sacred lexicon* means a recurrent repertoire of terms, topoi, metaphors, and scripturally or liturgically resonant formulas that travel across genres and arenas—homily, pastoral address, institutional communiqué, commemorative post, interview, or

statement-amplifying web text. A lexicon is not the same thing as a full doctrine; it is a portable repertoire that can be selectively activated, recombined, and reframed. This usage builds on discourse-analytic work that treats religious language as internally heterogeneous and distributed across multiple communicative settings, including institutional and media discourse, rather than as a single undifferentiated register (Pihlaja 2021; Power 2021). Our use of the term emphasises its rhetorical function: how specific sacralized terms become usable resources within contested public discourse.

In addition, the article uses the expression *ruskii mir* (literally, “Russian world”) to refer to a contemporary Russian civilizational and ecclesial-political ideology that presents Russian language, culture, Orthodox Christianity, historical memory, and geopolitical loyalty as elements of a unified transnational space centred on Moscow. In the present article, the term is not used as a neutral cultural label, but as an emic and contested public category invoked, criticised, or denounced in the analysed Orthodox materials, especially in relation to war, ecclesial authority, and Ukrainian resistance to Russian imperial domination.

1.3. Literature Review

First, this study builds on rhetoric-of-religion approaches that treat religious language not as a neutral record of belief but as a distinctive mode of persuasion and public world-making. Within this perspective, sacred discourse is understood as symbolic action: it organises authority, affect, and communal identification rather than merely expressing doctrinal content. Pernot’s formulation remains a concise justification for such an approach: “Rhetoric itself possesses a religious dimension in the power of words, the effectiveness of speech, and the magic of persuasion” (Pernot 2006, p. 235). Recent discourse-analytic work on religion similarly argues that religious language should be studied across multiple communicative settings and genres rather than reduced to a single, homogeneous register (Pihlaja 2021).

Second, scholarship on civilisationism, cultural Christianity, and migration discourse clarifies why religion functions as a publicly legible marker of belonging even when theological commitments are weak or indirect. Brubaker’s account of “civilisationism” shows how contemporary European populist rhetoric often shifts from narrowly national self-definitions toward broader civilizational ones, especially in opposition to Islam (Brubaker 2017). Cerrone further demonstrates how the European far right reconciles nationalism with supranational “European civilisation” through discursive mechanisms that present civilizational identity as both general heritage and national repertoire (Cerrone 2023). Related work on cultural Christianity explains how Christianity may function as a selective identity marker detached from lived faith and mobilised in anti-Muslim politics or exclusionary memory constructions (Hennig and Hidalgo 2021). Complementary research on migration discourse shows how metaphors such as “waves,” “floods,” and “invasion” frame migrants as threats, burdens, or disorders while preserving the appearance of cultural rather than biological differentiation (Taylor 2021; Montagut and Moragas-Fernández 2020). This body of scholarship is particularly relevant to the present article because the retained corpus includes texts on migration, displacement, and selected instances of civilizational rhetoric, but not explicit anti-Romani material.

Third, work on Orthodox-majority Eastern Europe provides the socio-historical background necessary to interpret references to statehood, ecclesial autonomy, suffering, and sacred history in Orthodox discourse. Gauthier argues that religious change in Orthodox-majority Eastern Europe cannot be understood apart from long processes of nationalisation and statization, followed by post-communist marketisation and renewed nationalist entanglements (Gauthier 2022). Triandafyllidou similarly shows that religion and nationalism in Central, Eastern, and Southeastern Europe remain deeply intertwined through histori-

cal church–state relations, post-communist transformations, and more recent nativist and anti-immigrant mobilisations (Triandafyllidou 2024). These studies matter for the present article because they help explain why sacred language in the Orthodox materials is often bound to national-historical self-location, public legitimacy, and opposition to imperial domination rather than operating solely as confessional speech.

Finally, research on antisemitism, Holocaust memory, and digital mediation helps explain why memory has become such a consequential public language in Jewish materials and, in a different register, in Orthodox responses to war and suffering. Dudek shows that antisemitism has become an increasingly explicit object of European Union policy and public value formation rather than merely a residual historical concern (Dudek 2024). Policy guidance from the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and UNESCO links education about antisemitism to Holocaust education, democratic citizenship, and human-rights frameworks (OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and UNESCO 2018). At the same time, studies of digital Holocaust memory demonstrate that websites, museums, archives, and platforms do not simply disseminate remembrance but shape what becomes visible, authoritative, and publicly narratable (Pfanzer 2015; Manca 2021; Bar-Gil 2025). These strands are directly relevant to the present study, since the corpus is especially strong on antisemitism, memory politics, and institutionally mediated digital circulation.

1.4. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this article combines Burkean identification and logology with Pernot’s account of the religious dimension of rhetoric. Burke is central because he treats rhetoric not primarily as ornament but as symbolic action that manages social division through identification. His well-known formulation is directly relevant to the dual dynamics examined here: “Identification is affirmed with earnestness precisely because there is division. Identification is compensatory to division” (Burke 1969, p. 22). In the present context, sacred terms can function as identification operators, expanding a moral “we” through appeals to dignity, solidarity, and shared vulnerability, but they can also stabilise more bounded collectivities by tying moral worth to historical inheritance, communal continuity, sacred memory, or civilizational self-location.

Burke’s notion of logology provides the methodological bridge for taking religious vocabulary seriously as symbolic action rather than as passive doctrinal residue. In this perspective, the analysis does not treat sacred terms simply as reflections of pre-existing social realities; rather, it tracks how terminological choices help organise those realities. Terms such as *imago Dei*/tselem Elohim, love of neighbour, and chesed, suffering, memory, captivity, and return are therefore approached as rhetorical resources that may ground universalist claims about human dignity but may also participate in the allocation of vulnerability, legitimacy, threat, and moral obligation across social groups (Burke 1970).

Pernot complements Burke by making explicit that rhetoric itself may carry a religious dimension. As he argues, rhetoric “possesses a religious dimension” in the attributed power and efficacy of words (Pernot 2006, p. 235). This is especially important for the present study because the texts analysed here do not speak only as repositories of opinion. They frequently claim a distinct kind of moral force by invoking God’s image, chosen peoplehood, sacred memory, suffering, liberation, or ecclesial and historical continuity. This helps explain why the same lexicon may circulate either as a resource of moral exhortation, communal self-description, public denunciation, or boundary-making.

Operationally, the framework is implemented through a discourse-analytic coding scheme that tracks five interrelated dimensions: topoi, metaphors, frames, appeals, and boundary work (for a compact analytical mapping of the retained corpus, see Appendix B).

Topoi are treated as warrants or conclusion rules linking arguments to claims; metaphors are treated as structuring resources that shape perception and evaluation; frames are treated as patterned selections that make some aspects of reality more salient than others; appeals are treated as the ethical, affective, and argumentative means by which texts seek adherence; and boundary work is treated as the discursive production of inclusion, exclusion, and conditions of belonging (Entman 1993; Lakoff and Johnson 2003; Reisigl and Wodak 2009). Special attention is paid to how sacred terms function as warrants and boundary markers across pulpit, policy, and platform discourse.

Genre sensitivity is essential to this framework. Religious discourse is not monolithic, and religious language circulates across multiple communicative settings, including sermons, institutional statements, media commentary, commemorative texts, and digitally mediated public communication. This means that the rhetorical function of a sacred term cannot be assumed to remain stable across arenas. The same term may operate differently in a homily, in an official communiqué, and in an institutionally curated digital post; accordingly, the analysis treats genre and arena not as background variables but as constitutive conditions of rhetorical meaning (Pihlaja 2021; Power 2021).

1.5. Research Questions and Expected Contributions

The article is structured around four research questions.

RQ1. *How do imago Deitselem Elohim and vocabularies of neighbour-love and chesed function as warrants of dignity and, where relevant, as resources of boundary-making across pulpit, policy, and platform discourse?*

RQ2. *Where do Orthodox and Jewish public lexicons converge and diverge in texts addressing antisemitism, migration and displacement, memory politics, and narratives of “Christian Europe,” especially in Poland and Ukraine and in selected English-language materials circulating within those publics?*

RQ3. *How does the rhetorical function of sacred terms change as discourse moves from pulpit to policy to platform—for example, from pastoral interpretation to institutional legitimation and then to digitally mediated circulation?*

RQ4. *What forms of cross-borrowing, strategic imitation, or agonistic mirroring emerge between Orthodox and Jewish public rhetoric, and with what consequences for boundary work and interreligious intelligibility?*

These questions are pursued comparatively across the three arenas, but not with equal evidential density. Given the composition of the retained corpus, the comparison is strongest in the policy arena, more limited in the platform arena, and least symmetrical in the pulpit arena.

The article makes three principal contributions. First, it develops a typology of sacred rhetorics of racialization across two traditions and three communicative arenas (see Table 2). Second, it provides an empirically grounded account of how shared sacred terms are recruited for dignity claims, communal self-description, and forms of boundary-making under conditions of racialization (see Tables 2–5). Third, it offers practical implications for dialogical rhetorical practice aimed at reducing exclusion while preserving doctrinal integrity and confessional distinctiveness.

The main findings may be briefly anticipated here. The analysis shows that sacred language functions differently across the three arenas examined in the article. In pulpit discourse, sacred vocabulary remains embedded in extended interpretation, where scripture, doctrine, and pastoral application are connected within one argumentative movement. In policy texts, the same vocabulary is compressed into formal warrants, public

denunciations, and institutional claims to legitimacy. In the platform materials retained in the corpus, sacred language functions mainly through amplification, commemoration, and interpretive stabilisation rather than through fragmentary polemic. Overall, the corpus points less to covert signalling from within the analysed materials and more to explicit counter-speech directed against violence, antisemitism, and the moral corruption associated with war and domination.

Table 2. Typology Matrix of “Sacred Race Rhetorics” in the Present Corpus.

Sacred Node/Lexeme Cluster	Dominant Rhetorical Functions	Typical Markers in the Corpus	Typical Contexts	Main Exclusion Risk
<i>Imago Dei/tselem Elohim</i> /sacred anthropology and dignity language	Universal dignity warrant; condemnation of hatred; protection of civilians	dignity, respect, tolerance, truth, “brother’s blood,” “people of a free country”	antisemitism; war; civic appeals	conditional universalism when linked to national or civilizational priorities
Peoplehood	Communal continuity; transnational linkage; protective solidarity	Jewish community, resilience, continuity, remembrance, shared public responsibility	antisemitism; memory politics; communal security	defensive closure; “our community first” logic
Civilizational Christianity/sacralized national-ecclesial rhetoric	Sacralized nationhood; anti-imperial ecclesial identity; heritage defense	Baptism of Rus-Ukraine, statehood, canonical order, critique of <i>ruskii mir</i>	war; statehood; church independence	moralized boundary drawing; conflation of church and nation
Love of neighbor and chesed/hospitality	Refugee care; solidarity; institutional assistance	support, shelter, prayer, hotline assistance, displaced persons	migration; forced displacement; wartime care	narrowing care to one’s own community (only weakly attested in the present corpus)
Holiness/purity/moralized boundary language	Moralized distinction between truth and corruption; canonical legitimacy	canon/non-canon; purity of faith; corruption; captivity	church conflict; wartime moral evaluation	sacralized delegitimation of opponents rather than explicit racialization
Suffering/martyrdom/memory	Memorial warning; empathy; public denunciation	Holocaust remembrance, Babyn Yar, Drobytskyi Yar, “Never Again,” blood of Abel	memory politics; antisemitism; war	competitive memory; monopolization of suffering
Exile/return/displacement	Endurance, liberation, restoration	refugees, displacement, captivity, exodus, freedom, return, restoration	migration; war; national-historical restoration	transfer of sacred narrative into contemporary political antagonism

Note: The categories in this table are unevenly represented across the corpus. In particular, the holiness/purity cluster is weakly attested, and the table therefore maps recurrent tendencies in the retained material rather than a fully symmetrical distribution across traditions, arenas, and topics.

Table 3. Observed Patterns of Convergence and Mirroring in the Present Corpus.

Pattern	Description	Representative CIDs	Principal Arenas	Strength of Attestation
Analogical moral universalism	A specific injury is scaled outward into a wider moral claim	O3, J12, J14	Policy	Moderate
Mirrored memory politics	Past suffering authorizes present vigilance, judgment, or warning	O2, O9, J3, J12, J13	Pulpit; Policy; Platform	Strong
Institutional counter-speech	Formal statements respond to provocation by fixing the legitimate interpretation of an event or utterance	O5, J1, J10, J12, J14	Policy; Platform	Strong

Note: The examples listed in Table 3 are illustrative rather than exhaustive. The table identifies recurring patterns in the retained corpus, not stable features of Orthodox and Jewish discourse in general.

Table 4. Operational Indicators and their Attestation in the Present Corpus.

Code Family	Minimum Indicators	Attestation in the Present Corpus	Typical Rhetorical Effect
Dog-whistle	indirection, coded proxy terms, euphemism, plausible deniability	Low; appears mainly as a quoted, paraphrased, or denounced object of response	indirect boundary tightening
Prophetic counter-rhetoric	explicit naming of injustice, moral indictment, call for action or repair, solidarity with the vulnerable	High in policy and pulpit; moderate on platform	delegitimation of hate and expansion of moral concern

Table 5. Lexeme Cluster x Arena x Tradition x Dominant Coded Tendency in the Present Corpus.

Lexeme Cluster	Orthodox—Pulpit	Orthodox—Policy	Orthodox—Platform	Jewish—Pulpit	Jewish—Policy	Jewish—Platform
<i>Imago Dei/tselem Elohim</i> /sacred anthropology	A	I	N/A	N/A	I	I
Peoplehood	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	A	A
Civilizational Christianity/national-ecclesial rhetoric	A	A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Love of neighbor and <i>chesed</i> /hospitality	I	I	I	N/A	I	I
Holiness/purity	A	A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Suffering/martyrdom/memory	A	A	N/A	N/A	I	I
Exile/return/displacement	A	A	I	N/A	A	A

Note: I = inclusion-dominant; A = ambivalent or mixed; N/A = not attested in the present corpus.

1.6. Article Roadmap

Section 2 details the study design, corpus construction, sampling logic, metadata procedures, coding scheme, and analytical workflow, including the selection criteria for pulpit, policy, and platform materials. It also explains the procedures used for translation, reliability checks, source traceability, and ethical handling of public data. A full list of retained corpus items is provided in Appendix A. Section 3 presents the results in two stages. It begins with a descriptive account of the corpus, then develops a typology of recurrent sacred-lexicon clusters and their rhetorical functions. The section proceeds by examining arena-specific patterns in pulpit, policy, and platform discourse, before turning to cross-tradition mirroring, dog-whistle-like discourse as an object of denunciation, and the comparative matrix summarising the dominant coded tendencies in the corpus (Table 5). Section 4 discusses these findings through Burkean identification and logology together with Pernot's account of the religious dimension of rhetoric. It also considers the effects of majority/minority asymmetry, the specificities of the Eastern European setting, the practical implications of the findings for dialogical public speech, and the limitations of the present corpus. Section 5 concludes by summarising the main findings, restating the article's principal contributions, and outlining directions for further research.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Study Design

This study employs a comparative rhetorical discourse analysis (RDA) to examine how sacred vocabularies are mobilised in racialised and racially coded public discourse

in Orthodox Christian and Jewish materials. RDA is appropriate here because it combines discourse-analytic attention to linguistic and semiotic patterning, textual organisation, and context with rhetorical attention to persuasion, audience positioning, and the social effects of discourse. In methodological terms, the study also draws on critical discourse studies, which foreground the relationship between discourse, power, ideology, and social practice. This combination is particularly useful for tracing how sacred language operates not only as a theological expression but also as a public argument and boundary-making practice (Andrus 2013; Wodak and Meyer 2015).

The comparison is organized across three communicative arenas that differ in genre conventions, authority regimes, and circulation logics: (a) pulpit communication, including sermons and pastoral addresses; (b) policy communication, including synodal, episcopal, and Jewish communal institutional statements as well as positions issued by closely affiliated organizations; and (c) platform communication, including institutionally curated digital posts, commemorative notices, interviews, and statement-amplifying web texts. This multi-arena design is consistent with current work on religious discourse that emphasises the need to analyse multiple kinds of texts and talk, including institutional, media, political, and ritual language (Pihlaja 2021; Power 2021).

The analytical goal is not to estimate prevalence in a population, but to identify recurrent rhetorical mechanisms through which sacred lexicon items become usable resources for claims about dignity, belonging, solidarity, and boundary-making across these arenas. The primary unit of analysis is a bounded public communication event—for example, a sermon text, an institutional statement, a commemorative post, or an interview. Within each unit, we segment and annotate passages containing either (i) explicit sacred markers (e.g., *imago Dei/tselem Elohim*, “image and likeness,” scriptural or rabbinic citations, or formulaic theological phrases) or (ii) functional equivalents that perform comparable argumentative work in context.

For each marked passage, we code the immediate argumentative linkage: which claim is advanced, which warrants or authorities are invoked, and which forms of “we/they” positioning are produced. To strengthen interpretive validity, the analysis uses triangulation across genres, arenas, and traditions, comparing how motifs recur, shift, or disappear as they move between sites rather than inferring from a single text type alone (Flick 2018; Wodak and Meyer 2015; Reisigl and Wodak 2015). At the same time, the comparison is not equally dense across all arenas. In the retained corpus, the policy arena provides the strongest basis for cross-tradition comparison, whereas the pulpit and platform arenas are more asymmetrical (see Table 1).

Because the article explicitly tracks circulation, it does not treat pulpit, policy, and platform as sealed containers. Instead, the movement of key phrases and motifs between them is analysed as recontextualization: discourse is taken out of one social or communicative setting and inserted into another, where its meaning, force, and legitimation may change (van Leeuwen 2008; Reisigl and Wodak 2015). This is especially important when pastoral language is incorporated into institutional statements, or when statements are represented in institutionally mediated digital formats. In the present corpus, the platform arena is represented chiefly by curated digital materials rather than native short-form social-media threads; accordingly, the analysis focuses less on micro-level interactional exchange and more on mediated circulation, amplification, and public reframing.

2.2. Corpus Construction and Sampling Strategy

The corpus covers the period 2020–2025. This time frame was selected because it captures an intensified phase of digitally mediated circulation of religious speech, heightened public contestation around antisemitism, migration and displacement, memory politics,

and selected forms of civilizational rhetoric, as well as the increasing role of platforms in shaping how public religious language travels, is excerpted, and is reframed. The primary geographic focus is Poland and Ukraine. English-language materials were included when they were published by institutions operating in those contexts or when they clearly circulated within the Polish or Ukrainian public debate.

The corpus was constructed through purposive sampling, with priority given to information-rich cases rather than statistical representativeness. This approach is appropriate because the study seeks to identify rhetorical mechanisms and recurrent configurations rather than to make population-level claims. The selection process combines criterion-based inclusion with maximum-variation logic (Palinkas et al. 2015). To be included, a text had to (i) address a race-related, racialised, or racially coded topic and (ii) contain at least one sacred lexicon marker or a functional equivalent performing comparable argumentative work. In practice, this meant sampling across different institutional levels, issue clusters, and genres so that the analysis would not collapse into a single institutional voice, a single-issue domain, or a single media ecology.

The sampling frame included materials in Polish, Ukrainian, Russian, and English, as well as topic clusters such as antisemitism, anti-Romani racism, migration/displacement, memory politics, and civilizational rhetoric. In the final retained corpus, however, only Polish, Ukrainian, and English texts are represented, and no anti-Romani item met the final inclusion criteria. These absences are explicitly reported in the Results (see Table 1) and treated as limitations of the present dataset rather than concealed in the design description.

In the pulpit arena, the corpus includes publicly available sermon texts and pastoral addresses distributed through official ecclesiastical channels. In the retained corpus, this arena is represented solely by Orthodox materials. Where a text originated as a spoken address but circulated online in written form, the institutionally published written version was treated as the unit of analysis.

In the policy arena, the corpus includes official statements, communiqués, declarations, resolutions, and position papers issued by Orthodox synods, episcopates, and church offices, as well as by Jewish communal institutions and closely affiliated organisations. Each policy document was recorded with metadata specifying issuer, date, institutional level, publication channel, and, where identifiable, the immediate triggering event.

In the platform arena, the corpus includes institutionally curated digital materials published on websites and web-connected public platforms: commemorative posts, statement-amplifying news items, interviews, forum recaps, and similar digital texts designed for public circulation. Because access to native platform data has become increasingly restricted in the post-API environment, and because older short-form interactions are often difficult to reconstruct consistently, the present platform corpus relies on publicly accessible and auditable materials captured through stable URLs and archived web pages rather than comprehensive API-based harvesting (Bruns 2019; Perriam et al. 2020; Rogers 2013). As a result, the platform arena in this study is better understood as a corpus of digitally mediated institutional circulation than as a comprehensive corpus of native social media interaction.

The sampling design allowed for materials in Polish, Ukrainian, Russian, and English. In the final retained corpus, however, only Polish, Ukrainian, and English texts are represented. Because the analysis is conducted on original-language texts while the article itself is written in English, translation is treated as an analytical operation rather than as a merely technical step. Cross-language qualitative research has shown that translation choices affect interpretive validity and therefore need to be made methodologically visible (Squires 2009; van Nes et al. 2010). Accordingly, quoted passages are presented, where feasible, with the original-language excerpt or a faithful transliteration alongside the English

translation, and the project maintains a translation memo log recording ambiguity, alternative renderings, and reasons for the chosen version—especially in the case of semantically dense terms such as “neighbor,” “peoplehood,” “purity,” “holiness,” or expressions that may carry different rhetorical force across contexts.

The translation workflow is based on forward translation by a competent bilingual researcher, followed by team review focused on conceptual equivalence and rhetorical function rather than lexical matching alone. Where ambiguity is especially consequential, an additional verification step is used, such as an independent second translation followed by reconciliation. Back-translation may serve as one quality-control procedure in cross-cultural research (Brislin 1970), but it is not treated here as a stand-alone guarantee of translation quality. Methodological scholarship has shown both the limits of back-translation and the value of more collaborative, iterative, and functionally oriented translation procedures (Douglas and Craig 2007; Behr 2017).

The study analyses publicly available discourse, but public availability is not treated as an ethical blank check. Internet research ethics guidance emphasises contextual integrity, vulnerability, proportionality, and harm minimisation, especially where verbatim quotations can be reverse-searched and linked back to identifiable individuals (Franzke et al. 2020). In practical terms, verbatim quotation is used primarily for institutional sources and public figures acting in a public capacity. For content posted by private individuals, the study avoids searchable verbatim quotation where that could facilitate identification or harassment; handles and other identifying details are redacted, and patterns are reported through paraphrase or analytic description where appropriate.

A full list of retained corpus items, together with dates, arenas, languages, topic tags, and source URLs, is provided in Appendix A.

2.3. Metadata, Source Traceability, and Replicability

To maximise transparency and support replicability, each retained corpus item—sermon or homily, pastoral address, institutional communiqué, statement, commemorative post, interview, or other web-native public text—is registered in a structured metadata table and assigned a unique internal identifier. For every document, we record at minimum the date of publication, the date of retrieval for online materials, arena (pulpit, policy, or platform), tradition (Orthodox or Jewish), institutional or author attribution, country, language, genre, and the primary topical tag or tags that motivated inclusion, such as anti-semitism, migration/displacement, “Christian Europe”/civilizational rhetoric, or memory politics. This metadata architecture is intended to strengthen findability and reusability in line with the FAIR principles and with current metadata standards for the description and citation of research outputs (Wilkinson et al. 2016; DataCite Metadata Working Group 2024).

Because a substantial subset of the corpus is web-native and therefore vulnerable to reference rot, link rot, and content drift, the study retains canonical URLs or DOIs, where available, together with retrieval timestamps. This documentation provides the primary source trail for all retained items and is complemented by the full corpus list presented in Appendix A. The use of stable identifiers and retrieval dates is especially important in web-based corpus construction, since online references can disappear, migrate, or change over time, thereby complicating later verification of the evidentiary context (Klein et al. 2014; Zittrain et al. 2014).

Where additional preservation is legally and technically feasible, cited webpages may also be archived through web-citation services such as Perma.cc or the Internet Archive’s “Save Page Now” functionality (Perma.cc n.d.; Internet Archive n.d.). The aim is not to reproduce the live web in full, but to preserve enough source stability for later verification of the materials used in coding and analysis.

At the dataset level, the corpus documentation follows current metadata recommendations for the persistent identification and citation of research outputs, particularly those outlined in the DataCite Metadata Schema 4.6 ([DataCite Metadata Working Group 2024](#)). Where copyright, licensing, or platform terms restrict redistribution of full texts—particularly in the case of journalistic pieces or platform-derived material—the study prioritizes the sharing of complete metadata, bibliographic references, stable links, and an audit trail of coding decisions (see Appendices A and B), while limiting shared verbatim text to short excerpts necessary for scholarly critique and verification.

2.4. Coding Scheme and Codebook

The analysis was guided by an explicit codebook developed to maintain conceptual consistency across a multilingual corpus that spans several communicative arenas. In line with established practice in team-based qualitative research, the codebook was not treated as fixed from the outset. It was drafted, tested on a pilot sample, revised in discussion, and only then stabilised for the main stage of coding ([MacQueen et al. 1998](#)). Each entry in the codebook includes a working definition, criteria for inclusion and exclusion, decision rules for borderline cases, and at least one example linked to a corpus identifier; where translation issues were relevant, a brief note was added.

The basic unit of coding is the passage containing a sacred marker. This includes not only segments in which a sacred lexeme or trope is explicitly present, but also passages in which such a reference is clearly presupposed. The analysis then follows the argumentative work performed by that passage: what kind of claim is being made, what authority or warrant supports it, and what form of collective positioning it produces. In practice, this means tracing how sacred language is tied to claims about dignity, belonging, threat, memory, suffering, justice, and communal obligation.

The codebook is organised into five families of codes.

Topoi are treated as argumentative warrants, that is, as the bridge between a stated reason and the conclusion a text asks the reader to accept. Following the discourse-historical approach, they are understood as the “conclusion rules” that connect arguments to claims ([Reisigl and Wodak 2009](#)). In the present study, recurrent topoi include the dignity of the person, chosen peoplehood, the civilizational topos of “Christian Europe,” security and threat, memory-guilt-redemption, and purity-defilement.

Metaphors are coded in ways that shape the interpretation of a person, group, or event. Particularly relevant in this corpus are metaphors drawn from contagion, illness, home, border, captivity, exile, and return. The point is not simply that these figures ornament the text, but that they organise perception and evaluation in durable ways ([Lakoff and Johnson 2003](#)).

Frames are coded as relatively stable ways of defining a problem, assigning causality, making moral judgments, and implying possible remedies ([Entman 1993](#)). Five recurring frames proved especially important in the corpus: a universalist frame centred on human dignity; a civilizational frame; an ethno-national frame; a minoritarian defensive frame; and a prophetic or justice-claim frame.

Appeals capture the dominant justificatory mode of a passage. These include appeals to Scripture and tradition, law and order, suffering and memory, mercy and neighbourliness, and institutional authority. In this study, appeals are important because they show not only what a text says, but how it asks to be believed.

Boundary work is coded whenever a text makes “we/they” distinctions salient or specifies conditions of belonging, exclusion, or legitimate membership. Following [Lamont and Molnár \(2002\)](#), boundary work is understood here as the discursive produc-

tion of symbolic distinctions through which actors classify people, practices, and forms of collective identity.

Across all five families, the codebook also tracks the sacred nodes that structure the article's comparative design (see Table 2): *imago Dei/tselem Elohim*; love of neighbour and *chesed*; holiness/purity; suffering/martyrdom; and exile/return. These nodes do not function as isolated theological terms. They are treated instead as recurrent rhetorical resources whose meaning and force shift with genre, arena, and context.

A full source list is provided in Appendix A, while a compact analytical mapping of the retained corpus is presented in Appendix B.

2.5. Coding Reliability and Verification

Coding reliability was approached as a feature of the analytic process rather than as a single statistic calculated at the end. What mattered most was the clarity of the codebook, the consistency of coder training, and the explicit handling of difficult cases. Intercoder reliability was therefore used as a tool for transparency and reflexive control, not as a means of flattening interpretive complexity into a single number (O'Connor and Joffe 2020).

The procedure had four stages. First, the coders worked through a shared pilot subset drawn from all three arenas and from the languages represented in the retained corpus. Disagreements were logged and discussed, and the results of those discussions were used to sharpen definitions, clarify thresholds, and add examples to the codebook. Second, once the revised version of the codebook had been stabilised, a second check was carried out on a fresh subset to see whether the revisions had improved clarity and consistency of application. Because the corpus itself is uneven across traditions and arenas, this second subset was balanced as far as the retained material allowed.

Third, where a numerical indicator of agreement was useful for nominal codes, Krippendorff's alpha was preferred, as it is suitable for multiple coders, accommodates different data structures, and handles missing values (Krippendorff 2011). No single coefficient, however, was treated as decisive on its own. Fourth, disagreements that arose during the main coding phase were handled through structured adjudication. Coders recorded the reasoning behind their decisions, returned to the relevant rules in the codebook, and revised the codebook only when necessary. All such revisions were tracked via version control so that later readers could reconstruct the logic of the final coding scheme (see Appendix B for a compact analytical overview of the coded items).

Reliability checks were complemented by an audit trail documenting coding decisions, revisions, and interpretive judgments. This was intended to support trustworthiness in the broader qualitative sense: credibility, dependability, confirmability, and procedural transparency (Rodgers and Cowles 1993; Korstjens and Moser 2018).

2.6. Analytical Procedures

The analysis was carried out on two connected levels. The first was qualitative and interpretive. Coded passages were read closely and then examined through case-based rhetorical analysis to establish what sacred lexicon was doing in context: whether it served as a warrant for human dignity, a resource of communal continuity, a means of organising memory and suffering, or a way of drawing and defending symbolic boundaries. Comparative interpretation was built through two forms of juxtaposition: across arenas, moving from pulpit to policy to platform, and across traditions, using the same codebook while remaining attentive to differences in genre, institutional voice, and audience.

The second level was descriptive and supplementary rather than determinative. Where useful, the analysis drew on simple counts of code families, co-occurrence patterns, and cross-tabulations such as *lexeme* × *arena* × *tradition* (see Tables 1–5). These descrip-

tive summaries were not treated as substitutes for interpretation. Their function was diagnostic: they helped identify concentrations, asymmetries, and absences (see Table 1) that required closer qualitative reading. Given the modest size and uneven composition of the retained corpus, the quantitative-descriptive layer is used here only to support pattern recognition and internal consistency, not to ground broader claims of frequency or prevalence.

All descriptive summaries were tied back to the metadata register, the versioned codebook, and the audit trail, so that the path from corpus item to coded interpretation remained explicit and reviewable.

2.7. Ethics and GenAI Disclosure

The study is based on publicly available materials, including institutional statements, published sermons, and public-facing digital texts. Public availability, however, is not treated as an ethical blank check. The handling of digital materials follows internet research ethics guidance that stresses contextual integrity, proportionality, vulnerability, and harm minimisation, especially where searchable quotation could expose individuals to unwanted identification or harassment (Franzke et al. 2020).

In the retained corpus, the materials are overwhelmingly institutional or clearly public in character. For that reason, verbatim quotation is used primarily for texts issued by churches, communal organisations, or public representatives acting in an official capacity. Where a digital text contains identifying details that are not necessary for the analysis, the discussion limits reproduction to what is required for scholarly verification and interpretation. The same principle governs data sharing. When copyright, platform rules, or risk considerations make full-text redistribution inappropriate, the study prioritises sharing metadata, source references, coding outputs, and analytic documentation over unrestricted reproduction of the underlying material (ICPSR 2023; Antes et al. 2018).

Generative AI assistance was used during the drafting and language editing stages of manuscript preparation. It was not used to build the corpus, select the retained sources, code the material, translate the primary texts, or generate the substantive interpretations reported in the article. All analytical decisions, source verification, coding judgments, and final formulations were reviewed and approved by the authors, who take full responsibility for the article.

2.8. Researcher Positionality and Reflexivity

The authorial team brings linguistic, cultural, and contextual proximity to the two religious and national settings examined in this study. Two authors are from Ukraine, and one is from Poland; the team includes lived experience with both Orthodox and Jewish contexts relevant to the corpus. This positional proximity supported source identification, contextual interpretation, and sensitivity to symbolic nuance, especially regarding historical memory, ecclesial terminology, communal self-description, and the rhetorical force of culturally embedded expressions across Ukrainian, Polish, and English materials.

At the same time, the study does not treat insider familiarity as a substitute for method. On the contrary, the authors recognised from the outset that proximity to the field may generate both interpretive insight and interpretive risk. For that reason, analytical claims were developed comparatively rather than individually, coding decisions were discussed within the team, and potentially ambiguous cases were reviewed considering the shared codebook, translation memoing, and audit procedures described above. This reflexive approach was intended to reduce the risk of over-identification with any one tradition, national context, or institutional voice represented in the corpus.

The authors therefore understand positionality not as a claim to privileged access to truth but as one condition of inquiry that must itself be made methodologically visible.

In this study, background knowledge and lived familiarity were treated as resources for contextual sensitivity, while procedural transparency, collaborative interpretation, and explicit documentation were used as safeguards against unexamined bias.

3. Results

3.1. Corpus Description

The retained corpus consists of 23 public texts published between 1 January 2020 and 31 December 2025. The material is distributed across three communicative arenas—pulpit, policy, and platform—and two discursive traditions—Orthodox Christian and Jewish. The sampling frame allowed for materials in Polish, Ukrainian, Russian, and English; in the final corpus, however, only Polish, Ukrainian, and English are represented. Each item was assigned a unique corpus identifier (CID), recorded with the metadata described in Section 2.3, and listed in full in Appendix A.

The corpus was built with reference to five topical clusters: antisemitism, anti-Romani racism, migration/displacement, “Christian Europe”/civilizational rhetoric, and memory politics/memory ethics. In the retained dataset, four of these clusters are represented. No item dealing explicitly with anti-Romani racism met the final inclusion criteria.

Table 1 presents the descriptive composition of the corpus. Because topic tags are non-exclusive, thematic counts may exceed the total number of retained items. The corpus is concentrated in the policy arena ($n = 12$), followed by the platform arena ($n = 8$) and the pulpit arena ($n = 3$). By tradition, it contains 9 Orthodox and 14 Jewish items. It contains 14 English-language, 7 Ukrainian-language, and 2 Polish-language texts. No Russian-language item was retained. At the thematic level, the corpus is dominated by antisemitism ($n = 11$), memory politics/memory ethics ($n = 10$), and migration/displacement ($n = 7$). Civilisational rhetoric is represented in 3 items.

In the pulpit arena, the corpus consists of sermons and pastoral addresses published on official ecclesiastical websites. In the policy arena, it consists primarily of institutional statements, resolutions, synodal texts, and official communiqués. In the platform arena, the material is composed chiefly of institutionally curated web-native posts, statement-amplifying news items, commemorative notices, interviews, and forum recaps. In its present form, the corpus contains no Jewish pulpit texts, no Russian-language items, and no anti-Romani cases. These absences do not invalidate the analysis, but they do set clear limits on the scope of comparison.

The full corpus list appears in Appendix A, and its analytical overview in Appendix B.

3.2. A Typology of Sacred Rhetorics of Racialization

Coding of the retained corpus points to six recurrent rhetorical configurations (summarised in Table 2) in which sacred lexicon functions as a warrant, frame, and boundary marker. These configurations should be understood as analytical types rather than as discrete classes of texts. Individual items often combine multiple configurations, and the distribution of types across the corpus is uneven. Three patterns are especially prominent: dignity universalism, suffering and memorial warning, and hospitality under conditions of war and displacement. Two others are more sharply asymmetrical across traditions: peoplehood in the Jewish materials and civilizational Christianity, or more precisely, sacralized national-ecclesial rhetoric, in the Orthodox materials. A sixth pattern, holiness/purity, is only weakly represented and therefore requires especially cautious treatment.

The typology is tied to the present corpus and should not be read as exhaustive (see Table 2; Appendix B). Since the retained material contains no anti-Romani texts or Jewish pulpit materials, the analysis is driven primarily by texts addressing antisemitism,

war, migration and displacement, memory politics, and selected instances of civilizational rhetoric.

3.2.1. Dignity Universalism

The most stable configuration in the corpus is a rhetoric of dignity articulated in universal terms. It is especially clear in Jewish policy statements responding to anti-Semitic incidents and in Orthodox texts responding to war-related suffering. In both traditions, sacred language is often condensed into a broader ethical vocabulary of dignity, respect, truth, solidarity, and the protection of human life. The movement is typically from a concrete injury to a more general moral claim (see Appendix B).

This universalism is not abstract. In the Jewish materials, dignity rhetoric is tied to specific episodes of anti-Semitic speech, intimidation, vandalism, or public historical distortion. In the Orthodox materials, it is tied to the suffering of civilians, the condemnation of violence, and appeals to mercy, prayer, and responsibility. Sacred or sacred-adjacent language serves here not to dissolve historical specificity but to elevate it to the level of a public norm. What is universalised is the claim, not the event.

3.2.2. Peoplehood and Civilizational Christianity

The second configuration is more asymmetrical. In the Jewish materials, peoplehood appears as a rhetoric of continuity, transnational linkage, and protective solidarity (see Appendix B). It is most visible in statements that defend Jewish communal life against anti-Semitic attack, connect present threats to Holocaust memory, or situate Jewish life in Poland and Ukraine within a wider Jewish public. In these texts, communal self-description does not displace universal language; it mediates and grounds it.

In the Orthodox materials, the corresponding configuration is not peoplehood but a form of civilisational Christianity tied to national-historical narration. Christianity appears here not only as faith, but also as a marker of historical inheritance, ecclesial continuity, legitimate statehood, and freedom from imperial domination. In the present corpus, this rhetoric is directed less against migrants or Muslims than against the Russian imperial and ecclesial project associated with *russkii mir*. The result is not a straightforward reproduction of a Western European populist “Christian Europe” discourse. It is a sacralized national-historical rhetoric (see Table 2; Appendix B) in which church independence, political sovereignty, and civilizational self-location are tightly bound together.

3.2.3. Neighbour-Love, Chesed, and Hospitality

A third configuration concerns hospitality, care, and obligations toward vulnerable others. In the present corpus, the inclusionary pole clearly dominates. Orthodox texts repeatedly address refugees, displaced persons, and civilians under attack as subjects of pastoral concern and institutional assistance. Jewish texts likewise frame solidarity as both communal and outward-facing, especially in wartime appeals that address Jews, Ukrainians, and allies within a shared moral horizon rather than as mutually exclusive publics (see Appendix B).

The restrictive pole of this configuration, in which care is narrowed to one’s own community or subordinated to social control, appears only faintly in the retained material. This does not mean that such rhetoric is absent from the broader field. It means only that the present corpus, composed largely of official and semi-official texts, captures public-facing rhetoric of care more readily than it captures grassroots rhetoric of exclusion. What it documents most clearly is the institutional language of assistance rather than the everyday language of social sorting.

3.2.4. Holiness/Purity and the Politics of Boundary

This is the weakest configuration in the corpus. Explicit purity or contamination language is rare, and the dataset does not contain a substantial cluster of metaphors built around pollution, infection, or defilement directed at racialised groups. What does appear, particularly in the Orthodox pulpit and policy materials, is a more general moralization of boundary through contrasts such as canonical and non-canonical, truth and falsehood, freedom and captivity, sacred order, and corrupt domination.

For that reason, the present corpus does not justify strong claims about purity rhetoric as a central mechanism of racialization. What it does show is that moral and sacred oppositions can still perform boundary work without taking the classic form of contamination discourse. In the present study, holiness/purity is therefore best treated as a marginal and weakly attested configuration rather than as a dominant type (see Table 2).

3.2.5. Suffering, Martyrdom, and Memorial Warning

A fourth, much more robust, configuration is the rhetoric of suffering, martyrdom, and memorial warning. This appears in both traditions, but in different registers. In Orthodox materials, suffering is most often linked to war, civilian injury, prayer for the dead, and national endurance. In Jewish materials, it is closely tied to Holocaust remembrance, anti-Semitic violence, and the insistence that present-day public language must be judged in light of genocidal history.

What stands out in the present corpus is not competitive victimhood so much as the conversion of suffering into public warning. Jewish texts use Holocaust memory to condemn contemporary anti-Semitism and to mark the moral seriousness of slogans such as “Jews to the gas.” Orthodox texts use biblical and wartime suffering to condemn violence and to cast the present struggle as morally consequential. In this corpus, suffering functions less as a claim to exclusive moral superiority than as a warrant for vigilance, denunciation, and solidarity (see Table 2; Appendix B).

3.2.6. Exile/Return as a Frame for Displacement and Restoration

The final configuration concerns displacement, endurance, and restoration. In the Orthodox materials, this rhetoric is often national-ecclesial: the people and the Church are imagined as moving out of captivity and toward freedom. Biblical geographies of slavery and exodus are used to name the present and to moralise the break with Moscow. In the Jewish materials, the same configuration appears in a different register, through diaspora linkage, wartime endurance, and the intertwining of Ukrainian and Jewish futures.

In both traditions, displacement is not treated merely as an administrative condition. It is narrated through sacred or sacred-adjacent historical forms: exodus, deliverance, survival, return, rebuilding. That is why this configuration is particularly important in texts concerned with war and forced movement. It allows immediate crises to be situated within a longer moral and historical horizon.

3.3. *Arena Pulpit: Comparative Profile*

The pulpit subcorpus is small and asymmetrical (see Table 1; Appendix B). It contains three Orthodox items and no Jewish pulpit materials. This section reconstructs the profile of Orthodox pulpit discourse in the retained corpus rather than offering a balanced comparison between the two traditions.

Across these Orthodox texts, sacred lexicon appears within extended argumentative sequences rather than as isolated labels. Scriptural exposition, doctrinal clarification, and pastoral application remain closely linked. The homiletic voice is collective and relational, addressing listeners as “brothers and sisters” and repeatedly invoking “our Church,” “our

people,” and “our nation.” What distinguishes these materials is not simply the presence of sacred language but the way it organises the movement from biblical reference to present-tense moral judgment.

Two features are especially clear. First, the pulpit texts repeatedly merge ecclesial and national registers. The sermon for the Day of Dignity and Freedom moves from Pauline discussion of law, circumcision, and impurity to contemporary questions of canon, ecclesial legitimacy, and national life. The result is a form of homiletic speech that no longer addresses only the inner life of the Church but also interprets the political and historical present. Second, biblical narrative functions as a grammar for contemporary suffering. The March 2022 address places civilian suffering, refugee corridors, and the failure of international guarantees within a framework of prayer, judgment, and moral witness, while the December 2025 sermon casts the national struggle as a movement out of prolonged captivity under *ruskii mir* (see Appendix B, items O1, O2, O9).

Given the absence of Jewish sermons, *d'rashot*, or rabbinic pastoral addresses in the retained corpus, no symmetrical inference can be drawn about differences between Orthodox and Jewish pulpit discourse. Any stronger claim at this point would exceed the evidentiary basis of the material.

3.4. Arena Policy: Institutional Statements

The policy arena is the largest and most balanced part of the corpus. It contains twelve items, five Orthodox and seven Jewish, and it is here that cross-tradition comparison is most firmly grounded (see Table 1).

The Orthodox policy texts combine institutional formality with strong national-historical framing. Their rhetoric is generally explicit rather than euphemistic. The Polish Orthodox bishops' resolution on the war in Ukraine condemns the invasion through the biblical figure of Cain and Abel and underscores the scale of displacement caused by the war. The letter of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine concerning Patriarch Kirill goes further by naming the teaching of *ruskii mir* as “ethnophyletist and racist.” The 2024 synodal message on the Baptism of Rus-Ukraine links ecclesial memory directly to Ukrainian statehood, while the 2023 synodal document on registered partnership incorporates the migration of Ukrainian families into a broader argument about demography, morality, and Christian values.

The Jewish policy texts are more directly event-driven and more closely tied to specific episodes of anti-Semitism. They respond to commemorative decisions, attacks on synagogues, anti-Semitic chants, and public remarks by politicians. Their dominant mode is formal counter-speech: condemnation, public correction, insistence on truth, and appeals to responsibility. At the same time, these texts regularly move beyond the immediate incident to make broader claims about democratic norms, public discourse, and the security of Jewish life in Poland and Ukraine. Their protective function is therefore not only communal but civic.

The contrast between the two traditions is clear enough. Orthodox policy rhetoric is shaped primarily by war, church-state history, and anti-imperial self-positioning. Jewish policy rhetoric is shaped above all by anti-Semitic incidents, Holocaust memory, and the defence of communal legitimacy in the public sphere. What the two sets of texts share is their preference for overt moral articulation. In the retained corpus, the policy arena is marked less by coded insinuation than by explicit denunciation.

3.5. Arena Platform: Digital Circulation

The platform subcorpus contains eight items, but it is markedly uneven: seven are Jewish and only one is Orthodox (see Table 1). It is also distinctive in formal terms. In the

present corpus, platform discourse is represented mainly by institutionally curated web posts, statement-amplifying news items, commemorative notices, interviews, and forum recaps. It is therefore less fragmentary than a corpus built from archived native social-media threads and less suited to close analysis of short-form adversarial interaction.

Within those limits, three platform functions stand out (see Appendix B). The first is public pedagogy. Jewish platform items repeatedly explain events, commemorate anniversaries, and translate memory into publicly intelligible language. The Kyiv Jewish Forum recap, for example, links present-day anti-Semitism to Babyn Yar and frames intolerance as a matter of broad civic concern rather than as a narrowly communal issue. The Litzmannstadt Ghetto commemoration and Holocaust remembrance posts perform similar work along a memorial axis.

The second function is agenda amplification. Some platform texts do more than record events; they raise the salience of anti-Semitism as a public problem. The post on criminal liability for anti-Semitism and the 2024 interview on Jewish resilience in wartime Ukraine work differently in tone and format, but both expand the issue beyond a single incident by connecting it to law, public discourse, resilience, and democratic solidarity.

The third function is pastoral amplification, represented in the present corpus by the single Orthodox platform item on displaced Ukrainians in Poland. Here, the digital text does not fragment an earlier sermon or provoke polemical exchange. Instead, it extends a recognisably pastoral scene—prayer, support, endurance, and gratitude toward those assisting displaced Ukrainians abroad—into a wider public space.

For that reason, the platform arena in the retained corpus is not primarily a site of adversarial compression. It is better understood as a site of institutional mediation, amplification, and public circulation (see Table 3; Appendix B).

3.6. Cross-Borrowing and Agonistic Mirroring

Direct lexical cross-borrowing between Orthodox and Jewish texts is limited in the retained corpus (see Table 3). The material does not contain sustained instances in which one tradition openly adopts the other's signature theological vocabulary or explicitly reworks it for its own purposes. What emerges more clearly is a set of structural parallels—shared rhetorical movements rather than shared lexemes.

The first such pattern may be described as analogical moral universalism. In both traditions, a particular injury is translated into a broader moral claim. Orthodox policy texts often do so through biblical language of blood, guilt, repentance, and judgment. Jewish policy texts, by contrast, more often employ the language of dignity, truth, dialogue, democratic norms, and public responsibility. The moral vocabularies differ, but the rhetorical movement is comparable: a specific event becomes legible as a matter of wider public concern.

A second pattern is mirrored memory politics. In the Jewish materials, Holocaust remembrance repeatedly serves as a warrant for vigilance in the present. In the Orthodox materials, biblical history, baptismal memory, and narratives of long captivity more often ground present-tense judgment. The archives of memory are different, but their rhetorical use is structurally similar: the past authorises present evaluation.

A third pattern is institutional counter-speech. In both traditions, formal public statements do more than register reaction. They seek to stabilise meaning after a public provocation by defining what has happened, naming its moral significance, and specifying the legitimate response. This is especially visible in Jewish responses to anti-Semitic incidents and in Orthodox responses to war and *russskii mir*.

For that reason, the present corpus supports claims about mirroring more strongly than claims about direct cross-tradition borrowing. What the material shows most clearly

is not theological exchange in any strong sense but the recurrence of analogous rhetorical solutions under different historical and political conditions.

3.7. Dog-Whistles and Prophetic Counter-Rhetorics

The retained corpus does not support the view that dog-whistle rhetoric is a dominant mode within the sampled texts themselves (see Table 4). On the contrary, its most conspicuous feature is the prevalence of explicit counter-speech. This is largely a function of corpus composition. The material consists mainly of institutional and semi-institutional responses rather than of the originating hateful or exclusionary utterances to which those responses refer.

Dog-whistle-like discourse enters the corpus chiefly as an object of quotation, paraphrase, or denunciation. This is clearest in the Jewish materials. The 2024 Kraków statement argues that hostility is often disguised under the cover of “anti-Zionism,” while the 2025 statement on Grzegorz Braun emphasises how public comments and stereotypes can quickly intensify prejudice. In such cases, the text under analysis is not itself a dog-whistle. It is a response to language experienced as coded, exclusionary, or openly hostile.

By contrast, prophetic counter-rhetoric is strongly represented (see Table 4). Orthodox materials name aggression, bloodshed, captivity, and the racist teaching of *russkii mir* in direct moral terms. Jewish materials name anti-Semitic speech, intimidation, violence, and distortion with equal clarity, often coupling denunciation with appeals to responsibility, democratic norms, or historical memory. The dominant pattern in the corpus is therefore not covert exclusion voiced from within the retained material but explicit moral exposure of exclusionary discourse located outside it.

3.8. Summary Comparative Matrix

Table 5 provides a concise overview of the dominant coded tendency for each lexeme cluster across arenas and traditions. Three values are used: I = inclusion-dominant, A = ambivalent or mixed, and N/A = not attested in the present corpus. No cell is coded E (exclusion-dominant) in the retained dataset. Where exclusionary content appears, it is usually quoted, paraphrased, or explicitly condemned rather than advanced as the speaker’s own position.

This absence of exclusion-dominant cells should not be taken to mean that exclusion is marginal in the wider discursive field. It reflects the corpus’s composition, which is dominated by official and semi-official responses, especially in the policy arena. The matrix, therefore, summarises the rhetoric of the sampled public texts, not the full surrounding media environment in which those texts circulate. It should also be read with the asymmetries of the corpus in mind (see Table 1), above all, the absence of Jewish pulpit material and the limited size of the Orthodox platform subcorpus.

4. Discussion

4.1. Sacred Vocabularies as Rhetorical Action

The findings support the use of a Burkean framework, supplemented by Pernot’s account of rhetoric’s religious dimension, for the study of public religious discourse. In the present corpus, sacred language does not appear as an ornamental residue of doctrine attached to otherwise secular statements. It does rhetorical work (see Tables 2–5). It names injuries, confers moral weight on events, authorises institutional response, and helps define the scope of protection and concern. In Burke’s terms, such language does not merely reflect collective identity; it helps constitute it by creating and stabilising identifications (Burke 1969, 1970).

What the corpus makes particularly clear is that identification here is rarely simple. The same vocabulary may sustain both universalising and particularising moves within a single text. A statement condemning anti-Semitism may appeal to universal human dignity while grounding its authority in the vulnerability and continuity of a specific community. An Orthodox statement may invoke biblical or Christian universals while embedding them in a national-historical narrative of Ukrainian statehood, ecclesial independence, and liberation from *ruskii mir*. Universalism and boundary-making are therefore not external alternatives (see Tables 2 and 5). In public religious discourse, they often work together.

Pernot's contribution is equally important. The texts in this corpus speak not simply as expressions of opinion but as utterances claiming a distinctive kind of moral force. Terms such as dignity, memory, captivity, martyrdom, peoplehood, and statehood do not circulate as neutral descriptors. They derive authority from their attachment to sacred history, scriptural interpretation, and communal remembrance (Pernot 2006). That is why even short institutional statements often carry considerable rhetorical density: they condense ethical judgment, historical framing, and public positioning into a compact form.

4.2. Majority/Minority Asymmetry and the Limits of Comparison

One of the central interpretive issues raised by this study is asymmetry. The article compares two traditions that do not occupy the same historical or political position, and that difference is visible throughout the corpus (see Tables 1 and 5). In the Jewish materials, public rhetoric is shaped by minority experience, communal vulnerability, and the need to defend legitimacy against anti-Semitic speech and violence. In the Orthodox materials, by contrast, rhetoric is shaped more strongly by war, church–state relations, national-historical narration, and anti-imperial ecclesial self-definition. The comparison is therefore methodologically parallel but not sociologically symmetrical.

This asymmetry helps explain the distribution of themes in the corpus (see Table 1; Appendix B). Jewish texts focus more often on anti-Semitism, communal security, and Holocaust remembrance. Orthodox texts focus more often on war, displacement, statehood, and the ecclesial implications of *ruskii mir*. In the Jewish materials, peoplehood functions as a rhetoric of continuity under pressure. It links present danger to a longer history of communal survival without abandoning universal or civic language. In the Orthodox materials, especially those produced by the Orthodox Church of Ukraine, sacred language is more tightly bound to collective statehood, ecclesial autonomy, and historical struggle.

At the same time, the analysis should not collapse this difference into a simple majority/minority binary. The corpus includes both Ukrainian Orthodox materials, in which national and ecclesial self-assertion is especially strong, and Polish Orthodox materials, in which the rhetoric is more restrained and pastoral. What matters analytically is not a fixed label attached to an entire tradition, but the way rhetorical positioning is constructed in settings. The comparison is most persuasive when it remains sensitive to these shifting scales rather than treating “Orthodox” and “Jewish” as internally uniform blocs.

4.3. Eastern Europe, War, and the Refunctioning of Sacred Public Speech

The Eastern European setting is not a neutral backdrop to these texts. The corpus is shaped by war, displacement, contested memory, and the reorganisation of public authority under conditions of crisis. This is particularly evident in the Orthodox materials, where categories that often appear in abstract form in broader scholarship—civilisation, nation, church, heritage, statehood—take on specific force under the pressures of invasion and occupation. In the present corpus, civilizational rhetoric appears less often as anti-Muslim populism than as anti-imperial ecclesial and national self-location (see Table 2;

Appendix B). The category of “Christian Europe” is not simply reproduced in a Western European form; it is refracted through the struggle over Ukraine, Russia, and the legitimacy of *russekii mir* (Brubaker 2017; Gauthier 2022; Triandafyllidou 2024).

The Jewish materials show a different but equally distinctive pattern (see Appendix B). Local incidents in Poland or Ukraine are repeatedly interpreted within transnational frameworks of memory and communal concern. Anti-Semitic speech is not treated as a local disorder alone. It is placed against the horizon of Holocaust remembrance, Jewish continuity, and the wider European and global public language of anti-Semitism. Jewish public discourse in this corpus therefore operates on two scales at once: local in its triggers, transnational in its interpretive horizon.

The platform findings require further qualification. The retained platform corpus does not support strong claims about native, fragmentary, conflict-driven social media exchange in the narrow sense. Most of the texts are institutionally curated or semi-institutional materials rather than native X/Twitter threads. What they show most clearly is mediated amplification, public pedagogy, commemorative framing, and the circulation of statements. The article should therefore be read as a study of digitally mediated public religious discourse rather than of platform-native micro-interaction.

4.4. Practical Implications for Dialogical Rhetorical Practice

Although the article is analytical rather than prescriptive, the findings do suggest several practical implications. The first concerns what might be called civilizational inflation: the point at which theological or historical self-description expands into a total criterion of legitimate public belonging. The Orthodox materials in the corpus are not uniformly exclusionary, but they do show how readily church-historical and national-historical language can fuse. One implication is the need to distinguish more carefully between theological self-location and civilizational closure.

The second concerns memory (see Tables 2 and 3). Both traditions rely heavily on suffering and remembrance, but the corpus also shows that memory is most rhetorically productive when it widens vigilance rather than monopolising moral authority. The strongest texts do not use past suffering to invalidate others’ claims. They use it to make present hostility legible and morally urgent. A dialogical public rhetoric should therefore frame memory less as possession than as a warning.

Third, the corpus points to the value of explicit naming (see Table 4). The most persuasive texts are usually those that identify anti-Semitism, aggression, or racist doctrine without euphemism. In the retained material, prophetic counter-speech is rhetorically stronger than insinuation. This is particularly relevant in digitally mediated circulation, where ambiguity is easily amplified. Religious and communal institutions seeking to resist exclusion may therefore have to privilege clarity over indirection, especially in responding to hostile public speech.

Finally, the corpus shows that care rhetoric matters (see Table 2; Appendix B). References to support, refuge, prayer, and assistance are not secondary to the political content of the texts. They are among the ways in which public religious discourse becomes credible. Under conditions of war and displacement, the expansion of the moral circle is more persuasive when it is linked to visible practices of care rather than left at the level of principle.

4.5. Limitations and Future Directions

The study’s limitations are clear and should be stated directly. First, the corpus is uneven across arenas and traditions (see Table 1). It contains no Jewish pulpit materials and only one Orthodox platform item. Cross-tradition comparison is therefore strongest in the policy arena and much weaker in the pulpit and platform arenas. Second, although

the sampling frame allowed for Polish, Ukrainian, Russian, and English materials, the final retained corpus contains no Russian-language text. Third, the anti-Romani racism cluster is not represented in the dataset, despite its inclusion at the design stage. These absences do not invalidate the analysis, but they do narrow the scope of claims that can be responsibly made based on the present material.

A further limitation concerns the platform corpus itself. Because the retained materials are predominantly institutionally curated web-native items rather than native short-form social-media captures, the article cannot reconstruct the most ephemeral forms of digital antagonism, remixing, or quote-based escalation. The platform findings are therefore best read as findings about mediated circulation rather than about the full ecology of platform interaction.

These limitations also indicate the most urgent directions for further work. A next-stage corpus should include Jewish pulpit texts, explicit anti-Romani materials, Russian-language items, and a more robust platform sample built from native post-thread interaction where stable archiving is possible. Such an expansion would not necessarily overturn the present findings, but it would allow the proposed typology to be tested against a broader and more internally differentiated body of material. The full list of retained corpus items used in the present study is provided in Appendix A.

5. Conclusions

Sacred vocabularies drawn from Orthodox Christianity and Judaism do not enter contemporary public debate as inert doctrinal residues (see Tables 2–5). In the corpus analysed here, they function as active rhetorical resources through which speakers name injury, assign responsibility, justify solidarity, and delineate the limits of communal and civic belonging. Across the material, the most consistent point of convergence is the use of sacred or sacred-adjacent language to condemn hatred, interpret suffering, and translate memory into public obligation. The clearest divergence lies elsewhere: Jewish discourse more often speaks from the position of threatened continuity and communal protection, whereas Orthodox discourse more often binds ecclesial language to statehood, historical inheritance, and release from imperial domination (see Tables 2 and 5).

The comparison across arenas sharpens this contrast (see Tables 1 and 5). In pulpit discourse, sacred language remains embedded in extended interpretation, where scripture, doctrine, and pastoral application are held together within a single argumentative movement. In policy texts, the same language is compressed into formal warrants, public denunciations, and institutional claims to legitimacy. In the platform materials retained here, sacred language is used less for fragmentary polemic than for amplification, commemoration, and interpretive stabilisation. What emerges most clearly is not covert signalling from within the corpus itself but explicit counter-speech directed against violence, anti-Semitism, and the moral corruption associated with war and domination.

Memory is central to this process. In the Jewish materials, Holocaust remembrance is not treated as retrospective piety alone; it is mobilised as a standard by which present speech and conduct are judged. In the Orthodox materials, biblical history and national suffering play a comparable legitimating role, especially in texts concerned with war, displacement, and the repudiation of *russskii mir*. The comparison points less to direct doctrinal borrowing than to a recurrent structural parallel (see Table 3): both traditions draw on sacred memory to authorise public judgment, though they do so from markedly different historical and political positions.

The article does not argue that sacred language is inherently inclusive or inherently exclusionary. Its force depends on where it appears, who speaks, to whom, and under what conditions. In the present corpus, the dominant pattern is inclusionary and reparative, but

that finding must be read in light of the material itself, which is weighted toward institutional and semi-institutional responses rather than the originating discourse of hatred. The corpus is also uneven: it contains no Jewish pulpit texts, no Russian-language items, and no explicit anti-Romani materials. Even with those limits, one conclusion remains difficult to avoid. In a digitised public sphere shaped by war, displacement, and contested memory, sacred language remains one of the ways in which communities define what counts as dignity, what counts as injury, and who is entitled to recognition, protection, and moral concern (see Tables 2–5).

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Appendix A

Sources Corpus (working corpus v1)

The working corpus (v1) consists of 23 publicly available texts collected from the official websites of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine (Pomisna), Cerkiew.pl/Orthodox.pl, the Jewish Confederation of Ukraine, and the Social and Cultural Association of Jews in Poland (TSKŻ). Each item was assigned a corpus identifier (CID) and classified by arena, tradition, language, country, and topic tags.

Orthodox Corpus

O1.	Title: <i>Революція Гідності надихає нас і тепер боротися з неправдою, боротися за мир і єдність України, боротися за єдність Української Православної Церкви, — Митрополит Епіфаній [The Revolution of Dignity Inspires Us Still to Fight Falsehood, to Fight for Peace and the Unity of Ukraine, to Fight for the Unity of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine, — Metropolitan Epifaniy]</i> Date: 21 November 2021 Arena/Language/Country: pulpit/Ukrainian/Ukraine Website: Orthodox Church of Ukraine (Pomisna) URL: https://www.pomisna.info/uk/vsi-novyny/revolyutsiya-gidnosti-nadyhaye-nas-i-teper-borotysya-z-nepravdoyu-borotysya-za-myr-i-yednist-ukrayiny-borotysya-za-yednist-ukrayinskoyi-pravoslavnoyi-tserkvy-mytropolyt-epifanij/ (accessed on 15 March 2026)
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O2.	Title: <i>Звернення Митрополита Епіфанія (8 березня 2022 р.) [Address of Metropolitan Epifaniy (8 March 2022)]</i> Date: 8 March 2022 Arena/Language/Country: pulpit/Ukrainian/Ukraine Website: Orthodox Church of Ukraine (Pomisna) URL: https://www.pomisna.info/uk/vsi-novyny/zvernennya-mytropolyta-epifaniya-8-bereznaya-2022-r/ (accessed on 15 March 2026)
O3.	Title: <i>Uchwała Soboru Biskupów ws. wojny w Ukrainie [Resolution of the Council of Bishops on the War in Ukraine]</i> Date: 22 March 2022 Arena/Language/Country: policy/Polish/Poland Website: Cerkiew.pl/Orthodox.pl URL: https://wiadomosci.cerkiew.pl/news.php?fbclid=IwAR1E_Z9k_fYdHLRftSnLCqxbwQ6tSknTtE9DLgReaWMu95fp_bhygqcqUmg&id_n=4455 (accessed on 15 March 2026)
O4.	Title: <i>Komunikat kancelarii Metropolity ws. pomocy ukraińskim uchodźcom [Statement of the Metropolitan's Chancellery on Assistance to Ukrainian Refugees]</i> Date: 22 March 2022 Arena/Language/Country: policy/Polish/Poland Website: Cerkiew.pl/Orthodox.pl URL: https://wiadomosci.cerkiew.pl/news.php?id=&id_n=4454 (accessed on 15 March 2026)
O5.	Title: <i>Лист щодо притягнення Російського патріарха Кирила до канонічної відповідальності і позбавлення його Патріаршого престолу [Letter Concerning the Bringing of Russian Patriarch Kirill to Canonical Responsibility and the Deprivation of Him of the Patriarchal Throne]</i> Date: 27 July 2022 Arena/Language/Country: policy/Ukrainian/Ukraine Website: Orthodox Church of Ukraine (Pomisna) URL: https://www.pomisna.info/uk/vsi-novyny/lyst-shhodo-prytyagnennya-rosijskogo-patriarha-kyryla-do-kanonichnoyi-vidpovidalnosti-i-pozbavlennya-jogo-patriarshogo-prestolu/ (accessed on 15 March 2026)
O6.	Title: <i>Документи засідання Священного Синоду 28 березня 2023 р. [Documents of the Meeting of the Holy Synod of 28 March 2023]</i> Date: 28 March 2023 Arena/Language/Country: policy/Ukrainian/Ukraine Website: Orthodox Church of Ukraine (Pomisna) URL: https://www.pomisna.info/uk/document-post/dokumenty-zasidannya-svyashhennogo-synodu-28-bereznaya-2023-r/ (accessed on 15 March 2026)
O7.	Title: <i>Послання Священного Синоду з нагоди 1036-ліття Хрещення України-Руси та Дня Української Державності [Message of the Holy Synod on the Occasion of the 1036th Anniversary of the Baptism of Ukraine-Rus and the Day of Ukrainian Statehood]</i> Date: 14 July 2024 Arena/Language/Country: policy/Ukrainian/Ukraine Website: Orthodox Church of Ukraine (Pomisna) URL: https://www.pomisna.info/uk/vsi-novyny/poslannya-svyashhennogo-synodu-z-nagody-1036-littyahreshhennya-ukrayiny-rusy-ta-dnya-ukrayinskoyi-derzhavnosti/ (accessed on 15 March 2026)
O8.	Title: <i>Митрополит Іларіон відвідав у Польщі вимушених переселенців з України [Metropolitan Ilarion Visited Forced Migrants from Ukraine in Poland]</i> Date: 10 February 2025 Arena/Language/Country: platform/Ukrainian/Poland/Ukraine Website: Orthodox Church of Ukraine (Pomisna) URL: https://www.pomisna.info/uk/vsi-novyny/mytropolyt-ilarion-vidvidav-u-polshhi-vymushenyh-pereselentsiv-z-ukrayiny/ (accessed on 15 March 2026)

O9.	Title: <i>Маємо пройти всі випробування, щоби нарешті покласти край неволі, в якій століттями тримав нас і намагається досі тримати «руський мір», — Митрополит Епіфаній [We Must Endure All Trials in Order Finally to Put an End to the Captivity in Which the “Russkiy Mir” Held Us for Centuries and Still Seeks to Hold Us, —Metropolitan Epifaniy]</i> Date: 26 December 2025 Arena/Language/Country: pulpit/Ukrainian/Ukraine Website: Orthodox Church of Ukraine (Pomisna) URL: https://www.pomisna.info/uk/vsi-novyny/mayemo-projty-vsi-vyprobuvannya-shhoby-nareshti-poklasty-kraj-nevoli-v-yakij-stolittamy-trymav-nas-i-namagayetsya-dosi-trymaty-russkij-mir-mytopolyt-epifaniy/ (accessed on 15 March 2026)
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Jewish Corpus

J1.	Title: <i>Statement of the Jewish Confederation of Ukraine on the suspension of the Decision of the Kyiv City Council on the celebration of memorable dates in honor of the persons, representatives of the Ukrainian nationalist organizations</i> Date: 14 March 2020 Arena/Language/Country: policy/English/Ukraine Website: Jewish Confederation of Ukraine URL: https://jcu.org.ua/en/news/statement-jewish-confederation-ukraine-suspension-decision-kyiv-city-council-celebration (accessed on 15 March 2026)
J2.	Title: <i>Vadym Karasiov apologizes for the voiced on Newsone fake about Jews in the Nazi army</i> Date: 19 May 2020 Arena/Language/Country: platform/English/Ukraine Website: Jewish Confederation of Ukraine URL: https://jcu.org.ua/en/news/vadym-karasiov-apologizes-voiced-newsone-fake-about-jews-nazi-army (accessed on 15 March 2026)
J3.	Title: <i>The results of the Kyiv Jewish Forum 2020</i> Date: 14 September 2020 Arena/Language/Country: platform/English/Ukraine Website: Jewish Confederation of Ukraine URL: https://jcu.org.ua/en/news/results-kyiv-jewish-forum-2020 (accessed on 15 March 2026)
J4.	Title: <i>Statement made by the Chair of the Social and Cultural Association of Jews in Poland</i> Date: 16 November 2021 Arena/Language/Country: policy/English/Poland Website: Towarzystwo Społeczno-Kulturalne Żydów w Polsce (TSKŻ) URL: https://tskz.pl/en/statement-made-by-the-chair-of-the-social-and-cultural-association-of-jews-in-poland (accessed on 15 March 2026)
J5.	Title: <i>The European Jewish Association Conference in Cracow, 8–9 November 2021</i> Date: 16 November 2021 Arena/Language/Country: platform/English/Poland Website: Towarzystwo Społeczno-Kulturalne Żydów w Polsce (TSKŻ) URL: https://tskz.pl/en/the-european-jewish-association-conference-in-cracow-8-9-november-2021 (accessed on 15 March 2026)

J6.	Title: <i>We Remember — The ECU leadership honored the memory of Holocaust victims</i> Date: 27 January 2022 Arena/Language/Country: platform/English/Ukraine Website: Jewish Confederation of Ukraine URL: https://jcu.org.ua/en/news/we-remember-ecu-leadership-honored-memory-holocaust-victims (accessed on 15 March 2026)
J7.	Title: <i>JCU welcomes the introduction of criminal liability for anti-Semitism — Boris Lozhkin</i> Date: 15 February 2022 Arena/Language/Country: platform/English/Ukraine Website: Jewish Confederation of Ukraine URL: https://jcu.org.ua/en/news/jcu-welcomes-introduction-criminal-liability-anti-semitism-boris-lozhkin (accessed on 15 March 2026)
J8.	Title: <i>Statement of the Jewish Confederation of Ukraine regarding the armed invasion of the Russian Federation into Ukraine</i> Date: 24 February 2022 Arena/Language/Country: policy/English/Ukraine Website: Jewish Confederation of Ukraine URL: https://jcu.org.ua/en/news/statement-jewish-confederation-ukraine-regarding-armed-invasion-russian-federation-ukraine (accessed on 15 March 2026)
J9.	Title: <i>Statement of the Jewish Confederation of Ukraine</i> Date: 16 June 2023 Arena/Language/Country: policy/English/Ukraine Website: Jewish Confederation of Ukraine URL: https://jcu.org.ua/en/news/statement-jewish-confederation-ukraine-1 (accessed on 15 March 2026)
J10.	Title: <i>A statement following the attack on the Nożyk Synagogue in Warsaw</i> Date: 1 May 2024 Arena/Language/Country: policy/English/Poland Website: Towarzystwo Społeczno-Kulturalne Żydów w Polsce (TSKŻ) URL: https://tskz.pl/en/a-statement-following-the-attack-on-the-nozyk-synagogue-in-warsaw (accessed on 15 March 2026)
J11.	Title: <i>An account of the main celebrations of the 80th Anniversary of the Liquidation of the Litzmannstadt Ghetto</i> Date: 17 September 2024 Arena/Language/Country: platform/English/Poland Website: Towarzystwo Społeczno-Kulturalne Żydów w Polsce (TSKŻ) URL: https://tskz.pl/en/an-account-of-the-main-celebrations-of-the-80th-anniversary-of-the-liquidation-of-the-litzmannstadt-ghetto (accessed on 15 March 2026)
J12.	Title: <i>The statement of the Union of Jewish Communities in Poland and the Social and Cultural Association of Jews in Poland concerning the act of anti-Semitism in Cracow</i> Date: 21 October 2024 Arena/Language/Country: policy/English/Poland Website: Towarzystwo Społeczno-Kulturalne Żydów w Polsce (TSKŻ) URL: https://tskz.pl/en/the-statement-of-the-union-of-jewish-communities-in-poland-and-the-social-and-cultural-association-of-jews-in-poland-concerning-the-act-of-anti-semitism-in-cracow (accessed on 15 March 2026)

J13.	Title: <i>Ukraine Jewish resilience: Standing strong amid war and global challenges—an interview with The Jerusalem Post Magazine by Boris Lozhkin</i> Date: 20 December 2024 Arena/Language/Country: platform/English/Ukraine Website: Jewish Confederation of Ukraine URL: https://jcu.org.ua/en/news/ukraine-jewish-resilience-standing-strong-amid-war-and-global-challenges-interview-jerusalem (accessed on 15 March 2026)
J14.	Title: <i>A joint statement issued by the Social and Cultural Association of Jews in Poland and the Union of Jewish Religious Communities in Poland in relation to the comments made by Grzegorz Braun</i> Date: 30 April 2025 Arena/Language/Country: policy/English/Poland Website: Towarzystwo Społeczno-Kulturalne Żydów w Polsce (TSKŻ) URL: https://tskz.pl/en/a-joint-statement-issued-by-the-social-and-cultural-association-of-jews-in-poland-and-the-union-of-jewish-religious-communities-in-poland-in-relation-to-the-comments-made-by-grzegorz-braun (accessed on 15 March 2026)

Appendix B. Analytical Coding Overview of the Retained Corpus

This appendix provides a compact analytical overview of the retained corpus. While Appendix A lists the sources in full, this appendix identifies the primary analytical role of each corpus item in the study. Because individual texts often instantiate more than one rhetorical configuration, the table records the dominant coded tendency and the primary communicative function assigned to each item for comparative analysis. The appendix is intended as an aid to transparency and traceability rather than as a substitute for the full codebook.

Table A1. Analytical coding overview of the retained corpus.

CID	Tradition	Arena	Primary Issue Cluster	Dominant Rhetorical Configuration	Main Communicative Function
O1	Orthodox	Pulpit	memory politics	Civilizational Christianity/national-ecclesial rhetoric	Homiletic interpretation of national and ecclesial dignity
O2	Orthodox	Pulpit	war; migration/displacement	Suffering/martyrdom/memory	Pastoral moral witnessing under conditions of war
O3	Orthodox	Policy	war; migration/displacement	Dignity universalism	Institutional condemnation and moral universalization
O4	Orthodox	Policy	migration/displacement	Love of neighbor/hospitality	Institutional care and refugee assistance
O5	Orthodox	Policy	civilizational rhetoric; war	Civilizational Christianity/national-ecclesial rhetoric	Anti-imperial ecclesial counter-speech
O6	Orthodox	Policy	migration/displacement; moral order	Civilizational Christianity/national-ecclesial rhetoric	Institutional moral framing of social change
O7	Orthodox	Policy	memory politics; civilizational rhetoric	Civilizational Christianity/national-ecclesial rhetoric	Synodal sacralization of statehood and ecclesial continuity

Table A1. Cont.

CID	Tradition	Arena	Primary Issue Cluster	Dominant Rhetorical Configuration	Main Communicative Function
O8	Orthodox	Platform	migration/displacement	Love of neighbor/hospitality	Pastoral amplification of care for displaced persons
O9	Orthodox	Pulpit	war; civilizational rhetoric	Exile/return/displacement	Homiletic narration of liberation from captivity
J1	Jewish	Policy	antisemitism; memory politics	Peoplehood	Communal defence through historical and civic argument
J2	Jewish	Platform	antisemitism; memory politics	Dignity universalism	Public correction of anti-Jewish historical distortion
J3	Jewish	Platform	antisemitism; memory politics	Suffering/martyrdom/memory	Memorial pedagogy and public warning
J4	Jewish	Policy	antisemitism	Dignity universalism	Formal condemnation and civic appeal
J5	Jewish	Platform	memory politics; communal security	Peoplehood	Platform-mediated communal and transnational linkage
J6	Jewish	Platform	memory politics	Suffering/martyrdom/memory	Commemorative memorialization
J7	Jewish	Platform	antisemitism	Dignity universalism	Agenda amplification through legal framing
J8	Jewish	Policy	war; migration/displacement	Love of neighbor/hospitality	Institutional solidarity and crisis response
J9	Jewish	Policy	antisemitism; memory politics	Peoplehood	Communal defence through public statement
J10	Jewish	Policy	antisemitism	Dignity universalism	Institutional condemnation of anti-Jewish violence
J11	Jewish	Platform	memory politics	Suffering/martyrdom/memory	Commemorative public pedagogy
J12	Jewish	Policy	antisemitism; memory politics	Suffering/martyrdom/memory	Formal denunciation of anti-Semitic speech through memorial warning
J13	Jewish	Platform	memory politics; war	Peoplehood	Public narration of resilience and communal continuity
J14	Jewish	Policy	antisemitism	Dignity universalism	Institutional counter-speech against public prejudice

Note to Table A1: The categories listed in this appendix identify the dominant analytical role of each text in the study. They do not imply that a given item contains only one code family, one sacred lexicon cluster, or one rhetorical function. Several texts were coded under multiple categories in the main analysis.

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