

# MAY A GOD BLESS THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Critical discourse analysis of the relationship between religious beliefs and politics in Bush's and Obama's discourses about the fight against terrorism

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The United States presents an interesting topic for the discussion about secularism in the West, as it is sometimes considered as an anomaly amongst secularising Western nations and as evidence of the failings of the secularisation theory. The influence of religion on the culture and political life of the U.S. is well known, but the relationship between religion and U.S. foreign policy has not gained much scholarly attention until the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

This study participates in the discussion about the relationship between religious beliefs and U.S. foreign policy by analysing discourses that previous U.S. presidents George W. Bush (GOP) and Barack Obama (D) construct about the fight against terrorism. The analysis is conducted using a Faircloughian three-dimensional critical discourse analysis on a total of 17 speeches from Bush and Obama. The research material consists of inaugural addresses and State of the Union Addresses.

The subject of this study is approached using a three-part theoretical framework. The theoretical framework consists of secularism, the concept of the post-secular, and the American civil religion. The three-part theoretical framework enables a comprehensive approach that allows versatile religious phenomena to be considered in the analysis. Thus, the analysis also includes versatile religious phenomena that are not straightforwardly connected to certain religions or religious groups.

The analysis revealed that Bush constructs three distinct discourses and a total of seven sub-discourses about the fight against terrorism, whereas Obama integrates the matter in a larger security-discourse and its sub-discourses. By not constructing distinct discourses about the fight against terrorism, Obama's addresses counter the Bush administrations high profile treatment of the conflict and the narrative of it as a distinct war. Bush's and Obama's addresses establish a relationship between religious beliefs and the American civil religion, although in Obama's case, the connection to religious beliefs is established chiefly in his inaugural addresses. This study argues that the presidents' discourses indicate a post-secular relationship between religion and politics in the context of the fight against terrorism, as they do not indicate either secularism or dominant religiousness, but a relationship that accommodates both religious and secular interpretations of politics and supports a non-traditional way of relating to religious beliefs in politics.

**Keywords:** critical discourse analysis, discourse, secularism, post-secular, American civil religion, religion, war on terror, terrorism, foreign policy

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The West is frequently described as secular and this depiction is often used to distinguish it from more religious areas, such as the Middle East. The United States provides an interesting subject for the discussion about Western secularity as it can be argued that the U.S. is secular due to its formal separation of church and state, even though religion is clearly visible in its politics and culture (Dillon 2012, 257–258). Recently, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, scholars have been paying more attention to the role of religion in the politics of the United States. Examining U.S. politics from the viewpoint of secularism is particularly interesting since the U.S. may be considered as a deviant case amongst secularising Western states, and it has been used to criticise the secularisation theory (Hackworth 2010, 356; Gorski et al 2012, 7).

The U.S. has a high variety of different religions and the importance of religious tolerance, diversity and freedom is often emphasised. Different religious groups usually focus more on the domestic and social affairs than on foreign policy, but various groups have also views about the role that the U.S. should play in the international arenas. The Christian Right, which is mostly identified with the Republican party, can be argued to be one of the most influential interest groups in the politics of the U.S. Another noticeable group is the Catholic Church, to name one. (Hastedt 2011, 117, 123–124.) The Christian Right is often referred to as Conservative Protestants, and it may be argued that their influence in the U.S. foreign policy-making grew after the 9/11 terrorist attacks (Croft 2009, 120, 123). Even though the relationship between U.S. politics and religion has been gaining more scholarly interest lately, the religious nature of many seemingly secular policies and the impact of religion in them has been under studied, especially in the context of secularism and the post-secular (Hackworth 2010, 357). Also, the religious dimension that affects the foreign policy of the U.S. was widely ignored before the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Marsden 2011, 327).

After the terrorist attacks of September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001, president George W. Bush declared war on terrorists, followed by military interventions in Afghanistan and later in Iraq. The interventions were justified by the terrorist connections of the Afghani and Iraqi regimes. (Katz 2013, 14.) The Bush administration dubbed the war as the War on Terror, a term that the Obama administration seized to use. Therefore, the conflict is generally referred

to as *fight against terrorism* in this study and the term War on Terror is only used in the context of Bush's addresses. This study discusses the relationship between religious beliefs and politics in the discourses about the fight against terrorism that previous U.S. presidents George W. Bush (Republican party) and Barack Obama (Democratic party) construct in a selection of their speeches during their presidencies. In that way, this study contributes to the discussion about the relationship between religious beliefs and U.S. foreign policy by analysing a foreign policy topic, the fight against terrorism, and the influence of religious beliefs in the discourses concerning it. The fight against terrorism remains a contemporary topic as the struggle still continues. Often the discussion about the fight against terrorism does not consider the influence of religious beliefs in Western politics, as the focus is generally on Islam, its radical forms and Jihad, which is why this study focuses on the relationship between religious beliefs and the politics in the U.S.

The main research questions of this study are: *What is the nature of the relationship between religious beliefs and politics in the discourses about the fight against terrorism? Are the discourses different from one another?* Thus, the content of both presidents' discourses and the relationships between religious beliefs and politics within them are compared. Additional research question that this research seeks to answer is: *How do the discourses reproduce the American civil religion?*

Using the term *religious beliefs* instead of religion in the research question is intentional as examining religious beliefs instead of only the effects of any recognised religions or religious groups enables including broader religious phenomena than just "traditional" religions in the analysis. The research material consists of one inaugural address and seven State of the Union Addresses given by George W. Bush and two inaugural addresses and seven State of the Union Addresses by Barack Obama. The discourses about the fight against terrorism and the relationship between religious beliefs and politics within the discourses are analysed using a Faircloughian three-dimensional form of critical discourse analysis.

The theoretical framework of this research consists of three different approaches that support each other: secularism, the concept of the post-secular, and the American civil religion. These three components together allow the relationship between religious beliefs and politics to be analysed thoroughly and from versatile perspectives. When discussing the relationship between state and religion, and especially the nature of the relationship

and whether it is secular or not, a well-fitting component of the theoretical framework is secularism. Secularism is a political doctrine or ideology that consists of the idea of the separation of religious and public spheres. Secularism is not, however, a uniform political doctrine or a way of separating the church and the state, but it appears differently in different cultures and states. Secularism must be distinguished from secularisation, which refers to historical and social processes of, for example, the privatisation of religion and the decline of religious faith. (Berg-Sørensen 2013, 2–3.)

The second part of the theoretical framework is the concept of the post-secular. The idea of many modern societies being secular has been widely questioned. The concept of the post-secular provides an approach to societies that are traditionally considered as secular but in which religion has maintained its status or is growing its significance. Contrary to secularist expectations, the significance of religion has grown, and its privatisation diminished in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. These societies that have not developed according to what the secularisation theory expected can be described as post-secular. (Beaumont 2010, 8–9.) The term post-secular can refer to the re-emergence of religion or its increased visibility in politics and culture, to critique towards modernist or secularist politics or ideology, or to a new, faith-based political approach, for example. The term has multiple uses, the simplest and perhaps most common being the re-sacralisation of public life and the increased significance of religion in moral, social and political matters in modern democratic societies. (Knott 2010, 20; Berg-Sørensen 2013, 3.)

Both secularism and the concept of the post-secular are used to analyse the relationship between politics and religion, for which purpose both are applicable but provide different perspectives. The third part of the theoretical framework is the American civil religion, largely based on Robert Bellah's definition of it. Bellah defines the American civil religion as the religious dimension that exists in the political realm and is expressed in a set of beliefs, symbols and rituals (Bellah 1970/1967, 171). The American Constitution, for example, has special symbolic role in the American civil religion (Levinson 1979, 123). The American civil religion is largely based on biblical events and themes but has also its own sacred events, rituals and martyrs, which differentiates it from pure Christianity (Bellah 1970/1967, 175). An important theme in the American civil religion is the idea that God has a plan for the United States and that the nation must fulfil this religiously interpreted purpose while it acts as an example for other nations. (Rouner 1986, 136; Bellah 1970/1967, 175).

To provide background information for this study, chapter two discusses the role of religion and the American civil religion in the U.S. society, in addition to a review of U.S. foreign policy and the fight against terrorism. Freedom of religion is an important theme to discuss as it creates a substantial foundation for the relationship between state and religion. A central discussion revolves around the Religion Clauses of the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States and their interpretation. The issue that the different interpretations evoke is whether the state should be strictly secular or endorse religious activities to best ensure freedom of religion.

Chapter three further illuminates the theoretical framework and its application to this study. Chapter four introduces the research material and the methodology of critical discourse analysis (CDA). The chapter discusses the theoretical background of CDA, its applications, and how Fairclough's three-dimensional model of CDA is applied to this study. The analysis is discussed in chapter five, which consists of three parts that each discuss one dimension of the analysis. The results of the analysis are summarised and reflected on in the sixth chapter. The concluding chapter reflects on this study and possible further research.



## 2. BACKGROUND

### 2.1. Religion, state and secularity in the United States

John Torpey (2012, 298) argues that the United States has become considerably more secular during the last hundred years in terms of differentiation of church and other institutions. However, despite the increase of the number of non-religious people in the U.S., Americans are still more religious and attend church more actively than people in Western Europe (ibid., 299). Bruce Ledewitz (2011, xvii–xviii) also argues that secularism in the United States is growing, even though the American society is still distinctively religious in many respects.

The First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, the Establishment Clause and the Free Exercise Clause, together called the Religion Clauses of the First Amendment, are notable in the discussion about the relationship between state and religion in the U.S. The Free Exercise Clause secures the U.S. citizens the right to exercise or not to exercise any religion of their choosing without governmental intervention (Hammond 1998, 1). The Establishment Clause states that the “congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion”, thus promising governmental neutrality towards religion and that religiosity will not be endorsed by the government (Ledewitz 2011, xviii, 3). The purpose of the Clauses is to give people the freedom to choose their own religion without the federal government endorsing any specific form of religion (Hammond 1998, 1).

The U.S. is a federal union and is thus formed of partly independent states that are differentiated from the federal government in scope. In the U.S., the federal government has primary jurisdiction over foreign affairs, whereas the state government has jurisdiction over civil and criminal law and public order, to name a few. (Deutsch 1970, 183, 229.) Even though the states have some independence, their laws and acts must always be in accordance with the Constitution. The judiciary is an important channel of federal influence over the states as it is the duty of the courts to decide whether the actions and laws of the state or federal government are valid under the Constitution. However, this does not ensure that the Constitution is interpreted in the same manner in every state as the interpretation always depends on the judges. (Ibid., 250–251.) Consequently, even though executing the Constitution consistently throughout the U.S. may at first seem

simple, due to differences of interpretation of the Constitution, this is not always the case. Hence, even the Constitution cannot ensure similar treatment of religion everywhere in the U.S.

There are, for example, difficulties with defining the meaning of neutrality in the Establishment Clause as the line between neutrality and favouritism has been in the centre of the discussion regarding the application of the Clause. Nowadays it seems clear that the Establishment Clause requires equal treatment of all faiths, at least, but the true meaning and application of the Clause is still widely contested. (Beschle 2002, 456, 462.) Furthermore, defining governmental neutrality towards religion is difficult because accommodating religion can still be accepted in schools, for example, under the Free Exercise Clause. Several court cases in the U.S. have shown that even apparent favouritism can be portrayed neutral and thus be accepted under the Establishment Clause. (Beschle 2002, 463; Ledewitz 2011, 21.) Even though the purpose of the Clause may seem clear and in support of secularism, the application of the Clause in addition to the application of the Free Exercise Clause has not been consistent, clear or in many cases in support of secularism.

The issue regarding the Religion Clauses of the First Amendment is that people interpret them and their meaning differently. For some, a literal interpretation is sufficient, meaning that everybody can choose to either practice or not to practice any religion and that the federal government will not express favouritism towards any religion. However, the literal interpretation is not sufficient and not applicable to different areas of life when the lack of resources may lead governmental actions to seem to favour some particular religion. A problem also arises when the two Clauses are in contradiction with each other, when the question is which Clause should be favoured. Two different approaches to the interpretation of the primacy of Clauses can be distinguished: separationist and accommodationist. The separationist approach emphasises the priority of the Establishment Clause since a secular state that does not favour any religion and a non-religious public sphere are believed to be essential in guaranteeing freedom of religion. According to the accommodationist view, practicing religion in the public sphere should be encouraged over nonreligion, because it is believed to be the only option in ensuring freedom of religion. (Hammond 1998, 1–3.)

Thus, there are clear differences regarding the interpretation of the Religion Clauses of the First Amendment, which also reflects the differences of opinions regarding the relationship between state and religion. There is no consensus on whether the U.S. federal government should be strictly secular without endorsing any kind of religious activity in the public sphere or should it, on the contrary, endorse all kinds of religious activity in order to ensure freedom of religion.

To conclude, the U.S. can be argued to be secular in the sense that it formally separates the church and the state. However, religion is still an important part of American society and politics, which may make the claim of the secularity of the U.S. unconvincing.

## 2.2. Freedom and religion, civil religion and founding myths

“[T]he United States stands always for human liberty, for individual rights, for freedom of movement, and for freedom of the person.” This is what former U.S. Secretary of State, Henry A. Kissinger, stated about the policy principles of the U.S. when questioned by the senate in 1973 on his nomination for Secretary of State. (Kissinger 1974, 205.) This statement implicates that freedom in its many forms is in the centre of U.S. policy, both foreign and domestic. Freedom is evidently the concept that many associate in some way with the United States and its foreign policy, whether or not one believes that the U.S. embodies it in reality.

Different American generations have held various views about liberty and freedom. For example, after the War of Independence, several views of liberty and freedom clashed: unitary and pluralist, national and sectional, republican and democratic, and traditional and modern. Furthermore, the clash between differing opinions about southern liberty and northern freedom sparked the Civil War. (Hackett Fisher 2005, 719.) Liberty and freedom can be perceived as terms with different meanings due to their origins from different words and different areas. Liberty, originating from ancient Mediterranean civilisations, came to mean the condition of being independent from another’s will, whereas freedom, with its Indo-European origin, refers to being connected to a community, to other free people, by kinship or affection. Whereas most nations in the West adopted either of the terms, the English-speaking world adopted both, which resulted in clashes between the two concepts. (Ibid. 716–717.) After the Second World War and during the Cold War, individual liberties and civil rights started to gain more attention. Hackett Fisher argues

that over time the American society has enlarged the meaning of liberty and freedom and become freer themselves. (Ibid. 721–722.)

Due to the versatility of concepts of freedom and liberty during U.S. history it is not necessary, or perhaps even possible, to try to identify one cohesive American concept of freedom, although similarities between different concepts can be found. The emphasis on civil liberties is evident (Abraham 1988, 3). Understanding freedom as a set of civil liberties, such as freedom of religion and freedom of speech, is visible in academic texts also, as scholarly texts often address different civil liberties separately instead of discussing the concept of freedom as a whole. A dominant idea regarding liberty, originating from the U.S. Constitution, is that liberty can only be achieved by the rule of law (ibid., 5).

American journalist M. Stanton Evans discusses the role of religion in the founding of the American concept of freedom in his book *The Theme is Freedom: Religion, Politics and the American Tradition* (1994). He claims that the American concept of freedom as the absence of coercion, more specifically the absence of state coercion over its citizens, was born of Western Christian views of human nature and the purpose of the state. These Christian views also affected how American institutions were formed in a way that protects and respects the freedom of U.S. citizens. (Evans 1994, 316–317.) According to Evans, the development of Western faith, especially in America, also affected the American Constitution. In the American faith, the state was seen as subordinate to a higher power rather than an expression of divine power, which enabled the restrictions of state power and more profound freedom to the U.S. citizens, as Evans interprets it. (Ibid. 309, 311–312.) Evans then argues that not only did religion affect the development of American institutions, religious belief is also “conceptually indispensable to a regime of freedom” (ibid. 37–38). Thus, it may be argued that religion and freedom have a close relationship in the U.S. history and present day.

The U.S. can be perceived as secular on the basis that state and religion are formally separated, even though religion is still an important part of the U.S. politics. Despite the Christian faith of presidents Bush and Obama, the U.S. has long promoted freedom of religion and acceptance of different religions (Gunn 2004, 503). The freedom of religious belief and association is achieved in the United States by the principle of separating religion and state, according to Robert Bellah (1970/1967, 170–171). The state of

religiosity in the U.S. is still a highly debated issue as some consider it more secularised than ever and some as religious as ever. The American civil religion and the discussion of its nature also bring another approach to the debate: if the American civil religion is accepted as an actual religion, its existence would naturally make the U.S. society religious. The debate on the nature of the American civil religion will be discussed further in chapter three. It can be argued that secularism or the post-secular period, depending on whether one believes that the age of secularism or secularisation has come to an end, has caused the birth of civil religion and the adoption of religious symbols to be used as political tools to promote national integration (Beyers 2014, 9; May et al. 2014, 340). This is one reason why the American civil religion is also included in the theoretical framework of this study.

When it comes to the relationship between religion and state, there is a sharp difference between the United States and France, for example. In France, religious expression is banned from public schools based on the French concept of secularism, *laïcité*, whereas in the United States religious expression in schools is promoted (Gunn 2004, 424.) Thus, the premise from which the U.S. conceptualises and treats religion is quite different compared to France. However, T. Jeremy Gunn (2004, 422) points out in his article *Religious Freedom and Laïcité: A Comparison of the United States and France* that the two doctrines, *laïcité* and freedom of religion, have many similarities, such as that they are both presented to promote equality, neutrality and tolerance, and both can be seen to operate as founding myths.

The freedom of religion is portrayed as the “first freedom” which the Pilgrims and other people who settled in America came to seek. Former U.S. president George W. Bush portrayed it as the cornerstone of the United States and many governmental actors reflect this idea. (Gunn 2004, 430, 431.) However, religious freedom in the United States did not actualise in reality for a long time, and although freedom of religion is the first right written in the Bill of Rights, the idea of freedom of religion being the “first freedom” is wildly overstated (*ibid.* 444–445). Only in the 1940s were real steps towards freedom of religion and banning religious discrimination taken. Freedom of religion is portrayed to originate gloriously from the past and embody equality, freedom of conscience, and other core values of many modern societies, but in reality, it emerged from times defined by hostility and violence. (*Ibid.*, 451–452.)

It may be argued that the U.S. foreign policy is largely shaped by a religious identity and foundational myths of manifest destiny, exceptionalism, and the U.S. being an innocent nation, which over time transformed into the American civil religion. Lee Marsden argues that president Obama used the American civil religion intentionally to gain support for his foreign policy agenda to maintain U.S. hegemony. (Marsden 2011, 326.) According to him, the will to “convert” the whole world into freedom, liberty, human rights, democracy and capitalism is especially visible in Obama’s speeches. Marsden argues that Obama’s foreign policy agenda was based on the tradition of the civil religion and that he used civil religion to frame and justify his agenda. (Ibid., 341.) American identity rests heavily upon the myth of *American exceptionalism*, the idea that the Americans are a nation chosen by God with higher morals and purpose such as freedom and human rights. The United States portrays itself embodying the way of life that is centred upon freedom, as the guardian of liberty, which is used as justification for its interventions in other countries. (Ibid., 328–329.)

### 2.3. On U.S. foreign policy

The grand strategies of different U.S. foreign policies can be associated with presidential doctrines that determine the agenda of the foreign policy (Hastedt 2011, 13). The Bush Doctrine emphasised the significance of pre-emptive action in preventing attacks against the U.S. and endorsed the use of U.S. force to encourage free and open societies, thus providing the intellectual framework for the launch of Global War of Terrorism (ibid., 20–21). The doctrine also includes an “America first” mindset and does not put as much weight on harmonious relationships between the U.S. and its transatlantic allies. The Bush Doctrine is largely shaped by the changing geopolitical position of the U.S. in the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the terrorist attacks of 9/11 and the subsequent strategy re-evaluation. The U.S. foreign policy was based on a combination of containment and deterrence for over 50 years, but the Bush Doctrine differed from the earlier alignments on its emphasis on pre-emption, its hegemonic aspirations and unilateralism. Previous U.S. strategies have had the same characteristics, but they became more pronounced in the Bush Doctrine. (Dunn 2009, 181–182.) Especially Bush’s pursuit towards unilateralism, even characterised as “neo-imperial”, harmed the image of the U.S. and the trust between the U.S. and its European allies (ibid., 186).

Obama continued to support the leadership role of the U.S., and even though he sought to realign the U.S. foreign policy, it can be argued that his foreign policy initiatives nonetheless reflected the “ordinary” characteristics of U.S. foreign policy (McCormick 2009, 245, Hastedt 2011, 65). The U.S. foreign policy can be argued to be shaped by three patterns of thought and action that shape the American national style of foreign policy-making. The foreign policy of both Bush administration and Obama administration reflected this American national style. The first pattern is unilateralism, i.e. the U.S. inclination of acting alone when addressing foreign policy problems. (Hastedt 2011, 59–60.) The second pattern is moral pragmatism, which contains the idea that American morality provides the universal criterion according to which every state’s behaviour can and should be judged. (Ibid., 61.) The third pattern is legalism, which rejects the idea that the balance of power can ensure national security. Legalism embraces the liberal idea that as rational beings, humans naturally avoid war and favour peaceful settlements of disputes. Thus, the central goal of the U.S. policy is to form a global system of institutions and rules so that disputes can be solved peacefully. (Ibid., 64.)

It may be argued that not one, but two Obama Doctrines exist. The first one strived to be different than the Bush Doctrine as it emphasised the need of open partnership and new U.S. relations with the world, for example. However, a second Obama Doctrine seemed to emerge in 2011 from the need to respond to the pro-democracy movements in North Africa and the Middle East. The second doctrine was more cautious and pragmatic and less concerned about the vision of the world and more about the reality. The second Obama Doctrine is also more attentive to the distinctions between serious threats and minor threats to the U.S. The second Doctrine has many similar themes as the first one but does not embrace responsibility in interfering in matters quite as much as the first. (Hastedt 2011, 3–4.)

The influence of religion in the U.S. foreign policy has been gaining more scholarly interest only in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Croft 2009, 120; Hastedt 2011, 58). The combination of religion and politics is not a new phenomenon, but religion has been an important theme in several important U.S. elections since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, especially in the post-war period (Marsden 2011, 332). Religion has affected U.S. foreign policy by both soft power and hard power. Soft power was used by distributing aid and American values by religious actors, and hard power even on the battlefields of Iraq, where conservative evangelical

actors sought to convert locals into Christianity, for example. It has also been revealed that the entire military culture is highly religious. (Ibid., 338–339.)

It may be argued that four religiously coloured assumptions that have influence on the U.S. foreign policy exist. The first is that the U.S. is considered God's chosen nation. The second is the idea that the U.S. has a special purpose to change the world, and the third is that this quest involves a fight against evil. The fourth assumption is that the world affairs are characterised by an "apocalyptic outlook" in the sense that subtle changes are not considered to be sufficient to cause any change in the world and that evil should be fought with radical action. (Hastedt 2011, 58.) These themes are also visible in the American civil religion and in its foundational myths, which will be discussed in chapter three.

However, it is important to remember that not all religious groups share the same view about the U.S. and its role. Glenn P. Hastedt (2011, 58) distinguishes three different schools of thought within U.S. Protestantism that all have different views regarding the U.S. foreign policy and how it should be conducted. Liberal Christianity provided the worldview for many people of the founding generation but is now been replaced by fundamentalism and evangelicalism. Fundamentalists have a pessimistic view about the future and the possibility of change, they draw sharp distinctions between believers and non-believers and are often not willing to cooperate with people they do not agree with. Like fundamentalists, evangelicals also separate believers from non-believers, but are more optimistic about prospects of change and cooperation. (Ibid., 58–59.) The idea that the U.S. must use its foreign policy to achieve the goals set by God is especially strong among the evangelicals (Croft 2009, 124). Differences within these groups exist, nonetheless, and often domestic social policy is more important to them than foreign policy. Regardless of where the idea of American exceptionalism stems from, it has great influence in the view that the U.S. should be the leader in world affairs. (Hastedt 2011, 58–59.)

American Christianity is a complex phenomenon full of different views and purposes, political purposes being one of them. A group called the Christian Right, or otherwise called Conservative Protestants, is often in the centre of interest when discussing the role of American Christianity in politics. Bush was highly popular among the Conservative Protestants in the presidential elections of 2000 and 2004. Lee Marsden has argued that the influence of the Christian Right on U.S. foreign policy-making has grown after the



9/11 attacks. (Croft 2009, 120, 123.) Many have argued that the George W. Bush administration was largely affected by the Christian Right and theological elements in general, and the administration faced accusations that it tried to gain profit from the president's apparent commitment to Christian values even though the senior official of the White House disregarded religious leaders and faith-based agenda. (Ibid., 122–123.) This demonstrates how the president may use religion to gain more personal support. However, the question is not only about the president being able to use religion to their own personal gain but how the majority of the American people also seem to expect that their president is a Christian. This was indicated clearly during Obama's presidential campaign before his first term, when his suitability to lead the U.S. and its foreign policy was questioned due to his race and religion. Christianity appeared to be especially important in the context of the fight against terrorism as voters seemed to worry about Obama having too empathetic views towards Muslims and being soft on terrorists. (Ledwidge 2009, 153–155.)

The relationship between the Bush administration and religion is often portrayed as straightforward, but in truth it was rather complex. It may be argued that the influence of religion on the Bush administration was subtler than expected, since although the administration had clear connections to the Christian Right, their views did not always coincide with each other and the administration's commitment to Christian values was at times more ostensible than genuine. (Croft 2009, 122–123.) However, religious groups managed to influence U.S. foreign policy particularly in Africa. The policy on AIDS was largely shaped by the beliefs and lobbying of the evangelical Focus on the Family group. (Hastedt 2011, 124.)

#### 2.4. The fight against terrorism

The large military campaign that the George W. Bush administration called the War on Terror is a highly complex phenomenon with a complicated background and causes that the scope of this study does not allow to discuss in its entirety. However, in order to provide context to the topic of this study, some central themes are discussed briefly. Justified by the War on Terror, U.S. military forces have been utilised in the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, but also in Iran, Libya, Pakistan, Somalia and Yemen. The effects of the war go even further, effecting states such as Chechnya, Libya, Palestine, the Philippines, and Sri Lanka. (Gregory 2011, 238.)

In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001, George W. Bush's administration with the U.S. allies declared war on terrorists, resulting in military interventions first in Afghanistan and later, in 2003, in Iraq. The Bush administration justified both interventions by the linkages of the Taliban government in Afghanistan and the alleged linkages of the Saddam Hussein government in Iraq to the terrorist network al-Qaeda. The Bush administration claimed that Hussein and his government were allies with al-Qaeda, although in reality they had little or no connection to the terrorist network. Resistance against foreign occupation was strong in Afghanistan and Iran, and it resulted in suicide bombings and insurgencies. (Katz 2013, 14.) Besides military intervention, Operation Enduring Freedom that started in October 2001, the U.S. also took counterterrorism and political and assistance actions in Afghanistan, aiming to eliminate al-Qaeda (Fair 2013, 76; Semple 2013, 47–48). The military campaign was successful in overthrowing the Taliban regime and drove the remaining organised troops of Taliban and al-Qaeda out of Afghanistan but did not stop insurgencies and other internal disturbances (Semple 2013, 53–54). It may be argued that the invasion of Iraq benefitted al-Qaeda as it allowed it to regroup and reorganise itself. The occupation also turned many Iraqis more hostile towards the U.S. and other Western troops and escalated the conflict that was initially rather limited to a larger one, which connected Arabian Muslims beyond state borders in resistance against foreign occupation. (Gerges 2013, 34.)

In addition to the occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq, the U.S. has made many other global efforts to fight terrorism, including military force, covert action, intelligence gathering, diplomacy, and creating new forms of international policing and forensic cooperation. U.S. actions in the fight against terrorism are not limited to U.S. actions abroad, as U.S. military and intelligence budgets have been increased significantly to improve safety on the U.S. soil. (Flibbert 2013, 95.) The War on Terror has also severely influenced the Middle East and North Africa by strengthening many authoritarian regimes and weakened Arab-Israeli-relations even further (ibid., 108).

At first, Bush and his anti-terrorism policies alongside the War on Terror enjoyed wide popularity in the U.S. However, by the end of Bush's second presidency, approval of the president himself, the war in Iraq and the actions taken on behalf of the War on Terror had dropped to record lows. One reason behind the disapproval may be that the Bush administration failed to invent a sufficient enough "counter ideology" to justify the military actions in the Middle East. (Watson 2009, 10, 13.)

Obama sought to change the Bush administration's course of action and the conduct of the fight against terrorism so that they would correspond U.S. values better. His administration also wanted to reconstruct the narrative of the War on Terror, ceasing to use the term and making it appear less dominant alongside other foreign policy priorities. Despite Obama's promises and efforts to close down the detention centre at Guantánamo Bay, it remains debatable whether the substance of the U.S. counterterrorism actions actually changed significantly as the fight against terrorism remained in the centre of his administration's foreign policy. Osama bin Laden was tracked down and killed by U.S. military troops in May 2011, marking a success in the fight against terrorism for the Obama administration. However, although the successful assassination of bin Laden was praised by many, the Obama administration's counterterrorism actions nevertheless drew much criticism. (McCrisken 2011, 782–783, 788.) The U.S. ended its large-scale military involvement in Iraq in 2011 as by that year, U.S. soldiers had left the country (Brennan et al. 2013, 5).

The costs of the fight against terrorism have been high. According to a Congressional Research Service report (DeBruyne 2017), as of April 2017, a total of 6901 U.S. military personnel were killed in action and over 85 thousand wounded in action in five military operations in the fight against terrorism: Operation Enduring Freedom (mainly conducted in Afghanistan from 2001 to 2014), Operation Iraqi Freedom (the invasion of Iraq in 2003, major combat operations ending in 2010), Operation New Dawn (replacement name for Operation Iraqi Freedom, casualties occurred between 2010 and 2011), Operation Inherent Resolve (against ISIL in Iraq and Syria, started in 2014), and Operation Freedom's Sentinel (in Afghanistan, started in 2015). The number of wounded does not include the numerous health and mental health problems that the veterans encounter. The exact number of the casualties of the U.S. operations, both enemy combatants and civilians, is hard to count, but the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War publication (2015) estimated that a total of around 1.3 million people were either directly or indirectly killed due to the operations in Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan: 1 million in Iraq, 220 000 in Afghanistan and 80 000 in Pakistan, not including farther war zones such as Yemen. The war has also been very expensive for the U.S. Since the attacks of 9/11, the spending on the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Syria and on Homeland Security and the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs was \$4.3 trillion in total in the fiscal year 2017. And as the war goes on, it is

estimated that the total cost of the fight against terrorism may rise to over \$5.6 trillion.  
(Crawford 2017.)

### 3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework of this research consists of three parts, which complement and support each other when examining the relationship between religious beliefs and politics in the United States. The three parts of this framework are secularism, the concept of the post-secular, and the American civil religion.

Secularism is not an unequivocal term: it refers to a variety of different views about the relationship between state and religion and is a common lens through which the relationship is examined in the West. Secularism commonly refers to the separation of church and state in the sense that political institutions are separated from religion and that they are justified using secular or public reason. When understood in a normative sense, secularism is usually interpreted as a political doctrine that gives priority to tolerance and neutrality. Secularism is often justified by the protection of religious freedom, freedom of conscience and equality between all people, regardless of whether they exercise religion or not. (Berg-Sørensen 2010, 1, 3.)

The nature of the post-secular is highly contested. It is unclear whether the term refers to a time that follows previously secular societies, or to a new kind of religion and the changing relationship between states and the secular (Knott 2010, 34). Jürgen Habermas is probably the most influential scholar of the post-secular, but his views have also been widely criticised. According to Habermas, religion has maintained its significance in post-secular societies, contrary to the claims of the secularisation theory. Habermas conceives the post-secular as a change of consciousness in the sense that a new reaction towards the continued existence and influence of religion in an increasingly secular environment is required. (Habermas 2008, 19–20.) Thus, the term post-secular may also refer to the misconceptions of the secularisation theory, i.e. to the continued existence or resurfacing of religion and religious diversity (Molendjik et al 2009, x; Berg-Sørensen 2013, 3).

The American civil religion is a concept originally introduced by Robert N. Bellah. He argues that an independent public religious dimension, expressed in a set of beliefs, symbols and rituals, exists in the U.S. He named this religious dimension the American civil religion. (Bellah 1970/1967, 168, 171.) A large debate surrounding the American civil religion is whether it is a genuine religion, merely a religious dimension or

something else. For example, Richard Neuhaus argues that the American civil religion is not a religion but a certain understanding of the U.S., influenced by a religious dimension (Neuhaus 1984, 100). Bellah argues that the American civil religion is ultimately based on Christianity, but that over time a set of beliefs, symbols and rituals, which are general enough to satisfy non-Christians, developed and institutionalised the society. The American civil religion, with its rather specific notions about America and its purpose, provides U.S. citizens a unifying, common identity and a tool for national religious self-understanding. (Bellah 1970/1967, 175–176; Rouner 1986, 128.)

Secularism and the concept of the post-secular provide different and useful approaches to the analysis of the relationship between religion and politics, and of the societal role and significance of religion. The concept of the post-secular is included in the theoretical framework because the concept brings certain flexibility to the analysis and allows to examine phenomena that are not traditionally considered religious. Secularism, in the most common sense of the term, is concerned with the separation of church and state and therefore is not best suited to study untraditional religious phenomena, such as civil religions and the influence of unestablished religions and religious beliefs. Thus, including the concept of the post-secular in the theoretical framework enables this study to analyse more versatile religious phenomena than the approach of secularism alone would enable. The American civil religion is included so that the influence and role of religious beliefs in U.S. politics can be examined more thoroughly. Whether one believes that the American civil religion is an actual religion or not, it consists of beliefs that are clearly religious in nature and thus, should not be left out of the analysis of the relationship between religious beliefs and the politics of the U.S.

The discussion about the post-secular is largely based on the failings of the secularisation theory, which is why the main arguments of the theory will also be introduced in the following chapter. However, the secularisation theory will not be applied to the research itself. The secularisation theory assumes that different processes will cause a secularisation of people's worldviews and a decrease in the number of religious institutions (Pratt 1970, 6). Thus, as the theory is concerned about societal processes, it is more applicable to studies that examine societal changes and processes and religiosity in general from a wider perspective, rather than to studies that examine some specific phenomena within a short timeframe. Since the focus of this research is on discourses

rather than on any processes that may have or may not have taken place in the society, secularism is more applicable to this study than the secularisation theory.

### 3.1. Secularism

The meaning of the secular is generally co-constructed with the meaning of sacred or religion. However, the definition of religion is not clear either. One reason behind the difficulty to define religion is cultural differences, as people around the world conceive religion differently (Torpey 2012, 282). Definitions of religion vary depending on the culture in which the definition is born and developed. In the modern West, where religion is supposedly differentiated from other spheres of life, at least to some degree, religion has come to mean a distinct sphere that is connected to the other spheres, possibly in strained terms. However, this concept of religion is not applicable to cultures and societies where differentiations have not taken place. (Madsen 2012, 31.) Madsen argues that although people in the West often claim to have a neutral attitude towards religion, Western concepts of the secular and religion are often largely shaped by Western Protestant theological concepts and connected to essentially theological concepts. In other words, Western social scientific concepts of the secular and the religious have certain assumptions and standards that some religious-like phenomena do not fit into, which makes defining different religious phenomena often difficult. (Ibid., 26, 29–30.)

John Torpey (2012, 187) describes two principal axes around which a satisfactory definition of religion revolves: whether a practice or an activity has a social dimension which can be used to challenge existing social arrangements, and whether it involves supernatural powers that might be able to change the current state of affairs in this world or the next. Usually some form of institutionalisation occurs (ibid.). However, untangling the definition of the “traditional” way of conceiving religions is not enough, since the so-called para-religions, such as civil religion, political religion and secular religion need to be considered, too (ibid., 285). The difficulty to define religion elaborates the complexity of defining the secular.

Before discussing secularism further, it is necessary to make distinctions between secular, secularism and secularisation. A rough distinction can be made as follows: secular refers to the differentiation of religion from other areas of society, such as politics and culture, whereas secularisation is a process that involves a decline in the number of religious people and the loss of the significance of religion and religious authority in the society.

Secularism refers to an ideology, political doctrine or belief that religion should be differentiated from other spheres of public life. (Berg-Sørensen 2010, 1; Fox 2013, 31; Snape & Brown 2016, 3–4.)

Secularism generally refers to the separation of church and state in terms of institutional arrangements and individual reasons, i.e. so that political institutions are independent of religion and they are justified using secular or public reason. (Berg-Sørensen 2010, 1, 3.) As a normative term, secularism is usually interpreted as one that gives priority to principles such as tolerance and neutrality, but the function of secularism as a political doctrine varies depending on the contexts in which it is adopted. The separation of religion and politics is often made to promote political ideals of liberty, tolerance, equality and neutrality, or more specifically, secularism is justified for the sake of religious freedom, freedom of conscience and the equality of people of all religious and non-religious beliefs. (Ibid., 1–3.)

To distinguish secularism and the secularisation theory from each other and to clarify the later discussion of the post-secular, the main ideas of the secularisation theory are introduced. The secularisation theory usually consists of two different assumptions. Firstly, the interest towards religion and the amount of religious institutions will decline due to a social process; and secondly, people's worldviews will become more secular due to an intellectual process. (Pratt 1970, 6.) According to the theory, scientific and technological advancements and developing societies will cause the decline in religious worldviews, the loss of societal significance of religious institutions, and the general decline in the exercise of religion. Secularisation theory has faced much criticism and some scholars even argue for the end of secularisation theory. Religion still has a significant role in the modern world, and even increasingly so according to some theorists, for example in the form of religious fundamentalism. (Habermas 2008, 17, 18.)

There have also been efforts to simplify the matter of secularisation by dividing the issue to “political secularisation” (the differentiation thesis) and “social secularisation” (the commodification thesis). The differentiation thesis refers to the historical separation of church and state and different spheres of the social system, such as politics, religion, and the economy, becoming more specialised. Social secularisation, in turn, refers to the decline in church membership, religious belief, experiences, and acts of devotion. Bryan S. Turner argues that the distinction between social and political secularisation is



important as the processes do not necessarily take place simultaneously. (Turner 2012, 140–142.)

As there are many different interpretations of secularism, there are also a variety of different views about the extent of religiosity in today's world: some scholars still argue for secularisation, while the others consider that the secularisation theory has failed. Jürgen Habermas argued after the 9/11 attacks that the world has entered a post-secular age, meaning the increasing significance of religion in the public sphere and the need to re-evaluate the relationship between politics and faith. Some scholars argue that the secularisation theory is only correct when applied to Western Europe. If this view is accepted, then an interesting question arises about why religiosity has maintained its significance in the U.S. while Western Europe has become more and more secular, as can be argued. (Torpey 2012, 279–280, 300.) The United States is one reason why the secularisation thesis may seem questionable (Hackworth 2010, 356; Gorski et al 2012, 7), which makes it a fascinating research topic to be approached from the viewpoint of secularism. The division between church and state, in terms of legal principles and often in terms as institutional arrangements as well, is quite sharp in the U.S. However, the U.S. may still be the least secular country in the West in terms of individual beliefs and public engagement. (Gorski et al 2012, 7.)

It can be argued that many different versions of secularism exist. Secularism first developed mainly in Europe, from where it spread to other countries, and with this spread its values and ideas often also changed. Different versions of secularism can be understood as results of differences in socio-cultural and political modernity in different societies. (Bhargava 2013, 18–19.) According to Rajeev Bhargava, the broad definition of secularism means the aim to ensure the freedom to either practice or not to practice religion and ensuring that religion has no institutionalised religious effect on political or social life. He understands secularism as a normative doctrine. Bhargava also distinguishes a narrower, but equally normative, definition of secularism: political secularism. Political secularism refers to the idea that religion and state should be separated in order to ensure religious and non-religious freedom and to avoid religious tyranny and oppression. Political secularism also has many different variations. (Ibid. 20.)

Modern democracies are generally expected to be secular, but the problem is that as interpretations of the term vary, it is unclear to what kinds of phenomena “secular” strictly

refers. It can be argued that the formal separation between church and state is not enough to make a regime secular. In addition to the liberty to either practice or not to practice religion, different beliefs and their practitioners must be equal among themselves. Furthermore, all religious orientations must be heard in the process of determining the political identity of the society and defining and reaching its objectives. The third requirement is surely hard to achieve in real life due to conflicts of interests and values, for example. (Taylor 2011, 34–35.) Charles Taylor (2011, 36) argues that the real essence of secularism is not the relationship between state and religion but how democratic states react to diversity. State neutrality is required to ensure that every religion and non-religiosity are treated equally without favouring any over the other (ibid., 37).

Thus, Taylor provides yet another way of interpreting secularism and how it relates to states. Regardless of the interpretation of the true nature of secularism, neutrality remains in the centre of it. Other important aspects that are connected to neutrality are tolerance and pluralism. Not only is a secular state required to treat all religions and non-religiosity equally and neutrally, it also must allow all kinds of religions and world-views to coexist peacefully without fanaticism, as Harvey Cox argues in his influential book *The Secular City* (1990). (Pratt 1970, 1–2.) Secularism is thereby not, according to many interpretations, necessarily against religion, even though some forms of anti-religion secularisms also exist (Bader 2007/2013, 49; Bhargava 2013, 25). The version of secularism that does accept religion does not demand the abolishment of religion but rather requires that the role of religion be articulated in a way that protects the freedom of religion and the equal treatment of citizens of all religious or non-religious orientations. In its most basic form this means the formal separation of state and church, even though to many scholars this is not a sufficient definition.

The formal institutional separation of state and church may be an insufficient feature in defining secular states since the institutional separation is also a feature found in states that have established religions. The separation is an important feature of secular states, but alone not sufficient to make a state strictly secular. A secular state has no formal or legal alliance with any religion, which means that in order to be classified as secular, a state cannot have an established religion. (Bhargava 2013, 22.)

Bhargava distinguished three levels at which states can disconnect themselves from religion. Firstly, at the level of ends (first-order disconnection), meaning that the state

does not serve any religion's ends but has its own, at least substantially independent, objectives. Secondly, at the level of institutions (second-order disconnection), so that governmental and political institutions are separated from religious institutions. Lastly, at the level of law and public policy (third-order disconnection), meaning that religion is disconnected from state by removing religion as an object of politics and public policy. A state can disconnect itself from religion at just some levels or at all of them. The different disconnections may also serve different ends, amoral or value-based. Secular states are amoral if they are not committed to values such as peace, liberty and equality, and they aim to maximize either power or wealth or both. Amoral secular states tend to be imperial and autocratic. Value-based secular societies, in turn, are committed to values such as peace, toleration and religious liberty. (Bhargava 2013, 21–24.)

The disconnection at different levels also vary in form, and the variations help in distinguishing different kinds of secular states. The disconnection at the third level, law and public policy, may be interpreted in a one-sided manner so that religions are excluded in order to control and even abolish them. Secular states with this kind of disconnection are anti-religious. Even though these kinds of states are secular, they may be against Bhargava's definition of political secularism, which requires religious liberty. The third level disconnection can also be interpreted as mutual exclusion. Religion should not affect the matters of the state and in turn, state cannot affect religion either, but a mutual non-interference prevails. (Bhargava 2013, 25–26.) A form of secularism that argues for the separation of state and religion as a way of protecting individual liberty can be called liberal secularism. Republican secularism argues for a one-sided exclusion of religion for the sake of individualistic equality of citizenship. These are the most common Western forms of secularism. (Ibid., 20, 26.)

Especially when examining societies where religion still has high relevance, it is important to take some criticism of liberal-democratic secularism into account. Liberal secularism requires citizen support to coercive laws only if they can be popularly justified, as the principle of equal respect requires. The terms of laws must then be acceptable to all citizens which is why a coercive law can never be based on religious reasoning since it would not enjoy public justification. Purely religious convictions and commitments should be rejected in a liberal secular state, which might cause contradictions between one's politics and morality. Morality is often derived from religion, but liberal secularism requires people to separate religion from politics. This, however, might be virtually

impossible if people believe that their politics should be consistent with their morality. Thus, liberal secularism may force people to act against their conscience by requiring a religious person to exclude their religious reasoning, and thus it violates the principle of equal treatment. This may also lead to separation between religious and non-religious people into their own, separate social spheres, which is why excluding religious views and people might not be the best option. (Bhargava 2013, 29–30.)

Another criticism towards liberal secularism is that it is based on and shaped by Protestant ethic. Thus, quite ironically, this form of secularism presupposes a Christian civilisation and makes it difficult to coexist peacefully with other religions and might be hostile towards non-liberal and non-protestant believers. However, as Bhargava points out, although it is important to give room to different kinds of religious views, non-liberal religions are often those that seek to oppress and exclude some groups of people. Non-liberal religions should be allowed to exist, but oppression does not need to be accepted. (Bhargava 2013, 30–32.)

Charles Taylor (2007) distinguishes three different characterisations of secularity. The first one is when religion is separated from political structures and is privatised as people's private matter. Politics is, then, completely separate from religious beliefs. This conception of secularity revolves around different public places that have no religious influence anymore. This conception, unlike the second, allows the existence of religions and religious beliefs as long as they remain people's private matters. The second meaning refers to the decline of religious belief and practice. (Taylor 2007, 1–2.) Taylor introduces a third sense in which secularity can present itself, one which he argues to be visible in the United States, for example. In this third sense, secularity means a transition from a society in which religious belief is not questioned to a society, where religious belief is conceived as merely one option among many. Thus, the third conceptualisation refers to the conditions in which people experience and search for the spiritual, a context which allows the existence of a plurality of options through which people interpret the world. With the new context and plurality of contesting options, people's naïve and automatic belief in the transcendent is ended. The reason for this condition is the emergence of exclusive humanism. (Ibid., 3, 21.)

Candice Dias and Justin Beaumont (2010) equate Taylor's conception of secular in its third sense, "Secularity 3", with Robert Baird's term "late secularism". The reason for

this equation is that both conceptions allow the existence of religious belief without making the society less secular. Dias and Beaumont agree with Taylor's claim that the U.S. is a secular state in secularism's third sense but choose to use Baird's term "late secularism" to describe the role and state of religion in the public life in the U.S. They argue this because while the church may have grown its significance as actors that complement governmental actions, especially under the second Bush administration, the relationship between religion and politics has changed relatively little since the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The legal separation between church and state remains, though as contested as ever, and the church remains as a complementary actor rather than a replacement of state actions, which indicate a role of religion typical to late secular societies. Dias and Beaumont further argue that Taylor's concept of Secularity 3 and Baird's late secularism can be used to contest Habermas's conception of the post-secular; an argument that will be explored further in the next subchapter. (Dias & Beaumont 2010, 269–270.)

In this study, secularism will be treated as a normative doctrine to analyse the ways in which religious beliefs are or are not separated from politics in the context of the fight against terrorism in Bush's and Obama's discourses. In other words, secularism is used as a lens through which the secularity, the separation between religious beliefs and state, is examined.

### 3.2. The post-secular

Like secularism, the concept of the post-secular is highly debated. It may be argued that the role of religion has not diminished in the world, contrary to what the supporters of the secularisation theory suggest, and the question about the societal role of religion remains (see Gorski et al 2012, 5). It is virtually unclear whether the post-secular refers to a time after secular societies, or to a new kind of religion and the changing relationship between modern states and the secular (Knott 2010, 34). Therefore, no consensus exists on the strictly "correct" way of using the term, which on the one hand makes the concept a versatile tool in examining different phenomena regarding the relationship between state and religion, but on the other hand makes its essential meaning ambiguous.

The term post-secular is often used to explain the continued presence or resurfacing of religion into the public sphere. It refers to the increased significance of religions and religious belief in political, social and moral issues. (Berg-Sørensen 2013, 3.) The post-secular can also refer to the diversity of religious, secularist and humanist views that exist

in modern societies contrary to the assumptions of secularisation theory (Molendijk et al 2009, x). The meaning of the post-secular is often co-constructed with the concepts of secular and religious, which may be considered as opposites, despite the difficulty to define both terms. The perhaps most obvious meaning of the post-secular is in reference to secularisation, as the post-secular can be conceived as a pause or stop to the secularisation process in terms of religion's retreat from the public sphere. (Knott 2010, 23.) Gorski et al (2012, 2) argue that there are two lines of inquiry trying to answer the question of the post-secular: defining the state of religiosity in the world and understanding how scholars of different disciplines are or are not paying attention to religion. According to them, the real question is whether the real world has changed or just the scholarly one. There is no consensus on the answer. (Ibid.)

Habermas is probably the most influential scholar of the post-secular. Habermas argues that even though religion has become more privatised, it does not mean that religion has lost any of its significance in the political, cultural, and societal arenas or in the lives of individuals. In post-secular societies, religion has kept its public significance in the society, contrary to the assumptions of the supporters of the secularisation theory. According to Habermas, the post-secular refers to a change of consciousness in the sense that people, Europeans to be more exact, have to find a new way of reacting to the continued existence and influence of religion in an increasingly secular environment. (Habermas 2008, 19–21.) Habermas argues that this change is due to three phenomena. First, the public consciousness is changed in the sense that reducing the role and significance of religion is not conceived as the only way to advance cultural and social modernisation. The second phenomenon is the increased influence of religious communities to public opinion and will formation. And finally, the third phenomenon is the challenge of the pluralism of ways of life that is posed by immigrants and refugees, especially from traditional cultural backgrounds. From these conditions arises the question of how citizens should relate to these changes and each other. (Ibid., 20–21.) In brief, this means that secular and religious people must find an interpretation of the relationship between faith and knowledge without automatically deeming each other's claims illegitimate, so that they are able to coexist peacefully in a self-reflective manner (ibid., 29).

Sociologist Michele Dillon criticises Habermas's conception of the post-secular by arguing that it "underappreciates the contested nature of religious ideas, marginalizes the

centrality of spirituality, emotion, and tradition to religion, and fails to recognize religion's intertwining with the secular" (Dillon 2012, 250). Thus, although Habermas is very influential in the discussion about the post-secular, his views are contested. Dillon also argues that the post-secular is applicable to the United States, whereas Habermas stated that it could only be applicable to societies that had experienced notable secularisation and where religion has resurged, such as Europe. Dillon sees the post-secular applicable to the U.S. because the post-secular takes religion's public relevance and the effect of religious ideas on civic discourse into account. Even though the American society is still largely religious, Americans presume they live in a secular society and are typically autonomous in deciding their form of worship. Dillon also argues that the U.S. is secular because of its strictly separated church and state, despite the clear visibility of religion in politics and culture. The public is also very aware of this separation and it affects the public opinion and legislative and policy debates. (Dillon 2012, 257–258.)

Michiel Leezenberg (2010) criticises Habermas's conception and definition of the post-secular for Eurocentrism. Habermas portrays the concept of the post-secular as only applicable to modern Western European states but Leezenberg argues that Habermas's definition is based on many unwarranted assumptions, so he calls for the redefinition of the post-secular so that it would be applicable more generally. Leezenberg also questions the nature of the post-secular and whether it is, in fact, a normative ideal, empirical analytical concept, or a mere catchphrase. (Leezenberg 2010, 92–92.) It seems that the term can function both as an empirical analytical concept and as a normative ideal. Habermas's later work emphasises the meaning of the post-secular as a phase following a secular, secularist or secularised time, where the post-secular becomes a matter of consciousness. During this phase people reject the previous secularist conviction of the eventual disappearance of religion due to the process of modernisation. (Ibid., 94.)

Leezenberg also criticises Habermas's way of portraying modernisation and secularisation as linear processes, so that a successful modernisation should always lead to societies which base their policies on secularist, or at least non-fundamentalist, principles, even though this view can be contested. Leezenberg also considers Habermas's notion of the separateness of public and private spheres misleading. According to Habermas's linear temporal imagery, the re-emergence of religion in political matters should be an anomaly in an irreversible process of modernisation and

secularisation, not only because it should not happen in this process and because it breaks the differentiation between the private and public spheres. Leezenberg further argues that the assumption of linear temporality has no empirical or historical evidence to support it and that Habermas's concept "fails to do justice to the typically if not essentially contested nature of religion, and its potential role as an arena or focus of struggles for power and cultural legitimacy." (Leezenberg 2010, 95–95.) Terms "modern" and "secular" can be used consciously to frame one society or opinion secularised and the other religious, and thus legitimating the secularly presented argument while illegitimizing the religious (ibid., 100). Leezenberg uses the Muslim Middle East as an example of the weaknesses of Habermas's assumptions since Habermas's assumption of the differentiation of the public and private spheres are not applicable there and this separation has not been their path to modernity (see e.g. Leezenberg 2010, 107; Dias & Beaumont 2010, 268).

Leezenberg argues that a better approach to the post-secular would be redefining the different spheres of life so that the new definition would "trace the history, or genealogy, of religion and secularism against a background of changing metadiscursive regimes". This would, according to him, allow scholars to better research the new nature and role of religion, not just in modern Western Europe but all around the world, and explain the remaining, and some would say misleading, master narratives of secularism and secularisation. (Leezenberg 2010, 111.)

Candice Dias and Justin Beaumont (2010) acknowledge Leezenberg's criticism of Habermas's definition of the post-secular and extend it to Habermas's claims about the role of religion in the United States. According to them, Habermas fails to grasp the state of historical religiosity in the U.S. politics by claiming that religion was reintroduced to politics in the U.S. only during George W. Bush's era, even though Bill Clinton had already granted religious institutions roles as government assistants. Dias and Beaumont claim that by ignoring the previous role of religion and connections between neoconservatives and the religious right, Habermas mistakenly considers the pre-George W. Bush era and the pre-9/11 United States largely secular. (Dias & Beaumont 2010, 268–269.)

Dias and Beaumont (2010, 269–270) argue that the U.S. is currently in a state of late secularism, using Charles Taylor's concept of the thirds sense of secularity and Robert Baird's term late secularism. They argue that religious actors in the U.S. supplement



governmental actions in reaching goals that are secular by nature, such as community welfare, which does not constitute a post-secular state or a Habermasian secular state, but rather a state of late secularism (*ibid.*, 277–278). In other words, Dias and Beaumont’s argument is that the U.S. has not passed a secular stage but rather remains in a form of secularism and cannot thus be called post-secular in its Habermasian sense. Treating secularism as a flexible concept enables the recognition of multiple layers of interaction, unlike classical views of secularism that classify interaction as either religious or secular. This way the presence or mentioning of religion does not automatically lessen the value of other elements in the interaction. (*Ibid.*, 275.)

Thus, what is similar in the concepts of the post-secular and late secularism is that they both aim to identify features of society or interaction that might be ignored if examined only through the lens of classical secularism. The problematisation of using terms “secular” and “religious” in legitimisation or de-legitimisation purposes is not central to this research as the purpose of this study is not to examine the legitimacy of the presidents’ policies from any subjective point of view. However, how the concepts of the post-secular and late secularism help to respond to the research problem is that they enable the analysis of the relationship between religion and politics from a new approach, which is not as restricted as the traditional understanding of the secular.

If scholars are to take on a post-secular view on discussing and analysing religion, not only does it require a new way of thinking about religion, it also compels scholars to think about the secular differently than before. If religion is defined as particular, “charged”, identity-forming practices and not just the traditional way as a set of ideas, beliefs, values and doctrines, scholars will be able to analyse practices and institutions that have similar function as “traditional religions” but have been left out of the discussion before. (Smith 2012, 161.) A post-secular approach may then enable scholars to take phenomena that are previously thought to be secular into consideration when researching religiosity and the relationship between the secular and sacred.

A debatable issue regarding the post-secular is whether it is a descriptive term or a normative program. As a descriptive term it would be a counterargument to secularisation theory, answering questions about the level of religiosity in the modern world. As a normative ideal, the post-secular would work as a guideline to the society and scientists on how to counter secularism’s normative doctrines. (Smith 2012, 163.) This study does

not discuss the matter of whether the post-secular is a descriptive term as this study does not discuss the success or failure of the secularisation theory, or whether it is a normative program, nor will it seek to answer whether the U.S. society is religious, secular or post-secular. The concept of the post-secular is used to analyse the role and influence of religious beliefs in a supposedly secular state. Applying the concept of the post-secular also makes it possible to approach the matter in a way that enables to discuss religious phenomena that are not religious in the traditional sense of the word, such as the American civil religion.

According to Hent de Vries (2012, 108) Barack Obama represents a post-secular style of politics. In his article *Simple Ideas, Small Miracles: The Obama Phenomenon* he discusses Obama's political theology, which he defines as "a theologically inspired, informed and inflected politics, characterized [...] by its 'deep pragmatism'" (ibid.). De Vries describes Obama as an atypical Democrat regarding the question of the relationship between religion and politics as he argues that Obama's administration advocated actively for the realignment of religion in the public sphere (ibid., 119). Thus, applying the concept of the post-secular in a narrower sense to politics instead of the entire society is possible. The concept of the post-secular provides a useful approach to analyse Obama's politics, and considering the close relationship between religion and politics during the George W. Bush, the concept of the post-secular is applicable to the Bush administration's policies, too. Although it has been established that a relationship between the Bush administration and religion, more precisely the Christian Right, existed, the nature of the relationship between the administration's policies and religious beliefs in general is not yet resolved.

### 3.3. The American civil religion

It may be argued that the American civil religion was able to be born because of the religious plurality in the U.S. Because of the plurality, no single form of religion could achieve a strong enough position to offer all people a generalised meaning, but a common meaning that would bring diverse people together was needed, however. Thus, the American civil religion formed to fill this void as a substitute for a belief-system that could provide meaning to all people. (Hammond 1980, 121–122.)

The term "civil religion" originates from Rousseau's work. To Rousseau, civil religion means a devotion to a country that rivals the devotion to some faith. (Torpey 2012, 285.) According to Robert Bellah (1970/1967, 172), Rousseau's conception of civil religion

was based on the following principles: the existence of God, life after death, “the reward of virtue and the punishment of vice, and the exclusion of religious intolerance.” Bellah’s conception of civil religion, which he first introduced in his essay *Civil Religion in America*, originally published in 1967, is a broader model than Rousseau’s. Bellah’s definition of the American civil religion is central when discussing the different aspects of the American civil religion but it is also widely criticised, which is why a further review of Bellah’s definition of the American civil religion and its criticism is necessary.

According to Bellah (1975, 3), citizens can interpret their “historical experience in the light of transcendent reality” through civil religion. Bellah argues that a certain kind of a religious dimension, a well institutionalised civil religion exists in the U.S. According to him, this religious dimension exists separately from any church and must be given the same attention as to any other religion. This public religious dimension that is expressed in a set of beliefs, symbols and rituals, is what Bellah calls the American civil religion. (Bellah 1970/1967, 168, 171.) Thus, Bellah does not distinguish sharply whether what he calls the American civil religion is an actual religion or just a religious dimension. This question has been central in the criticism towards his argument. Richard John Neuhaus argues that the American civil religion is, in fact, only an understanding of the U.S. marked by a religious dimension and not a religion comparable to Christianity, Hinduism and Islam, for example. Neuhaus does not deny the possible existence of civil religions elsewhere but argues that a civil religion does not exist in the U.S. (Neuhaus 1986, 100–101.)

Neuhaus bases his argument on several characteristics or criterion that religions should fulfil but the so called American civil religion does not. First, religions have certain cultic aspects, for example the celebration of certain events and beliefs that construct understanding of the reality. Second, religions have in some ways, formally or otherwise, accepted leaders with sacred authority. Third, religions have explicitly defined ways of determining who is a member and who is not. Fourth, explicit or implicit statements of beliefs exist, and incorrect beliefs are often condemned. Fifth, there is a moral code regarding the connection between belonging to the religion and individual and corporate behaviour. And lastly and most importantly, a religion embodies all the characteristics in an institutionalised way, or there is at least effort to bind all these elements together to make the religion and its claims identifiable. Neuhaus argues that Bellah’s definition of the American civil religion fails to reflect these characteristics sufficiently and coherently

and cannot therefore be called a religion. (Neuhaus 1986, 101.) Leroy S. Rouner agrees with Neuhaus in the sense that he does not consider the American civil religion an actual religion in any socio-historic way but does not agree with Neuhaus's and Bellah's later adoption of the term public philosophy either, since according to him, it does not sufficiently reflect the binding power of civil religion (Rouner 1986, 129).

In addition to a large debate on whether the American civil religion is a religion or something else, there is much debate on what the phenomenon that Bellah calls the American civil religion should be called correctly. Bellah acknowledges that the term he chose turned out to be unexpectedly provocative but at least it stirred vivid conversation, which might not have happened had he chose to use terms such as "political religion", "religion of the republic" or "public piety" instead. (Bellah 1980, 3-4.)

Bellah uses John F. Kennedy's inauguration address of January 20<sup>th</sup>, 1961, as an example of the presence of the American civil religion in speeches of previous presidents of the United States. Kennedy mentions God in the first two paragraphs and the closing paragraph of his address, which could indicate that religion has an irrelevant position in the American society, since religious references are not made when discussing serious matters in the middle of the speech. Bellah notes that other presidents, too, tend to mention God in ceremonial situations, which might mean that the significance of religion is merely ceremonial. One might also say that the president of the United States must refer to God in order to maintain popularity and not to lose votes. (Bellah 1970/1967, 168-169.) However, Bellah argued that rituals and their significance cannot be ignored just because they are "merely" rituals. He writes that what people say on solemn situations, often reflect the deep-set values and commitments of the society, and examining them might reveal something important about religion in the U.S. Another interpretation can be drawn, however, from the way in which Kennedy speaks of God. Kennedy does not make references to any specific God, but rather to a general concept of God that every American can be expected to recognise, which could indicate the lessened significance of religion. Thus, the question is whether religion has significance only as a concept and not for its content. Examining the true significance of religion in the political life and people's private lives is important since it reflects how civil religion relates to these different spheres of life. (Bellah 1970/1967, 169-170.)

The paragraphs of John F. Kennedy's inauguration address in question are as follow:

We observe today not a victory of party but a celebration of freedom—symbolizing an end as well as a beginning—signifying renewal as well as change. For I have sworn before you and Almighty God the same solemn oath our forebears prescribed nearly a century and three quarters ago.

The world is very different now. For man holds in his mortal hands the power to abolish all forms of human poverty and all forms of human life. And yet the same revolutionary beliefs for which our forebears fought are still at issue around the globe—the belief that the rights of man come not from the generosity of the state but from the hand of God.

[...]

Finally, whether you are citizens of America or citizens of the world, ask of us here the same high standards of strength and sacrifice which we ask of you. With a good conscience our only sure reward, with history the final judge of our deeds, let us go forth to lead the land we love, asking His blessing and His help, but knowing that here on earth God's work must truly be our own. (John F. Kennedy, 1961.)

A study published in 1983 argues that the American civil religion has existed and been visible in the U.S. presidents' speeches since the times of George Washington (Toolin 1983). The study examined religious references in 49 presidential inaugural addresses from George Washington to Ronald Reagan, and its findings proved that almost 90 percent of the addresses had references to a deity of some sort. Some of the references were explicit enough to be identifiable as results of a Judeo-Christian tradition. However, more important for the examination of the American civil religion were the references concerning the people and history of the U.S. Themes such as the Constitution and some particular presidents, such as Abraham Lincoln, Franklin D. Roosevelt and especially Washington, were prominent in the addresses, with the Constitution treated almost as a sacred book. (Ibid., 40–43.) Toolin (1983, 45) argued that the civil religion serves three basic functions: culture binding, culture affirmation, and legitimation. This further provides proof of the existence of the American civil religion and of the ritual-like role of the inaugurations, as the inaugural addresses of previous U.S. presidents clearly reproduce the American civil religion.

The separation of church and state in the U.S. secures religious freedom but also separates religion from the public life, which may explain the ambiguous nature of the God in question. The exact nature of any president's faith is not, or should not be, relevant in their actions as a public servant. The reason why the president is even able to speak about

religion despite the separation of state and church is, according to Bellah, that the separation has not prevented a religious dimension from existing in the political realm, a religious dimension that is the American civil religion. (Bellah 1970/1967, 170–171.) A common American conception of religion has influenced the evolution of American institutions and affect different spheres of American life, including the political sphere. The inauguration of a president functions as a religious legitimation of the highest political authority, among other things, and is an important ceremonial event in the American civil religion. (Ibid., 171.)

The reason why religious legitimation and attributing the highest sovereignty to God is important is that the popular democratic vote itself does not offer sufficient criterion of right and wrong and does not provide an “ultimate significance”, as Bellah expresses it (Bellah 1970/1967, 171). The motto, “In God we trust” and including “under God” in the pledge to the flag, among others, serve as signs of attribution of the highest authority to God, which provides the higher standards according to which actions should be judged. By swearing an oath not only to the people but also to God, the presidents extend their obligation to the higher criterion, God. Bellah describes Kennedy’s inauguration address as an expression of the divine duty of the U.S. to carry out God’s will on earth, a theme that is deeply imbedded in the American culture. (Ibid., 171–172.)

The American Civil War brought another important theme to the American civil religion: a theme of death, sacrifice and rebirth, symbolised by the life and death of Abraham Lincoln. This new theme of citizens giving their lives for the survival of the nation has clear Christian symbolism, without a connection to the Christian Church. The new theme is expressed both physically and ritualistically. Symbolically in national cemeteries, such as Gettysburg National Cemetery and Arlington National Cemetery, ritualistically on the Memorial Day, for example. The public school system provides an effective context for the cultic celebration of the rituals of the American civil religion, for example on Veterans Day and on the birthdays of Washington and Lincoln. (Bellah 1970/1967, 177–179.)

Bellah notes that the God of American civil religion is austere in the sense that His focus is on law and order rather than love and salvation. The God is, however, deeply involved in the events of history and cares especially for the U.S. (Bellah 1970/1967, 175.) Bellah argues that the set of beliefs, symbols and rituals that constructed the American civil religion developed since the founding of the United States and institutionalised in the U.S.

society. The result was a civil religion that has its roots in Christianity but is general enough to satisfy the non-Christians of the nation. However, the emerged civil religion is not completely generic, but has rather specific notions about America, which allows the civil religion to be used as a tool for national religious self-understanding. (Ibid., 175–176.) Rouner (1986, 128) argues that civil religion in the U.S. has enabled the multicultural and pluralist society to work and not fall apart by providing people a common identity, a shared sense of home.

Bellah clarifies to his critics that the American civil religion does not mean worshipping the American nation itself but “the subordination of the nation to ethical principles that transcend it and in terms of which it should be judged.” He argues that all nations and peoples will come to a religious understanding of themselves. (Bellah 1970/1967, 168.) Much of the American civil religion is based on biblical events and themes, such as Chosen People and Promised Land, but the U.S. also has its own martyrs, solemn rituals and sacred events, for example the inauguration of a new president. (Ibid., 175.) The American civil religion revolves around the thought that the U.S. must behave in the way that God intended it and make the nation an example for all other nations: it is the credo of the purpose of the U.S. (Rouner 1986, 136; Bellah 1970/1967, 175). The civil religion binds the American society together and creates a common identity by creating loyalty to values that transcend the nation and give it a purpose. These values in the American civil religion include sacrificial love and freedom of the individual. What makes the American civil religion a civil religion rather than a public philosophy, according to Rouner, is the binding power that a religious loyalty to these values induce. (Rouner 1986, 133.)

Thus, it may be argued that the American civil religion is ultimately based on Christianity and hence has many Christian characteristics. However, it is important to note that it is not analogous to nor the same as Christianity. The American civil religion is often conceived by religious leaders, for example, as a corrupted version of actual Christian faith and as a false religion that threatens true religions (Neuhaus 1986, 102; Rouner 1986, 128). It may be argued that especially Protestants, among other religious groups, may influence the U.S. foreign policy in varying degrees. When identifying religious implications in policy-making or political addresses, it is important to consider whether the policy or address were affected directly by a religious group or the American civil religion. They probably are connected with regards to Christianity, but sometimes it may be hard to distinguish. However, the American civil religion expresses itself in ambiguous

references to religious concepts that all citizens can relate to, which helps in distinguishing which references are influenced by pure religion and which by the American civil religion.

The exact nature of what Bellah originally called the American civil religion is still highly debatable, but what seems clear is that the different concepts are used to depict an aspect of the American society that provides a religious interpretation of the nation's identity and purpose. Thus, there is clearly a phenomenon to be studied but no consensus on what to call it. The purpose of including the American civil religion in the theoretical framework of this study is not to determine whether it is a religion or not, but to examine the religiosity of concepts that are seemingly secular, such as freedom or the purpose of the nation, but what are interpreted religiously in the U.S. for what seems like an attempt to unify the nation and construct a shared understanding of self as members of the nation. If one compares the concept of the American civil religion to a classic definition of religion, like Neuhaus did, it may be argued that the American civil religion is not an actual religion in the traditional sense of the word. However, as the definition of religion is a matter of wide discussion, Neuhaus's definition is not the only way to determine whether a certain set of beliefs counts as a religion. The definition of religion, however, is a question for theologians and scholars of religion.

The viability of American civil religion is often questioned, and a timely question concerning the subject of this study is whether it can survive after the 9/11 attacks and the following prospect of diminished tolerance towards religious diversity (Turner 2012, 145).

### 3.4. Conclusion

As interpretations of the meaning of secularism vary, it is often unclear what kinds of phenomena the term secular strictly refers to. In general, the term refers to the separation of church and state, and it may also be understood normatively as a political doctrine that advocates for tolerance, neutrality, religious freedom and equality. (Berg-Sørensen 2010, 1, 3.) Bhargava (2013, 21) introduces three levels of disconnection between religion and state which can be used to examine the relationship between church and state. However, of the three levels of *ends*, *institutions*, and *law and public policy*, only the first-level of disconnection, level of ends, can properly be applied to a limited aspect of politics, such



as the topic of this study, as the second- and third-level disconnections concern politics and society on a broader level.

Charles Taylor's concept of the third sense of secularity, or what Dias and Beaumont (2010) refer to as late secularism using Baird's term, refers to the state in which the role of religion in a society has transformed into one option among others rather than being the default. The concept forms an interesting discussion with the concept of the post-secular. The terms refer to similar phenomena but choosing one term over the other depends on whether one believes that the society in question remains in a secular state or not. However, because this study does not make conclusions about the state of the entire U.S. society but only about a small fraction of U.S. politics, the concept of late secularism is better applied to other studies. In short, in this research secularism will be used as a normative doctrine to analyse the secularity, i.e. some form of separation between religious beliefs and politics, in Bush's and Obama's discourses about the fight against terrorism.

Jürgen Habermas has had great influence in forming the concept of the post-secular, albeit views about the concept still vary. The concept of the post-secular may be understood as an answer to the misconceptions of the secularisation theory, as religions have maintained their significance in many societies contrary to the expectations of the secularisation theory. The concept may also be understood as a new way of relating to religions and their relationship with states. (Knott 2010, 34; Berg-Sørensen 2013, 3.) It is also debated whether the concept of the post-secular can be applied to the United States. Habermas mainly considers the concept applicable to Western Europe, whereas Michelle Dillon, for example, argues that it is also applicable to the U.S. due to the separation of church and state and the assumption that many Americans have about living in a secular society (Dillon 2012, 257–258). Thus, despite the clear visibility of religion in the American politics and culture, it may be argued that the U.S. is or was secular, making the concept of the post-secular applicable.

In this study, the concept of the post-secular is used to analyse the relationship between religious beliefs and a particular foreign policy theme, the fight against terrorism, in a supposedly secular state. The post-secular is a part of the theoretical framework because it enables the analysis of many forms of religious belief, including the American civil

religion, instead of merely traditional religions. In this way, the relationship between religious beliefs and politics can be examined more comprehensively.

Robert Bellah defined the American civil religion as the independent public religious dimension that exists in the political realm of the U.S. This religious dimension is expressed in a set of beliefs, symbols and rituals that are based on Christianity but have developed to be general enough to satisfy the non-Christians of the American society. (Bellah 1970/1967, 168, 171, 175–176.) The reason why the American civil religion is included in the theoretical framework of this research is closely connected to the reason why the post-secular is part of the theoretical framework: so that religious phenomena that are not traditionally considered religious can be included in the analysis. Whether or not the American civil religion is a religion comparable to recognised religions makes no significance for this study as the focus will be on the religious beliefs concerning the U.S. that the phenomena named the American civil religion contains and analysing how they influence the discourses about the fight against terrorism.

The three components of the theoretical framework provide this research a versatile and comprehensive approach to the analysis of the relationship between religious beliefs and politics. This approach does not ignore the influence of religious beliefs that are not straightforwardly connected to recognised religion such as Christianity, which a simpler theoretical framework would not enable.

## 4. MATERIAL AND METHODOLOGY

### 4.1. Research material

The analysis includes eight addresses given by George W. Bush and nine addresses by Barack Obama during their two-term presidencies. The total of 17 speeches consists of seven State of the Union Addresses from both presidents, one inaugural address from Bush and two inaugural addresses from Obama. Bush's first inaugural address is not included in the research material as the War on Terror had not started during the time of Bush's first inauguration. Bush's addresses were given between January 2002 and January 2008, and Obama's between January 2009 and January 2016. The addresses are retrieved from the presidency archive of the Miller Center (Miller Center 2018).

The president of the United States is required by the Constitution to give the Congress information and recommendations about the State of the Union. While the Constitution does not specify when the addresses are to be given, it was eventually established that the message should be given to the Congress annually, except for the year that the president is elected. The addresses discuss a wide range of affairs: budget, economy and any other relevant domestic and foreign policy issues. (History, Art & Archives, U.S. House of Representatives 2018.) George Washington's inauguration started the tradition of inaugural addresses. Inaugural addresses do not have any official contentual requirements, but they usually present the president's vision about the nation and its future. (The Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies 2018.)

State of the Union Addresses were chosen as research material because despite the members of the Congress changing, the context of the addresses remains the same to a large extent, which facilitates critical discourse analysis. While the language and even discourses might change depending on the audience to which the president gives his speech, it can be expected that the language in the State of the Union Addresses is not specifically coloured or aimed at one certain group of people, as the speech is given to Congress and a diverse crowd with both opposing and agreeing views. Thus, the contexts of the speeches remain similar to one another and the analysis becomes more trustworthy than if the analysis examined speeches that were given to a religious crowd, for example, which can be expected to include more religious vocabulary. The inaugural addresses were included in the research material for the important role they have as rituals of the

American civil religion, so that the influence of the American civil religion can be examined more thoroughly.

The State of the Union Addresses are lengthy; Bush's addresses are over 5000 words except for his first one, which is roughly 3800 words. Obama's speeches are even longer, his shortest one being over 6000 words and the longest over 7000 words. Inaugural addresses are significantly shorter, Bush's address being roughly 1700 words and Obama's addresses around 2200. However, as the State of the Union Addresses discuss a wide range of topics and both foreign and domestic policy, not nearly all of the addresses' content is relevant for this study. The relevant sections were chosen by topic, i.e. when the presidents discussed their administration's acts regarding the fight against terrorism or when they addressed their foreign policies in a broader manner. The analysis of this study solely concerns these relevant sections.

## 4.2. Methodology and method

The analysis of this study is conducted using critical discourse analysis (CDA). To be more specific, the method applied to the analysis of the research material follows a methodological approach and concept of discourse introduced by Norman Fairclough. The basic ideas of CDA are largely shaped by the work of Fairclough and Teun A. van Dijk, for example. Discourse analysis, in general, is ultimately text analysis. There are many versions of discourse analysis: some versions focus on detailed analyses of texts and some on the discourses and their influence on a more general level. In social sciences, discourse analysis is often based on the work of Michel Foucault, and linguistics do not play such an important part in the analysis. (Fairclough 2003, 2–3.) This study uses an approach that includes linguistic analysis but focuses also on the content and influence of the constructed discourses. Critical discourse analysis seeks to develop methods and theory that can coherently examine the relationship between language, power and ideology, and reveal politically or ideologically invested practices and conventions in and behind texts. Critical discourse analysts are also committed to political intervention and social change. (Machin & Mayr 2012, 4.) Before discussing critical discourse analysis further, it is necessary to introduce its key concepts and premises; social constructivism and the concept of discourse.

### 4.2.1 Social constructivism

Even though there are several variations of critical discourse analysis, what they have in common is the idea of language as a social construction. This means that language is understood to shape and be shaped by society and construct social reality. (Jokinen, Juhila & Suoninen 2004, 17; Machin & Mayr 2012, 4.) Due to this this specific view of the social world, some argue that discourse analysis should not be characterised as a clearly defined method but rather as a loose theoretical framework that provides various methodical applications (Jokinen, Juhila & Suoninen 2004, 17). Discourse analysis examines how reality is constructed by language and has thus theoretical connections to social constructivism (Jokinen, Juhila & Suoninen 2002, 39; Alvesson & Sköldberg 2009, 228).

Social constructivism is a highly diverse and multi-faceted type of philosophy of science which contains the idea that reality is socially constructed. Social constructionist studies often analyse something that is taken for granted as truth to break this conception (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009, 15, 23–24). Social constructivists, such as pioneers of social constructivism Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, assume that the social order is a human product, created to bring stability into people's lives. Kenneth J. Gergen emphasises the importance of language and the local nature of knowledge: he argues that knowledge can never be objective or absolute but is always tied to human practice. (Ibid., 26, 30.)

Discourse analysis and critical discourse analysis see language as action that not only portrays the world, but constructs, changes, rearranges and reproduces social reality. Language creates meaning and thus constructs to the topics it discusses. Social practices produce significations and meanings; thus, they are not born arbitrary from the minds of individual people. (Jokinen, Juhila & Suoninen 2004, 18, 21.) This view is acknowledged in this study as the analysis of social practices is included in the method, as well as the role of language in constructing ideas and discourses.

Not only does social constructivism affect the choices the researcher makes concerning the objective, research questions, and analytical tools of their research when using discourse analysis, it also affects the way in which the relationship between researcher and their object of study is conceived. The nature of this relationship is also seen as constructive in the sense that on the one hand, the researcher depicts social reality by their

findings, but on the other hand also constructs it. The work of the researcher must then also be regarded reflexively. (Jokinen, Juhila & Suoninen 2002, 40–41.) Reflection enables researchers to examine the extent to which they are able to portray different phenomena without constructing them in the usual, expected manner (Jokinen, Juhila & Suoninen 2004, 24).

#### 4.2.2. Discourse

Many disciplines use different versions of discourse analysis, which is why terms such as “discourse” and “discourse analysis” have various meanings (Schiffrin, Tannen & Hamilton 2001, 1). Generally, discourse refers to something that is not just grammar or semantics but a broader idea that is communicated by a text. Discourses express social values and ideas and contribute to the reproduction of social life, thus affecting the way we see the world and effectively influencing the way the world is built. Discourse can be defined as a framework of interpretation that consists of ideas and events. Individual semiotic choices of different actors may influence how people place ideas and events within the framework, thus producing different associations and affecting the way people conceive the world and reality. (Machin & Mayr 2012, 20–21.)

Thus, discourse is not only sentences and language, but language use in its particular context (Pietikäinen 2000, 57). Two different definitions of discourses, derived from two linguistic paradigms, the functionalist and formalist, can be distinguished. The formalist definition focuses on the structure and form of language and regard language as an autonomous system, whereas the structuralist definition studies language in its relation to its social functions, thus conceiving language as a social phenomenon. Following these concepts of language, a formalist type of discourse analysis is concerned with the structure and forms as discourse, while a functionalistically inspired approach focuses on the functions, variations and uses of discourse. However, to conduct a comprehensive analysis, one would have to combine aspects of both views since either is not enough alone. It may be difficult since the approaches have different assumptions about language, but including both structure and function in the analysis of discourses is nonetheless important. (Ibid., 58–59.) This study adopts a mainly structuralist definition of discourse and language because the focus of the analysis will be on the relationship between language and social functions and how discourses operate and are consciously used. However, although the functionalistically inspired approach is more dominant in this study,

the formalist approach cannot be ignored and it necessarily visible in the analysis of the structure and form of language and discourse, which is an important part of CDA.

Discourses are social and dialogic in nature. They vary depending on the situation, institutions, social customs, and participants that shape them. Different situations, social classes and people have different meanings for words, which consequently alters discourse. Discourse can also take the form of knowledge, although not every discourse is accepted as knowledge by everyone. Thus, a hierarchy between discourses exists. (Macdonell 1986, 1–2.) Discourses can be described as systems of meanings that are constructed within social practices and construct social reality (Jokinen, Juhila & Suoninen 2004, 26–27).

Ian Parker (1992) distinguishes several features of discourse. First, he argues that discourses are actualised in texts, which is why discourse analysis is interested in texts and not so much on the authors of the texts as individuals. Second, discourses are about objects; discourses are sets of meanings that constitute an object, and thus they provide meaning or a “life” to objects that they discuss. Third, discourses contain subjects. This refers to how discourses can attract individuals to assume certain positions of personality, in other words, discourses affect the way we conceive ourselves in certain situations and how we behave in them. Fourth, a discourse is a coherent system of meaning that is formed by the metaphors, analogies, and images that the discourse uses to portray reality. Fifth, a discourse refers to other discourses. Discourses are entwined with other discourses, borrowing analogies and metaphors from each other. Thus, a contradiction within a certain discourse may be the effect of some other discourse. Sixth, a discourse reflects on its own way of speaking, which means that it is possible to find aspects of a discourse that comments on the choices of words and terms included in it. Examining the internal contradictions of discourses is of interest to discourse analysis, also. Finally, Parker claims that discourses are historically located. Discourses are not static but located in time and history, which is why their origin and change should be pinpointed. (Parker 1992, 6–17; Jokinen, Juhila & Suoninen 1994, 60–63.)

Parker also introduces three auxiliary criteria for discourse, which are important to consider especially in the context of critical discourse analysis. First, they support institutions by acting as practices that reproduces the material basis of the institutions, i.e. as discursive practices. Second, discourses reproduce power relations. Institutions, for

example, entail power relations and reproduce them, which in itself forms a connection between power and discourse. However, it is important to remember that power and discourse do not always involve each other. And lastly, discourses have ideological effects, although it is important to note that not all discourses are ideological in nature. (Parker 1992, 17–20.)

#### 4.2.2.1. Fairclough's three-dimensional concept

The critical discourse analysis applied to this research is based on Norman Fairclough's approach, and thus it is also deeply connected Fairclough's concept of discourse. Fairclough sees discourses as three-dimensional concepts that consists of *social practices*, *discursive practices* and *texts* (see e.g. Fairclough 1992, 73). Fairclough portrays the concept as pictures in two ways that illustrate the dimensions of the concept and also the levels of analysis it requires (see Figures 4.1. and 4.2.). The Figure 4.1. forms the frame of the critical discourse analysis conducted in this study.

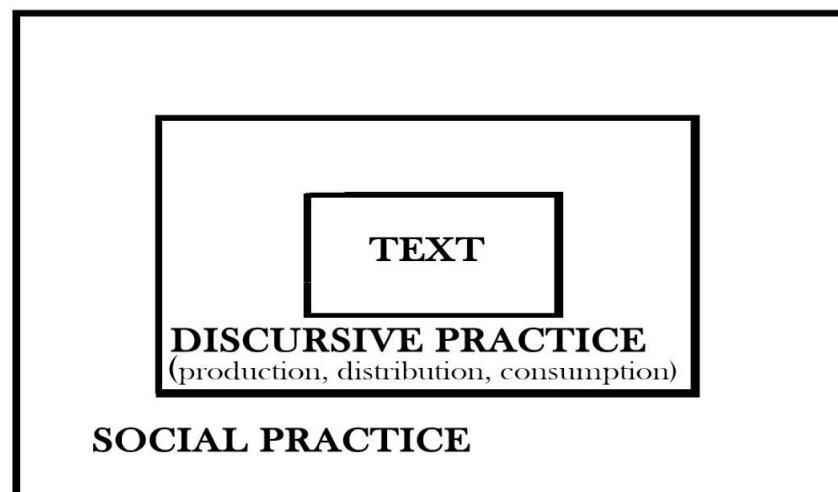
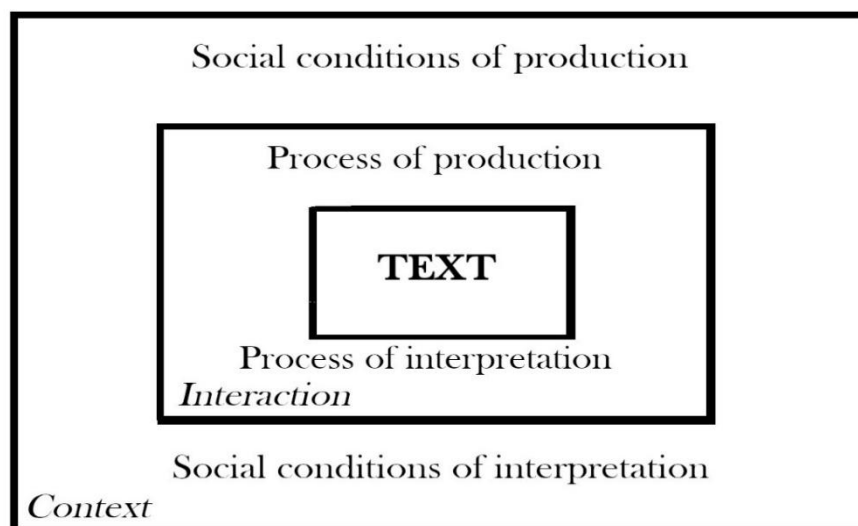


Figure 4.1.: Fairclough's three-dimensional concept of discourse (Fairclough 1992, 73).





**Figure 4.2.: Fairclough's concept of discourse as text, interaction and context**  
(Fairclough 1989, 25).

The three-dimensional model of discourse attempts to connect three analytical traditions that are important for critical discourse analysis. It combines the traditions of text or linguistic analysis, the macro-sociological tradition of analysing social practice in relation to social structures, and the “interpretivist or micro-sociological tradition of seeing social practice as something which people actively produce and make sense of on the basis of shared common procedures”. (Fairclough 1992, 72.) The interpretivist claim is that members of social communities produce their organised worlds, but besides this the way in which the members’ practices are shaped by social structures, relations of power, and the nature of social practice must be considered, also (ibid.).

Fairclough uses the term *discourse* more narrowly than social scientist usually do when referring to language use. By referring to discourse, Fairclough proposes to view language as a social practice, rather than purely individual activity. (Fairclough 1992, 63.) Fairclough defines discursive events as instances of language use that are analysed as text, discursive practice, and social practice, and texts as the written or spoken language that is produced in a discursive event (Fairclough 1993, 138). Conceiving discourse in this way means that discourse is, on the one hand, a mode of action; a way in which people may act towards the world and each other. On the other hand, the concept also assumes that dialectical relations exist between discourse and social structure, and between social structure and social practice. Social structure shapes discourse by class and other social relations at a societal level, by social institutions such as law and education, by systems of classification, and by norms and conventions, among others. Discourse is also socially

constitutive: it in turn shapes all dimensions of social structure by shaping norms and conventions, and relations, identities and institutions behind it. (Fairclough 1992, 63–64.)

Fairclough introduces three constructive effects of discourse. First, discourses affect the construction of social identities and subject positions, but this effect should not be over-emphasised. Second, discourses help in constructing social relationships between people. And lastly, and most importantly for the subject of this study, discourse contributes to the construction of systems of knowledge and belief. Fairclough argues that these effects correspond respectively to three functions of language and dimensions of meaning which coexist and interact in all discourse. The identity function of language refers to how discourse enacts identities, the relational function to how social relationships between discourse participants are formed and negotiated, and ideational function to how texts signify the world and its processes, entities and relations. (Fairclough 1992, 64.)

According to Fairclough, it is imperative to see the relations between social structure and discourse as dialectic as it prevents overemphasising the social determination of discourse and the construction of the social in discourse. Social practice has many orientations, such as political and ideological, and all of these might have implications of discourse without being merely discourse. Discourse may, however, be a political or ideological practice, and thus establish, sustain and alter power relations and the collective entities between which these power relations exist, such as classes, communities and groups. Discourse can also function as a political or ideological practice which establishes, sustains and changes power relations and different collective entities between which power relations exist, and naturalise certain power relations and ideologies. No particular discourses are necessarily political or ideological in nature but may be used in a political or ideological way. Thus, same discourses can be used in various ways. (Fairclough 1992, 65–67.)

Discursive practice is a particular form of social practice. Discursive practice influences the reproduction of society concerning social identities, social relationships and systems of knowledge and belief, and also contributes to transforming society. (Fairclough 1992, 65, 71). Discursive practice involves processes of text production, distribution, and consumption. Context affects how these processes function: text is produced differently in different situations and contexts. (Fairclough 1992, 78; Fairclough 1993, 138.) Text, whether spoken or written, is only a part of the social process that discourse is. Text is the product of the process of production and a resource of the process of interpretation.

From the perspective of discourse analysis, texts can be perceived as traces of the productive process and clues in the process of interpretation. (Fairclough 1989, 24.)

*Order of discourse* refers to the total amount of discursive practices of an institution and to the relationships between them. Order of discourse is sometimes referred to as interdiscourse, but Fairclough opts to use the Foucauldian term. It is the structural entity that underlies discursive events; a complex of related discursive formations that contributes in determining what can be and should be said by someone in certain situations. The different parts of an order of discourse, i.e. the different types of discursive practice, are called elements. The element boundaries may become a focus of contestation and struggle and might produce the re-articulation of orders of discourse. (Fairclough 1993, 135, 138; Fairclough 1992, 31, 68–69.)

In this study, discourse is understood as Fairclough's three-dimensional concept. This choice is made because it supports Fairclough's approach to CDA and provides grounds for a systematic and comprehensive analysis. The three-dimensional concept shapes the framework of the analysis, making it three-dimensional as well, as the analysis consists of textual analysis and the analyses of discursive practices and social practices.

### 4.2.3. Critical discourse analysis

Critical discourse analysis includes various different approaches and methods that are chosen according to the research object (van Dijk 2001, 353; Fairclough 2010, 7). Van Dijk argues that CDA is not so much an approach but rather a new perspective on theorising, analysis and application within discourse studies (van Dijk 2001, 352). The primary focus of CDA is on how power relations and inequalities produce social wrongs, i.e. the effects of the dialectic relations between power and discourse on other elements in the society (Fairclough 2010, 8). Van Dijk (2001, 352) states that the primary interest of CDA is in how "social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text in the political and social context." With this kind of analysis, it is useful to study ideologies and how they serve power and produce identities and power relations by representation (Fairclough 2010, 8). CDA assumes that power is transmitted and practiced through discourse, and thus, power relations are assumed to be discursive in nature (Machin & Mayr 2012, 4).

The ‘criticality’ of critical discourse analysis brings a normative dimension to the analysis. The analysis is based on certain values about right and wrong and criticises the grievances of a society. However, it must be noted that different values and ideas of right and wrong exist and differences between interpretations may occur. However, the critique may also concern the gaps between what a certain society claims to be and what it really is. (Fairclough 2010, 7.) With these kinds of studies, debates over the different meanings of concepts of right and wrong might be less central. The critique is negative if it analyses how societies maintain social wrongs, or positive if it analyses how they are or could be abolished (ibid.). This study does not so much criticise the society of the United States, but rather seeks to prove whether it is accurate to use the term *secular* in connection to U.S. policies in the context of the fight against terrorism. Thus, it may be interpreted as critique towards the unadvised use of the term secular.

CDA is more concerned about how and why different linguistic features are produced in discourses and what ideological objectives they may serve than just describing these different features. The critical stance of CDA aims to expose strategies that appear normal or neutral but are ultimately ideological in nature and seek to shape representation for some particular aim. (Machin & Mayr 2012, 5.) In this study, the critical nature of the analysis seeks to reveal how, if in some way, the relationship between religious beliefs and politics is maintained, and how the values and views within the beliefs are maintained in the society. If the presidents’ addresses and discourses about the fight against terrorism (re)produce religious beliefs and the American civil religion, the influence of religious beliefs and their relationship with politics are preserved. This study seeks to resolve whether the discourses participate in the maintaining of the relationship between religious beliefs and politics in the context of the fight against terrorism. The addresses and discourses of U.S. presidents are likely to influence the country’s politics and even the entire society, which is why the techniques they use to shape representation should be examined.

What makes critical discourse analysis different from other forms of discourse analysis, according to van Dijk, is that it tries to explain discourses in terms of social interaction and social structure features, for example. It studies the relationship between discourse structures and power and dominance: how discourses legitimate, reproduce, confirm, or challenge them. The research topics of CDA are mainly social problems and political issues. (Van Dijk 2001, 353.) Fairclough (2010, 3) argues that CDA has three basic

characteristics. First, it is *relational* in the sense that it focuses on social relations rather than just on entities and individuals. Thus, CDA recognises the complexity of social relations. Second, CDA is *dialectical*. Relations between different objects, whether they are physical objects such as people, institutions or power relations, are understood to have a dialectic nature which explains why discourse itself cannot be defined as a separate 'object'. Dialectical relations are relations between objects that are different from one another but not separate, in the sense that they affect and support each other in some way, like power and discourse. Power depends partly on how discourse supports its legitimacy but states, for example, can also use force to maintain their power, which means that power is not completely discourse. They have dialectical relations because state power is partly discursive in character and these different objects are a part of one another. Fairclough understands CDA as an analysis of the dialectical relations between discourse and other objects, elements and moments, and as an analysis of the international relations of discourse, rather than as an analysis of the discourse itself. This kind of approach crosses the lines of traditional discipline boundaries, which is why the third character of CDA, according to Fairclough, is that it is *transdisciplinary*. (Ibid., 3–4.)

Critical discourse analysis was chosen as the method, or perhaps more accurately stated as the methodology of this study because it suits the aims of this study. CDA fits well to the analysis of whether the discourses in the addresses of presidents Bush and Obama maintain the relationship between religious beliefs and politics and reproduce the American civil religion. The question concerning this study is then ultimately about the relations between power and discourse, which is why CDA is a suitable choice of methodology to be included in the framework of this study. When it comes to maintaining the relationship between religious belief and politics and reproducing the American civil religion, the question is not perhaps about directly causing inequality or injustice, at least within the U.S. It is, however, about dominance and hegemony regarding the image of the global role of the U.S. that is being constructed in the discourses, and about knowledge and beliefs regarding the relationships between different discourses. CDA, with its many variations, provides a useful framework for the analysis of how this dominance is (re)produced, which is why it serves the purpose of this study.

Power, or more specifically social power, is a central notion in most critical work on discourse. Van Dijk defines power in terms of control: power is the ability to control the acts and minds of others. Power over others is expressed in many ways, and hegemony is

but one of them. According to van Dijk, hegemony refers to the integration of the power of dominant groups to laws, rules, norms and habits. (Van Dijk 2001, 355.) The concept of hegemony was central in the work of Antonio Gramsci. Fairclough defines it as both leadership and domination over economic, political, cultural, and ideological domains of society. Hegemony is not, however, simply dominating the subordinate classes, but forming alliances and winning their consent by concessions or through ideological means. Hegemony is a focus of constant struggle that forms political, economic or ideological domination or subordination. (Fairclough 1992, 91–93.) In this study, the concept of hegemony is especially important in the analysis of social practices, as that dimension of the analysis examines the relationship between discourses and ideology and power as hegemony.

Although the most obvious forms of exercising power are through money or abusive acts such as force, power can also be exercised inconspicuously, through everyday actions that are taken for granted. By controlling people's opinions and knowledge, their actions can be indirectly influenced as action is controlled by the mind. In other words, by controlling the most influential discourses, it is also possible to influence the minds and actions of others. (Van Dijk 2001, 355.) What is of interest to this study, is how the discourses presidents Bush and Obama construct seek to influence the way in which the U.S. and its actions are conceived and whether the image has connections to religious beliefs. As the presidents of the United States, Bush and Obama had great influence over the representation of U.S. actions in the fight against terrorism. The leaders and most prominent members, the elites, of different social groups have more access to and control over various public discourses than "ordinary people". This access and control regarding social discourses makes the elites more powerful than the ordinary people if social power is defined discursively. (Van Dijk 2001, 356.)

Van Dijk (1993, 257) argues that while controlling the discourse is a central form of social dominance, "modern" power has a clear cognitive dimension: often the exercise of power includes mind management in the sense that it influences people's knowledge, beliefs, understanding, plans, attitudes, norms, values and ideologies. This "public mind" is what van Dijk calls social cognition which refers to "[s]ocially shared representations of societal arrangements, groups and relations, as well as mental operations such as interpretation, thinking and arguing, inferencing and learning, among others" (ibid.). Social cognition forms the base that moderates discourse and all social action and from

which social events, power relations and social institutions are interpreted. Social cognition forms a bridge between micro- and macro-levels, discourse and action, and individual and group, and thus forms a link between discourse and dominance. Ideologies have serious influence on values and norms, which is why ideologies are seen as important reflections of values, beliefs and interests of certain groups. Ideologies strategically monitor and organise people's beliefs and attitudes, even though the specific way in which they achieve this is yet debatable. (Van Dijk 1993, 257–258.)

Critical discourse analysis is also widely criticised. Some criticise CDA for its lack of actual criticism, while some take it more of a tool for interpretation than analysis (Machin & Mayr 2012, 208). One problem with CDA may be its countless approaches as choosing one particular approach may be quite difficult. While different methodological approaches within CDA provide versatile and comprehensive approaches to text analysis, there is a risk of getting distracted from the original research question, resulting in a different analysis than originally expected. (Lassila 2010, 185–186.) CDA's strive for interdisciplinarity may be problematic also: the systematic analysis of language may not always be compatible with a social scientific approach. When examining the relationship between language and social, linguistics tends to focus on language whereas social sciences focus on the social phenomena. (Ibid., 186.) It may also be argued that CDA favours some meanings of texts while ignoring others and that it does not consider the intentions of text producers enough (Machin & Mayr 2012, 210–211).

The criticism towards critical discourse analysis is acknowledged in this study. It is evident that other choices about the structure and choices of methodology and method could have been made, and that although the analysis will be conducted systematically and comprehensively, the results may still be argued to be only a matter of interpretation. Since CDA is criticised for ambiguity and its large number of different approaches, this study acknowledges it by providing as clear an account of the method and the analysis process as needed to ensure an overt description of how the analysis was conducted and the results achieved. This will ensure the transparency of this study and provide grounds for the results of the analysis.

#### 4.2.4. Applying CDA to this study

Critical discourse analysis is utilised in this study to reveal the discourses that Bush and Obama construct in their addresses and whether the discourses uphold the relationship

between religious beliefs and politics in the context of the fight against terrorism, on the one hand, and reproduce the American civil religion, on the other. The theoretical framework of this study provides much of the framework for the analysis, as the analysis seeks to find implications of secularism, religiosity, the post-secular or the American civil religion in the discourses to examine the relationship between religious beliefs and politics. Other central concepts in the analysis are hegemony and ideology that examine the influence of power and ideology in the construction of the discourses and in their content.

In practice, critical discourse analysis incorporates three dimensions of analysis: linguistic or textual analysis; analysis of production, comprehension, and the usage of discourse; and analysis of social practices. Using Fairclough's terminology, the three-dimensional analysis contains the analysis of textual practices, discourse practices, and social practices. Thus, the aim is to analyse different dimensions of discourse. (Fairclough 1992, Pietikäinen 2000, 70.) The analysis is conducted following Fairclough's model of critical discourse analysis that is based on his three-dimensional concept of discourse, which was introduced earlier. The analysis then consists of three parts: 1) text analysis called "description", 2) "interpretation" consisting of analysis of discursive practices and 3) the analysis of social practices. (Fairclough 1992, 73.) The frame of the analysis is depicted in the Figure 4.1. in its three-dimensional form: the first dimension of analysis is the text, the second is the dimension of discursive practice, and the last dimension is that of social practice.

In this study, the text analysis is conducted using Hilary Janks's linguistic analysis rubric (Janks 2005). The rubric provides a systematic way to analyse linguistic features of texts and is suitable and based on Fairclough's approach to CDA. The rubric includes several linguistic features that are to be analysed, such as lexicalisation, transitivity, mood, and sequencing of information (*ibid.*, 101). The analysis is conducted by examining the linguistic features mentioned in the rubric. The rubric in full is included in the appendix-section (Appendix A).

The interpretation process of discursive practices is a multilevel one, and a "bottom-up-top-down" process. Lower levels of analysis are concerned with analysing words and sentences, whereas higher level focuses on meaning and how they are created in sentences, in entire texts, or in parts of them. Meanings of higher level units are partly



built up from meanings for lower units (bottom-up interpretation), but the interpretation of higher units also influences the way that lower units are interpreted (top-down processing). (Fairclough 1992, 80–81.)

Fairclough introduces three main headings that will be used in the analysis of discursive practice: first, the force of utterances, which examines the speech acts in the texts; second, the coherence of texts; and third, the intertextuality of texts. These headings form a framework for the analysis of the aspects of the production and interpretation of texts, as well as its formal properties. (Fairclough 1992, 75.) Force is the component that has an active, interpersonal nature and meaning, which illustrates what the text is being used to do socially and what speech acts it is used to perform. These speech acts can be, for example, giving an order, asking a question, threatening, or promising something. The force factor can be quite ambivalent in texts, but context can reduce this ambivalence. Context helps to explain how certain forms of words can have forces that might be hard to detect without considering the context. Before an interpretation of the force of the utterance can be made, an interpretation of the context of the situation must be made. The interpretation of the context of situation helps in the analysis of the text in the sense that it helps to predict discursive types that might be relevant and how different elements are related to each other and their backgrounds. (Ibid., 82–83.)

Fairclough argues that coherence is ultimately a matter of interpretation rather than a text feature as parts of a text only make sense together if the reader can connect them in some meaningful way, even without explicit connecting markers within the text. The way in which readers make sense of texts may rest upon ideological assumptions, which is why there may be cause to resist or struggle against the automatic assumptions connections that texts convey. (Fairclough 1992, 83–84.)

The last dimension of analysis is intertextuality. When examining intertextuality, the focus is on the features that have been borrowed from other texts. The intertextual features may be clearly visible or merged in. The intertextual perspective may emphasise the historicity of texts in terms of production, i.e. how they communicate with prior texts. In terms of distribution, the focus is on predictable transformations of one text to another. Finally, in terms of consumption, an intertextual perspective helps in illustrating the effect that other texts have on the interpretation process. Fairclough distinguishes between manifest intertextuality and interdiscursivity or constitutive intertextuality. Manifest

intertextuality refers to a heterogenous constitution of texts from other specific texts, while intertextuality refers to a heterogenous constitution of texts from elements of orders of discourse. The concept of intertextuality sees texts historically as transforming the past into present by naturalising certain conventions and texts into routines, for example. (Fairclough 1992, 84–85.)

Fairclough argues that the analysis of discursive practice should include both micro-analysis and macro-analysis. Micro-analysis refers to examining how participants produce and interpret texts by their members' resources, for example the orders of discourse. Macro-analysis complements micro-analysis by explaining the nature of the members' resources, so that it is possible to produce and interpret texts and examine whether the resources are drawn upon in normative or creative ways. The interrelationship between micro- and macro-analyses enable Fairclough's three-dimensional framework to mediate the relationship between the dimensions of social practice and text, since the nature of the social practice determines the macro-processes of discursive practice, and micro-processes shape the text. (Fairclough 1992, 85–86.)

Fairclough draws upon Althusser's and Gramsci's contributions to 20<sup>th</sup> century Marxism when discussing discourse as social practice. He discusses discourse in relation to ideology and to power, more specifically power as hegemony. Fairclough defines ideologies as significations or constructions of reality, i.e. the physical world, social relations, and social identities, which are built into various dimensions of the forms and meanings of social practices. They also influence the production, reproduction or transformation of relations of domination. Ideologies work the strongest when they are embedded and naturalised within discursive practices and become understood as common sense. (Fairclough 1992, 86–87.) Fairclough argues that ideology is located both in structures and events. The structures, such as orders of discourse, shape the outcome of past events and the conditions for current events, and events reproduce and transform their conditioning structures. The features of levels of texts and discourse that may be especially ideologically invested include word meanings, presuppositions, metaphors, and coherence. Fairclough states that discourses and discursive practices are ideological if they include significations that contribute to sustaining or restructuring power relations, but not every discourse is automatically ideological. (Ibid., 89–90.)

Because orders of discourse, among other elements, may become ideologically invested, ideology is also a part of hegemony and hegemonic struggle. Fairclough's view of hegemony involves the idea that discursive practice, the production, distribution, and consumption of texts are a part of hegemonic struggle of the existing order of discourse and existing social and power relations. Thus, hegemonies have ideological dimensions. The concept of hegemony helps to explain the relations between particular aspects of discourse and the nature of the social practices that they are a part of, and the nature of the discursive practice, such as the socio-cognitive aspects of their production and interpretation. The concept of hegemony helps in analysing the social practice within which the discourse belongs in terms of power relations and whether they reproduce, restructure or challenge existing hegemonies. It also offers a way of analysing discursive practice as a mode of hegemonic struggle, reproducing restructuring or challenging existing orders of discourse. Examining hegemonies then enables to analyse the ideological investment of discursive practices. (Fairclough 1992, 93, 95.)

In short, hegemonic discourses are about knowledge, power and truth becoming intertwined. A central discussion within the process of discourses becoming hegemonic is whether the process is intentional with strategic aims or whether the process happens unknowingly. The actors' intentions are of no interest to discourse analysis, but it does not exclude examining the possible aims of the hegemonic discourses. (Jokinen, Juhila & Suoninen 1993, 89–90.)

Questions that help with analysing the process of discourses becoming hegemonic, following Jokinen, Juhila & Suoninen (1993), include: has simplification replaced diversity, complexity, and contradiction and in what ways? In what ways did simplification achieve plausibility? How are the socially constructed nature of knowledge and practice concealed and how are they naturalised so that they are taken for granted? Identity-formation is central in the construction of hegemony. Thus, the analysis can involve the question: how and what kinds of strict, personal identity-bound subject positions are created for people? Beside simplification, appealing to general consensus is also a central option of hegemony process. Consensus can be derived from appealing to experts or to the majority opinion. Thus, one can also ask the text: is consensus used to legitimise knowledge? Appealing to shared cultural conventions is often highly influential in reproducing hegemonic discourses. This can be examined by noting what arguments are effective and are thus often utilised. The last question introduced by

Jokinen, Juhila and Suoninen is how parts of other systems of meanings are used to support certain discourses. (Ibid. 89–95.)

## 5. ANALYSIS

The analysis is conducted following Fairclough's three-dimensional model of CDA, which is based on his three-dimension concept of discourse (see figures 4.2. and 4.2.). The first part of the analysis, the textual analysis, is conducted using Janks's (2005) linguistic analysis rubric and seeks to describe the linguistic features of the texts. The rubric, included in the appendix-section (Appendix A) is used in the form that it is presented in this thesis, so that the different aspects that are introduced in the rubric are examined in the texts, and found linguistic elements are placed in the rubric's table. This approach ensures that the analysis is conducted systematically. The second and third parts of the analysis, the analysis of discursive practices and the analysis of social practice respectively, are conducted using the framework provided by Fairclough. The analyses of discursive practice and social practice are connected to each other as they both are concerned with interpretation processes and discursive practices are also forms of social practice.

Thus, there is some overlap in the dimensions of the analysis, despite each stage having their own focal points. The discourses will be discussed in their entirety in the chapter discussing the analysis of social practices. After the two dimensions of analysis a picture of the features of the texts and the discourses is formed, so that conclusions about the discourses and their connections to hegemonic struggles and ideologies can be drawn.

### 5.1. Textual analysis

The first part of the analysis utilises Janks's (2005) linguistic analysis rubric, which guarantees a systematic approach to the analysis. Textual analysis aims to describe the features of texts to provide an image of the nature, style and content of the texts. All features included in the rubric were considered in the analysis, but some features proved out to be more significant in the analysis than other features, as some linguistic features are more prominent in the addresses. Lexicalisation, voice, mood, pronouns, and the use of definite article *the* proved to be the most central linguistic features in Bush's addresses in the parts of the texts that were of interest to this study. These features revealed the most significant information about the addresses, whereas analysis of metaphors, for example, would not have been fruitful as Bush uses very few metaphors in the context of the War on Terror.

With Obama's addresses, the most significant textual feature to this study was lexicalisation, as it offered the most material for the analysis. Although Obama's addresses are more vivid in language use than Bush's addresses and include more metaphors and euphemisms, for example, many of these textual features were not relevant for this study as the analysis only concerned the relevant sections of the addresses. Bush's addresses will be discussed first, and Obama's addresses with comparisons to Bush's addresses are discussed in the following sub-chapter.

### 5.1.1. Bush's addresses

The president gives his inaugural addresses and State of the Union Addresses alone. Thus, there is no turn-taking; Bush is the only one being heard and he alone is in control of the discussed topics and discourses. Bush uses the phaser War on Terror to refer to the fight against terrorism, which is why the term is also used in the context of Bush's addresses. When discussing the War on Terror and U.S. military operations abroad, Bush's speeches retain a similar style and voice throughout his presidency. The voice is most often active, stressing the U.S. as an active and conscious actor abroad. This certainty is not only constructed with the active voice but also with lexicalisation. For example, in 2006 Bush stated: "Our enemies and our friends can be certain: The United States will not retreat from the world, and we will never surrender to evil." This similar assuring and confident voice is maintained throughout the speeches. The voice turns passive when Bush discusses one motivating aspect behind the actions abroad, which is his belief that the U.S. is *called* to responsibilities in the world (see e.g. Bush 2002; 2003; 2004). However, it is not entirely concluded who or what is calling the U.S. Without an explicit disclosure, it may be interpreted that Bush believes the call to come from a higher power, as Bush (2003) states that: "As our nation moves troops and builds alliances to make our world safer, we must also remember our calling as a blessed country is to make the world better."

The mood remains similar thorough the speeches, as Bush makes mainly statements that imply his sureness about his administration's policies and the global role of the U.S. Some offers rather than commands are made, but mainly the mood implies sureness and confidence about the topics discussed. There are also only few modals, such as may, might or could will, or adverbs to indicate uncertainty. This confidence can be expected of political speeches and political discourse, and Bush's speeches correspond this as they are written in a way that seeks to show the president's and his administration's confidence

in the U.S. foreign policy regarding the War on Terror, and also increase the audience's confidence in it.

Clear divisions are made between the U.S. and others by pronouns *us* and *them*. *Us* is used to refer to the U.S. and its citizens, and even U.S. allies are often excluded from "us", as Bush mainly speaks about "the U.S. and our allies" (see e.g. Bush 2002; 2003; 2007). This maintains the image of the U.S. as an exceptional actor and emphasises the idea of U.S. leadership. Emphasising the exceptionality of the U.S. is connected to the myth of American exceptionalism, which is also a part of the American civil religion. Thus, Bush reproduces the set-up of the American civil religion between the U.S., its allies and enemies. The speeches, quite expectedly, make clear distinctions between the U.S. and its enemies in the War on Terror. In his second inaugural address, Bush (2005a) states: "[A]ll the allies of the United States can know: We honor your friendship; we rely on your counsel; and we depend on your help. Division among free nations is a primary goal of freedom's enemies." Although the allies of the U.S. are not included in "us", the importance of amicable relations is emphasised so that the distinction between them and the U.S. enemies can be contrasted.

Definite article *the*, according to Janks's (2005) rubric, is used "for shared information – to refer to something mentioned before" or to something that the audience can be assumed to know about. It also reveals textual presuppositions (ibid.). This linguistic technique is used in the speeches to construct the idea that the views or information presented in the addresses is commonly shared. Bush uses this technique to reinforce the idea of the U.S. as a protector of freedom, for example. The emphasis on freedom in Bush's addresses is consistent with the connection commonly constructed between U.S. politics and the advocacy of freedom. Freedom is also a central value in the American civil religion, a value that binds the U.S. citizens together by their religious loyalty to it (Rouner 1986, 133). Thus, as Bush emphasises the centrality of freedom in the U.S. society and in his administration's policies, he is also reproducing the American civil religion.

The phrase "the enemies of freedom" is used to construct a shared image of the enemies of the U.S. as opposing one of the core values of the U.S., freedom (Bush 2004; 2006). The phrase implies a strict division between enemies of freedom on the one hand, and allies of freedom on the other. This constructs strict subject positions and identities: one is either an advocate of the U.S. concept of freedom or against it. Creating stiff subject-

positions and identities, according to Jokinen, Juhila and Suoninen (2004, 92–93), can be used as a technique to hegemonise discourses. In Bush's speeches, this technique, whether it is used consciously or not, emphasises the identity of the U.S. and its citizens as the allies of freedom and their enemies as enemies of freedom, and constructs the idea that one can only be for or against freedom and hence either a friend or an enemy of the U.S. Thus, dividing people and countries into defenders of freedom and enemies of freedom hegemonises the discourse Bush is constructing.

“The attack on freedom” phrase in Bush's 2005 State of the Union address further constructs the shared view of the conflict as a fight for freedom. “The cause of freedom” is a rather often occurring phrase, mentioned in the State of the Union Addresses of 2004, 2006 and 2007 and the second inaugural address (2005b). In 2006, Bush stated that: “America acts in this cause with friends and allies at our side, yet we understand our special calling: This great Republic will lead the cause of freedom.” Using the definite article *the* and creating a recurring phrase constructs the idea that there is shared knowledge about the nature and cause behind the U.S. military actions abroad. Another phrase that Bush (2008) uses to construct a shared idea of the nature of U.S. military actions abroad is “the armies of compassion”, stating: “Tonight the armies of compassion continue the march to a new day in the gulf coast.” Calling the U.S. military forces *the armies of compassion* clearly seeks to construct an idea that the military operations in the gulf coast are acts of compassion. Furthermore, presenting it as a phrase with the definite article *the* in it shows, or show an effort to construct, a presupposition of that being the truth about the mission. With these phrases, Bush reproduces the foundational myths that influence the American identity and are a part of the American civil religion. The myth of American exceptionalism portrays the U.S. as a chosen nation with a higher morals and purpose (Marsden 2011, 328–329), and Bush reinforces this view by emphasising the role of the U.S. as a leader of freedom with the value of compassion.

Lexicalisation, the selection of wordings, affect how ideas are constructed (Janks 2005). Lexical analysis is central to this study since the words that are chosen for Bush's addresses construct the idea of the U.S. actions in the War on Terror consciously the way that the Bush administration wants its policies portrayed. To streamline the analysis, similar lexicalisations were grouped together in a table that also creates a timeline to see whether lexicalisation changed during Bush's presidency. No significant lexicalisation changes over time were found, despite the increased talk about the “advance of freedom”



during Bush's second term as president. The entire original table cannot be fitted in this work due to its size and length, so an abbreviated version is included in the appendix-section (Appendix B), to provide an example of the analysis process. The table includes quotes of interest to the analysis from Bush's addresses, listed under the year of the speech they were mentioned in. Similar clauses are situated in same rows to ease making comparisons.

Different portrayals of freedom and the relationship of the U.S. to it are a central topic in the addresses. While U.S. interests are mentioned too, the use of U.S. military forces is portrayed as fighting freedom's fight, fighting against the enemies of freedom and leading freedom's cause (Bush 2002; 2004; 2006). Furthermore, Bush appeals to the divine to justify the need to protect liberty. In the State of the Union Address of 2003, Bush states that: "The liberty we prize is not America's gift to the world, it is God's gift to humanity", and in 2004 that: "I believe that God has planted in every human heart the desire to live in freedom". Thus, the position of the U.S. as a defender of freedom and consequently the actions in the War on Terror are justified by religious references.

Bush also argues for his administration's aims in the War on Terror by appealing to American idealism. Bush speaks of the idealism and ideals of the U.S. This idealism includes the ideals of freedom, ending tyranny, and service to the U.S. and to other people. Bush (2005b; 2006) speaks of the idealism that the U.S. soldiers portray abroad as they serve their country and take great risks while doing it, and how some criticise the Bush administration's aim to end tyranny as misguided idealism, although Bush claims that the security of the U.S. depends on it. Appealing to a shared set of ideals is an effective way to convince people and is a better way to influence secular people than appealing to a higher power.

Bush argues that freedom has the power to change the world and bring hope and peace on Earth (Bush 2005b). Doing this, Bush further reinforces the value of freedom and justifies its centrality in his administration's foreign policy. Furthermore, this argument brings more legitimation to U.S. actions in the War on Terror that Bush presents as the promotion of freedom. The selection of words in Bush's addresses construct a certain image that he wants to convey of his policies, and that image is that the U.S., as a defender of freedom, is with its military actions protecting God's gift to humanity and thus bringing peace and hope to humans everywhere. In 2007 and 2008 respectively, Bush expressed

his beliefs about the nature and consequences by freedom by stating that “[f]ree people are not drawn to violent and malignant ideologies”, and that the U.S. foreign policy is based on the premise that “people, when given the chance, will choose a future of freedom and peace.” Thus, Bush associates particular beliefs with freedom, as he expects that the freedom’s ability to bring peace is due to the peaceful mindset of free people. He also reproduces the American civil religion as the emphasis on the good qualities of freedom reinforces its status as a central American value. In his second inaugural address, Bush states the following:

By our efforts, we have lit a fire as well, a fire in the minds of men. It warms those who feel its power. It burns those who fight its progress. And one day this untamed fire of freedom will reach the darkest corners of our world. (Bush 2005b.)

Bush claims that the U.S. is striving for peace, and by expressing his beliefs about the nature and influence of freedom, Bush ties the goal of world peace to the need to expand his concept of freedom in foreign nations (Bush 2003, see also e.g. Bush 2002; 2004; 2005a; 2005b). “The advance of liberty is opposed by terrorists and extremists, evil men who despise freedom, despise America, and aim to subject millions to their violent rule”, Bush (2008) states, constructing an idea of a confrontation between evil, represented by terrorists and the enemies of freedom and the U.S., and good, represented by the U.S. and its allies in the cause of freedom. Constructing the idea that the U.S. concept of freedom is good and those opposing it are evil displays the U.S. foreign policy tradition of moral pragmatism, the idea that the U.S. provides the criterion according to which other states’ actions should be judged (Hastedt 2011, 61). Furthermore, it reproduces the myth of American exceptionalism as it reinforces the superiority of freedom as an American value compared to views that are not compatible with it.

Already in his first State of the Union Address, Bush (2002) famously used the phrase “axis of evil” to describe Iran, Iraq, North Korea and their terrorist allies. Often in his State of the Union Addresses Bush describes U.S. actions as a fight against evil and overcoming evil with greater good (see e.g. Bush 2002; 2002; 2006), and in his 2007 address he stated that: “The evil that inspired and rejoiced in 9/11 is still at work in the world. And so long as that’s the case, America is still a nation at war.” Choosing to describe the U.S. enemies as *evil* creates justification and legitimacy to U.S. actions, as

the U.S. is presented as the good force, which suits the efforts to justify U.S. military campaign abroad well.

Bush also describes the War on Terror as an “ideological conflict” or “ideological struggle” (Bush 2006; 2007; 2008). This depiction combined with Bush describing the conflict as the protection of freedom implies that freedom itself is the ideology that is being contested. Bush (2005b) describes the conflict as “the attack on freedom”, encapsulating what he believes is the essence of the war, and also with the use of definite article *the* he implies that the nature of the conflict is as he supposes. When comparing these two depictions of the War on Terror, the ideological struggle versus the fight between good and evil, the latter has more religious connotations with the definition of good and evil being a central theme in many religions. However, it seems that good and evil are not, at least explicitly, defined through any particular organised religion but through the American concept of freedom; those opposing it being evil and those protecting it being good.

Bush (2002; 2005a; 2005b) argues that the U.S. does not intend to impose its culture or form of government in the Middle East. Instead, he emphasises the aim to liberate the oppressed and help the people in the Middle East to protect their freedom without the will to dominate (see e.g. Bush 2003; 2004; 2008). While stressing that there is no will to conquer or impose American way of life upon the countries of the Middle East, Bush however states:

America will lead by defending liberty and justice because they are right and true and unchanging for all people everywhere.

No nation owns these aspirations, and no nation is exempt from them. We have no intention of imposing our culture. But America will always stand firm for the nonnegotiable demands of human dignity: the rule of law; limits on the power of the state; respect for women; private property; free speech; equal justice; and religious tolerance. (Bush 2002.)

Thus, the claim of not imposing U.S. ways of life upon foreign nations seems like a mere strategy to gain acceptance to U.S. policies by representing them in another way.

Bush (2003; 2004; 2006) emphasises that the war was started by the terrorists and forced on the U.S., and that it “fights reluctantly”, making the U.S. seem like a victim, which fits the myth of the U.S. as an innocent nation. In 2006, he stated that the U.S. “did nothing to invite” the ideological conflict at hand. Despite the seeming reluctance, Bush

emphasises the call he feels the U.S. has as a blessed country to make the world a better place (Bush 2003). Bush (2002; 2003; 2004; 2008) speaks of *the call of history, the calling of U.S. conscience* and *the historic commitment to end tyranny*. And not only is the U.S. called to action, it is also called to leadership (see e.g. Bush 2004; 2006). On the one hand, Bush (2005b) emphasises the involvement of a higher power in the course of events, stating: “History has an ebb and flow of justice, but history also has a visible direction, set by liberty and the Author of Liberty.” On the one hand, he also emphasises the meaning of human action, arguing that “it is human choices that move events” (ibid.). Bush’s speeches construct the idea that a path for history, created by a higher power, exists but that the path is executed by humans. This idea provides further justification for the Bush administration’s policies, since it creates the idea that the administration is in its special calling fulfilling a plan from a higher power.

Bush’s addresses also aim to justify their military actions with simpler lexical choices, for example by calling the cause of the U.S. just and right and claiming that the U.S. is bringing terrorists to justice (see e.g. Bush 2002; 2003; 2004; 2007). Bush emphasises the compassionate character of the U.S. citizens and describes compassion as the deepest American value (Bush 2005b; 2007; 2008). He states that: “The qualities of courage and compassion that we strive for in America also determine our conduct abroad” and as mentioned earlier, describes the U.S. armed forces in the gulf as the “armies of compassion” (Bush 2003; 2008). Thus, Bush constructs legitimation for his administration’s foreign policies, including other policies than military actions, by presenting them as acts of compassion. In his 2006 State of the Union Address, Bush argued for showing compassion abroad as follows:

We show compassion abroad because Americans believe in the God-given dignity and worth of a villager with HIV/AIDS or an infant with malaria or a refugee fleeing genocide or a young girl sold into slavery. We also show compassion abroad because regions overwhelmed by poverty, corruption, and despair are sources of terrorism and organized crime and human trafficking and the drug trade. (Bush 2006.)

The quote shows that besides freedom, other features that Bush deems God-given also operate as motivators for the Bush administration’s foreign policies. Bush also emphasises the honourable nature of the U.S. and its actions and the self-sacrifice of the Americans for the freedoms of their countrymen and strangers (Bush 2003; 2007).

Emphasising the sacrifice that the U.S. soldiers make for their country's freedom and for the freedoms of people abroad fits the American civil religion's theme of death and sacrifice, which entered the civil religion during the American civil war (Bellah 1970/1967, 177). Bellah (1970/1967, 168) also argued that the American civil religion is in the end about "the subordination of the nation to ethical principles that transcend it and in terms of which it should be judged." This idea of judging the nation by transcending ethical principles is visible in Bush's speeches, as he goes to great lengths to emphasise the good qualities of the U.S. and the goodness of their actions abroad.

While emphasising the selflessness and kindness of the U.S. foreign policy and the self-sacrifice and compassion of Americans advancing these policies abroad, Bush also argues that these actions are vital for the safety of the U.S. (see e.g. Bush 2002; 2005a; 2005b). Bush (2005a) claims that the "survival of liberty in our land increasingly depends on the success of liberty in other lands" and further explains:

America's vital interests and our deepest beliefs are now one. From the day of our founding, we have proclaimed that every man and woman on this Earth has rights and dignity and matchless value, because they bear the image of the Maker of heaven and Earth. Across the generations, we have proclaimed the imperative of self-government, because no one is fit to be a master and no one deserves to be a slave. Advancing these ideals is the mission that created our Nation. It is the honorable achievement of our fathers. Now, it is the urgent requirement of our Nation's security and the calling of our time. (Bush 2005a.)

Thus, Bush ties advancing U.S. interests and values while helping other countries together. Furthermore, God and His gifts to humanity are yet again used as justifications for U.S. foreign policy. Bush (2003; 2004) expresses faith in a higher plan, speaking of having faith in Providence and in God's guiding power. In his 2005 State of the Union Address, Bush stated: "The road of Providence is uneven and unpredictable—yet we know where it leads: It leads to freedom." Bush aligns his administration's policies and its goals to the outcome of Providence, constructing legitimacy for his policies in the eyes of those who believe that a higher plan for humanity exists. Bellah (1970/1967, 171) argued that a part of the American civil religion is presidents attributing the highest authority to God, which provides the "ultimate significance" and criterion for right and wrong that democratic choices cannot themselves ensure to people. As Bush expresses his faith in God and His plan that the U.S. is to follow, he appoints God as the highest authority and follows the customs of the American civil religion.

Terms such as God, higher power, angels and Providence are not the only explicitly religious words in the speeches, as Bush also speaks about *the creed* of the U.S. In his 2002 State of the Union Address, Bush discussed the reactions of the U.S. citizens to the terrorist attacks of 9/11, and stated the following:

For too long our culture has said, "If it feels good, do it." Now America is embracing a new ethic and a new creed, "Let's roll." In the sacrifice of soldiers, the fierce brotherhood of firefighters, and the bravery and generosity of ordinary citizens, we have glimpsed what a new culture of responsibility could look like. We want to be a nation that serves goals larger than self. We've been offered a unique opportunity, and we must not let this moment pass. (Bush 2002.)

Creed, which traditionally refers to religious faith, is used in a secular-like manner in Bush's speeches: not referring to any recognised religion but secular matters such as societal values. Further, Bush (2002) also argues that the terrorist enemies of the U.S. have chosen tyranny and death as their cause and creed, while the U.S. chooses freedom and dignity of every life. While these values may be based on religious beliefs, as suggested earlier, the term creed itself does not refer to any particular traditionally religious faith or beliefs but rather to matters that may traditionally be thought of as secular.

Like freedom, democracy is also associated with particular beliefs in Bush's speeches. In 2006, Bush stated that: "Democracies replace resentment with hope, respect the rights of their citizens and their neighbors, and join the fight against terror", expressing the belief that democratic countries are more peaceful than others. Freedom and democracy are also treated almost as synonyms in the speeches, or at least very tightly involved with one another. In 2004, Bush stated the following, associating democracy and freedom together:

We also hear doubts that democracy is a realistic goal for the greater Middle East, where freedom is rare. Yet it is mistaken and condescending to assume that whole cultures and great religions are incompatible with liberty and self-government. I believe that God has planted in every human heart the desire to live in freedom. And even when that desire is crushed by tyranny for decades, it will rise again. (Bush 2004.)

Bush offers many reasons for his administration's foreign policies and actions in the War on Terror: the special calling of the U.S., liberating the oppressed, and protecting U.S. interests, to name a few. However, these reasons are all favourable to the U.S. and its citizens and no negative aspects of military actions abroad are brought up, besides the

honourable sacrifices of the military and the military families. Even though the war is justified using different arguments, they all present the U.S. in a positive light, disregarding other views. This can be interpreted as a simplification strategy to replace contradiction and complexity, and hegemonise the discourse Bush is constructing in his addresses.

Some religious terms and phrases are used in Bush's speeches, but they do not dominate the vocabulary in any explicit way. Religious expressions are used sparingly, and rather than taking any dominant role in describing U.S. foreign policy, they imply beliefs and presuppositions that are motivating factors behind the policies. As Bellah's example of president Kennedy's addresses and the American civil religion, Bush does not offer any specifications either about the identity of the God he is speaking about or from which religion his religious expressions are derived from. This upholds the opportunity for people from various faiths to relate to his words. Furthermore, by not using religious vocabulary in any overwhelming way and justifying the Bush administration's policies also with non-religious arguments ensures that secular people can relate to his message as well as religious people.

### 5.1.2. Obama's addresses

The starting point of Obama's addresses is the same as Bush's: Obama gives his speeches alone and is the sole person in control of the topics and discourses in the addresses. By external features such as voice, mood, modality, polarity, and tense, Obama's addresses have clear similarities with Bush's addresses, as all these features imply sureness and trust in the administration's policies and U.S. military actions abroad. Like in Bush's addresses, this sureness is strengthened with lexical choices. A typical way to reinforce Obama's message is using the word *must*, as in his 2010 State of the Union Address: "For America must always stand on the side of freedom and human dignity—always." These features also remain similar throughout Obama's nine addresses. The voice of the addresses is active which constructs the idea of the U.S. as an active and conscious actor, and passive is rarely used. Obama's addresses contain mainly statements and commands, which is why the mood implies certainty. The use of present tense when describing U.S. actions abroad creates the idea that Obama has full confidence in them, while it also increases the audience's confidence in them. Modality contributes in the creation of this

image, as there are few modals when Obama discusses his administration's policies and their effects.

As in Bush's addresses, Obama's addresses also use the pronoun *us* to refer quite strictly to U.S., but sometimes also to U.S. allies or some non-defined group of countries, for example to countries that "enjoy relative plenty" (Obama 2009). However, Obama's addresses use the definite article *the* to create an image of shared information far more sparingly than Bush's addresses, as there are no often recurring phrases created with the use of the definite article when discussing U.S. policies in the fight against terrorism. Although Obama's and Bush's addresses have many similarities, Bush's addresses use more versatile textual techniques to construct discourses about the fight against terror.

The textual feature that is of most interest to this study is lexicalisation. The lexical analysis of Obama's addresses was also conducted by placing wordings of interest to a table, grouping lexicalisations of the same subject together and creating a timeline, as with Bush's addresses. As the table is lengthy, an abbreviated version of the table is included in the appendix-section (Appendix C). What is notable is that the subject of the fight against terrorism is much less dominant in Obama's addresses than in Bush's. Obama's addresses discuss topics such as economy, taxation, education and other domestic policy issues extensively, but mainly discuss the fight against terrorism as part of a national security -theme. The analysis is then limited to rather small sections of the addresses.

Furthermore, whereas Bush talked clearly and explicitly about the U.S. actions against terrorism, Obama is much vaguer about the matter as he does not use the phrase *War on Terror* but uses many different terms to describe it. Thus, there is not only over-lexicalisation but also re-lexicalisation when describing the U.S. fight against terrorism. In his first inaugural address, Obama (2009) still talked about a war "against a far-reaching network of violence and hatred", but in his later speeches does not refer to the fight in terror as a one, distinct conflict. Bush did so with the phrase War on Terror, but Obama refers to the events of what Bush talked about as parts of the War on Terror, such as the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, as interrelated conflicts but not as parts of a whole. For example, Obama uses terms such as "struggle", "fight", "counterterrorism efforts" and "threat" to refer to the foreign policy issues concerning terrorism but does not adopt one consistent phrase (Obama 2011; 2013b; 2014). This complicates the effort to identify



the parts of the speeches when Obama speaks strictly about countering terrorism as he does not necessarily separate the subject from the general lines of foreign policy or security. However, with knowledge of the context of the addresses and the events of the U.S. fight against terrorism, it is possible to identify the relevant sections for this study.

How Obama depicts the fight against terrorism is not highly consistent, as he uses different expressions to describe it. The most recurring way that Obama describes the nature of the fight is as fighting a *threat* that the terrorists pose or their actions that *threaten* the U.S. and its citizens (Obama 2010; 2012; 2013b; 2016). Another somewhat recurring way that Obama describes it is referring to the U.S. actions of taking the fight to al-Qaeda or taking direct actions against terrorists (Obama 2010; 2011; 2013b). The choices of words get harsher by the end of Obama's second term, as in his 2015 State of the Union Address, Obama states that the U.S. continues to "hunt down the terrorists". Even further, in his last State of the Union Address, Obama (2016) states that the terrorists must be "taken out", and when speaking of ISIL, he stated that: "We just need to call them what they are – killers and fanatics who have to be rooted out, hunted down, and destroyed."

This rather harsh tone is contrasted with Obama (2011; 2012) reassuring that the war in Iraq is ending, and even more so with Obama speaking continually about ending the war in Afghanistan and about the U.S. needing to consider its military operations more carefully (Obama 2013b; see also e.g. Obama 2014; 2015). In his 2014 State of the Union Address, Obama stated the following:

I have used force when needed to protect the American people, and I will never hesitate to do so as long as I hold this office. But I will not send our troops into harm's way unless it's truly necessary; nor will I allow our sons and daughters to be mired in open-ended conflicts. We must fight the battles that need to be fought, not those that terrorists prefer from us – large-scale deployments that drain our strength and may ultimately feed extremism.

So, even as we aggressively pursue terrorist networks – through more targeted efforts and by building the capacity of our foreign partners – America must move off a permanent war footing. That's why I've imposed prudent limits on the use of drones – for we will not be safer if people abroad believe we strike within their countries without regard for the consequence. (Obama 2014.)

This quote is significant for this study because it encompasses much of how Obama believes the fight against terrorism should be conducted. Obama establishes that the U.S. uses force to protect the U.S. citizens and that it will be used if necessary, but only if it serves the interests and aims of the U.S. and does not inspire more extremism, as the terrorists intend. Earlier on, Obama (2013b) stated that he does not believe that it is necessary to send U.S. troops to occupy other nations to meet the threat of al-Qaeda, even though direct action against them will be taken if needed. Obama's tone regarding military operations abroad seems more pacific and prudent before his last State of the Union Address (2016), although already in his State of the Union Address of 2015 he stated that the U.S. reserves the right to act unilaterally to hunt down the terrorists. Obama (2016) also stresses the willingness of the U.S. to act solo in his last State of the Union Address, as he states that: "American leadership in the 21st century is not a choice between ignoring the rest of the world – except when we kill terrorists." Thus, Obama introduces the idea of American exceptionalism in the addresses by emphasising the ability and readiness of the U.S. to act against terrorism alone, regardless of others, if necessary.

The theme of American exceptionalism is extended to the topic of the importance of American leadership that Obama reproduces in his addresses. Obama seeks to realign the nature of American leadership, as he states that he believes in a "smarter" kind of leadership, smarter than considering military operations as first options of problem-solving (Obama 2015). In 2011, Obama stated that the U.S. leadership has made America "not just a place on a map, but the light to the world", and later emphasised the potential of the U.S. leadership to do good in the world (Obama 2011; 2014). Although Obama emphasises American leadership and its good qualities and sometimes even the willingness to act unilaterally, he also expressed the will to find a way for the U.S. to lead the world without becoming its "policeman" (Obama 2015). In this sense, Obama's tone is yet again more placatory than his predecessor's. However, Obama does not portray any less faith in U.S. responsibilities or role in the world and in the fight against terrorism than Bush, as he connects the U.S. actions in the fight against terrorism to U.S. helping the world and oppressed people gain peace and freedom. In 2011, Obama addressed the fight against al-Qaeda and American efforts against nuclear weapons in Iran and North Korea and stated that: "This is just a part of how we're shaping a world that favors peace

and prosperity.” Thus, Obama portrays the fight against terrorism as one branch of the U.S. efforts and leadership to reach world peace.

Obama (2012) speaks about the “renewal” of American leadership, which implies that it had been lost at some time, probably referring to the Bush administration. This is connected to Obama speaking about “rejecting the false choice” between U.S. safety and values, as Obama states that the U.S. must enlist its values in the fight (Obama 2009; 2010; 2013b). Furthermore, Obama (2015) states that the example of U.S. values is an important part of their leadership, and that U.S. values are the greatest strength of the U.S. abroad (Obama 2010). This is easily interpreted as critique towards the Bush administration, especially combined with Obama’s efforts to close down Guantanamo Bay, and as an effort of the Obama administration to change the course of U.S. action. Once again, Obama reproduces the idea of American exceptionalism and the rightness of their values and ideals by emphasising their power and meaning, for example by stating that in their efforts against terrorism, the U.S. remains true to their Constitutional ideals and sets an example for the rest of the world (Obama 2014).

Obama does not only emphasise the combability of U.S. values and action in the fight against terrorism, but also stresses the American values and ideals that U.S. troops personally portray in their actions abroad. “We honor them not only because they are guardians of our liberty, but because they embody the spirit of service”, Obama (2009) stated in his first inaugural address. Obama emphasises the heroic and courageous nature of the U.S. troops as they sacrifice for the security and freedom of the U.S. citizens (see e.g. Obama 2011; 2012; 2013a; 2013b). Thus, like Bush, Obama reproduces the American civil religion theme of sacrifice.

It is noteworthy that the lexicalisation in Obama’s inaugural addresses is different than in his State of the Union Addresses. Unlike in the inaugural addresses, in his State of the Union Addresses Obama does not mention God or express religious beliefs in the context of the fight against terrorism, except for when he stated the notion that all people are *created* equal when discussing American values (Obama 2010). In his inaugural addresses, however, Obama in many ways implies that God is the motivation and reason behind U.S. actions and values. He, like Bush, states that freedom is a gift from God and that it must be secured by “His people here on Earth” (Obama 2009; 2013a). For example, in his first inaugural address, Obama (2009) said the following:

Let it be said by our children's children that when we were tested we refused to let this journey end, that we did not turn back nor did we falter; and with eyes fixed on the horizon and God's grace upon us, we carried forth that great gift of freedom and delivered it safely to future generations. (Obama 2009.)

In the same speech, he stated that the source of their confidence is the knowledge that God calls on the U.S. “to shape an uncertain destiny” (ibid.). Thus, not only does he portray belief in God being the source of the freedom that they protect in their fight against terrorism, he portrays the U.S. as a nation under God’s special care and with a fate determined by Him. Appealing to a higher power justifies the Obama administration’s actions and establishes a relationship between the Obama administration’s politics and religious beliefs. Furthermore, it reproduces the myths of the American civil religion and continues its style of vague references to God that people of most faiths can relate to. Unlike Obama’s inaugural addresses, the language regarding the fight against terrorism in Obama’s State of the Union Addresses indicates secularism, since although they reproduce the American exceptionalism myth and thus parts of the American civil religion, they are not explicitly connected to religiously coloured ideas, such as the idea of the U.S. being a God’s chosen or blessed nation. The different lexical style in Obama’s inaugural addresses demonstrates the special role that inaugurations have as rituals of the American civil religion.

The textual features of Obama’s addresses do not indicate many efforts to hegemonise Obama’s message about the fight against terrorism, which may be due to the message itself being incohesive, especially towards the end of Obama’s presidency. Obama’s requirement to apply the U.S. values to their policies is intensified by appealing to shared values as well as appealing to a higher power to convince the addresses’ audiences of the role of the U.S. may be signs of efforts to hegemonise the discourses Obama is constructing, and Obama often appeals to other shared cultural traits as he addresses the audience using the word *we*, which implies shared and common views. However, in addition to these, other hegemonising techniques are not employed in the context of the fight against terrorism in the text-level of the discourses.

## 5.2. Analysis of discursive practice

The second level of Fairclough’s model of analysis is the analysis of discursive practices, which studies the production, consumption and interpretation of texts and their formal

features. The analysis is conducted following the three main headings Fairclough introduces: the force of utterances, the coherence of texts, and the intertextuality of texts. (Fairclough 1992, 75.) Thereby, the analysis of discursive practices is concerned with speech acts and what the texts are being used to do socially; revealing the ideological assumptions behind coherence; and the influence of other texts on the texts themselves and their interpretation. This level of analysis is interpretative and thus, the focus of the analysis is not just in any sentences and clauses that are in the addresses, but in those that somehow aim to create meanings upon the matters discussed, whether it is creating new meaning or reproducing old. Knowledge of the contexts of the speeches and their topics is important for the sake of interpretation.

### 5.2.1. Bush's addresses

In terms of the force of utterances, Bush's addresses are largely what is expected of political speeches. Statements or assertions are used prominently in the addresses to portray and conceptualise the Bush administration's policies in a favourable way. Because the role of the president is to offer the Congress advice rather than commands in their State of the Union Addresses, there are not many direct commands in Bush's addresses. However, some clauses can be interpreted as indirect commands, usually concerning the support of the military troops. Bush also makes both direct and indirect requests, mostly to the citizens of the U.S. and the Congress. Bush's addresses also involve convincing on behalf of his administration's policies, and some promises to the American troops, their allies and oppressed people especially in Iraq. In a less prominent role are a few rhetorical questions and regular questions.

The assertions mainly describe U.S. actions in the War on Terror and the nature of U.S. enemies, but they also explicitly state the religious beliefs that affect U.S. actions in the conflict. The belief in a guiding higher power is also visible in a speech act which can be interpreted as either an assertion of convincing. In his 2004 State of the Union address, Bush stated: "The momentum of freedom in our world is unmistakable, and it is not carried forward by our power alone. We can trust in that greater power who guides the unfolding of the years." Although at first sight the quote seems like an assertion, appealing to a higher power may be a convincing technique as Bush is aligning his administration's policies with the actions of a higher power. As securing the freedom of U.S. citizens and oppressed people abroad is what Bush says is a central object of the

efforts in the War on Terror, Bush (2005b) aligns his policies with a higher power also by claiming with a certainty that the road of Providence leads to freedom.

Bush (2002) talks of a close relationship with God with the assertion that: “[M]any have discovered again that even in tragedy—especially in tragedy—God is near”, and in the form of an indirect request to action as he expresses that as a blessed country, the U.S. has a special calling to make the world a better place (Bush 2003). By calling the U.S. a blessed country and appealing to this as he expresses the need for U.S. action, Bush is also reproducing a foundational myth that is an important part of the American civil religion (Bellah 1970/1967 175). The myth of American exceptionalism and the idea the U.S. is a God’s chosen nation with higher morals and purpose are central for the American civil religion and the American identity, and these perceptions are often used as justifications for U.S. actions abroad (Marsden 2011, 328–329). Bush reproduces the myth of American exceptionalism by assertions that emphasise the necessity of U.S. leadership in spreading freedom (Bush 2004). Furthermore, in his second inaugural address, Bush (2005a) asserts that: “We will persistently clarify the choice before every ruler and every nation, the moral choice between oppression, which is always wrong, and freedom, which is eternally right”, implying that the U.S. has the right and true values that others should follow, fitting to the concepts of the American civil religion. Bush also stresses the singularity of the U.S. and its tasks as in 2002, he seeks to convince his audience about the rightness of their actions by stating that the U.S. has been offered a unique opportunity, and that the moments should not be allowed to pass.

In terms of coherence, Bush’s addresses seem coherent at first as the topics flow easily from one to another and the addresses are easy to follow. However, as the coherence of texts is about interpretation and about their readers connecting topics together in some meaningful way, it is important to mind the ideological assumptions and assumed knowledge of the context that the addresses are based on and make the texts seem coherent. A reason that can break the appearance of coherence is the lack of knowledge of the context, as Bush often refers to the nature and reasons of U.S. actions in the War on Terror in a way that assumes prior knowledge or views of the matters. Furthermore, he seems to expect that the audience holds similar views as well. However, expressing a view in a way that expects others to think the same way may also be a technique to hegemonise his message. By not explaining the views or by not presenting any contesting ones, Bush creates meanings in a way that he intends it, as he controls the discourse in

his addresses. For example, in 2003, Bush stated that “America’s duty is familiar” without clarifying the content of the duty or why such duty exists. Correspondingly, in 2004 Bush spoke about the responsibility that the U.S. is rising to meet without specifying the nature of the responsibility. These statements are also connected to the idea of American exceptionalism, moral superiority and manifest destiny of the American civil religion, as they portray the U.S. as an actor with a higher purpose.

Bush also makes a few seemingly unconnected religious statements that, provided that they are interpreted as unconnected, break the coherence of the addresses. After describing the character of the U.S. in the face of adversity and the right of every person to be free, Bush (2003) resumes to state that liberty is God’s gift to humanity and that Americans have faith not only in themselves, but in the “loving God behind all of life and all of history”. In a similar manner, Bush (2005b) moves on to discuss the ways of Providence and its destination of freedom after addressing the dreams of the U.S. nation and the already fulfilled dreams of the fall of communism and imperialism. While one interpretation may be that these religious notions are unconnected to the topics that precede them, in Bush’s mind they seem to be connected or he seeks to connect the topics to add religious meaning to matters that are often deemed secular as such.

The level of coherence in the addresses may also indicate ideological investment, as Fairclough (1992, 89–90) argues that coherence, among other text or discourse features, may easily be ideologically invested. Fairclough (*ibid.*) stated that discursive practices can be ideological if they somehow sustain or restructure power relations, and with presuppositions of shared knowledge and structuring his addresses in a way that allows people to connect politics with religious beliefs, Bush is upholding the significance of religious belief in U.S. politics and the idea that they are connected.

Manifest intertextuality in Bush’s addresses is the most visible in the form of quotes, many of which are the stories of veterans and military families or statements from allies. Most of these quotes do not have relevance to this study since they do not concern the research problem. However, in his second inaugural address, Bush (2005a) quotes president Lincoln by saying: “The rulers of outlaw regimes can know that we still believe as Abraham Lincoln did: ‘Those who deny freedom to others deserve it not for themselves and, under the rule of a just God, cannot long retain it.’” This quote is significant because not only does it appeal to the rule of God and its effects, but the statement has even further

authority since it was originally said by Abraham Lincoln, a notable previous U.S. president. Thus, the quote seeks to construct even more legitimacy to U.S. actions abroad.

Constitutive intertextuality is more dominant than manifest intertextuality in the parts of the texts that discuss U.S. foreign policy and the War on Terror. Intertextuality and text are understood broadly so that not only direct references are considered, but also references to different orders of discourse. Constitutive intertextuality is created mainly by references to U.S. history, previous presidents and Founders, religious texts, Bush's and his administration's own previous actions, and collaborative acts with allies, such as reports from the U.N. Religious intertextuality is created by many references to religious themes such as Providence and God, and God's actions or wishes. Many of these references have already been introduced in this analysis chapter. In keeping with the style of the addresses, although the connection to some religious thought is visible, no specific religion is identifiable from the references.

The discursive practices in Bush's addresses imply a clear connection between religious belief and Bush's and his administration's policies, thus they do not indicate secularism nor can be called secular. The texts are produced in connection to religious beliefs and they influence the interpretation and formal features of the texts. The discursive practices reproduce some myths and beliefs of the American civil religion and retain its ambiguous style in the way that all religious references are ambiguous enough so that people of many faiths can relate to them. However, the speeches also include many speech acts and references to other texts that do not have any religious connotations, so although religious beliefs are present in the speeches and their discursive practices, they do not dominate them entirely. Thus, some parts of the texts can be interpreted as secular even though religious beliefs still exist in the background. The texts then accommodate both religious and secular interpretation, because although the values such as freedom and equality are often supported by religious beliefs, they are values that secular people can easily support, too. Thus, the production, consumption and interpretation of Bush's addresses align religious beliefs with secular matters by speech acts such as assertions and convincing, creating meanings by connecting matters together with the appearance of coherence, and with versatile references to other texts, whether religious or secular.



Fairclough defined ideologies as significations or constructions of reality that are built into social practices. According to him, ideologies work the strongest when they are naturalised within discursive practices so that they seem like common sense. (Fairclough 1992, 86–87.) The argument of this study is that in the context of the discourses in Bush's addresses, the American civil religion functions as an ideologically invested order of discourse that influences discursive practices. The American civil religion signifies reality in the sense that with its beliefs and myths it shapes the American identity and creates meaning to the U.S. as a nation and to its policies. This is especially visible when examining coherence as the meaningfulness behind many connections of the present day to U.S. history are connected to the American civil religion and the myths of American exceptionalism and manifest destiny. Talking about American duty, responsibility and "generational commitment to the advance of freedom" without explaining or justifying them is connected to the presupposition that these are already acknowledged facts about the nature of the U.S. and its international role (Bush 2003; 2004; 2005b). Further, as the members of Congress are expected to be conscious about the U.S. policies and history, they are aware of the content of the myths that created the American civil religion that affects U.S. policies, and thus are even more easily affected by this ideological investment in the discursive practices.

Another ideologically invested level of discursive practice is the U.S. concept of freedom, which is connected to the American civil religion but so central in the discourses in Bush's speeches that it must be addressed separately. The U.S. commitment to freedom and its advance is naturalised within the discursive practices in all three levels of examination: firstly, its significance and naturalness is established in assertions and convincing speech acts. Secondly, its naturalised position connects matters together in a meaningful way and creates coherence. In 2005, Bush (2005b) stated that: "Our generational commitment to the advance of freedom, especially in the Middle East, is now being tested and honored in Iraq", naturalising the commitment using history. And lastly, it is supported with intertextual references, for example by quoting Abraham Lincoln (2005a). The concept of freedom gives significance to the U.S., its identity and its foreign policies, which is why it also functions as an ideology.

The discursive practices contribute to the reproduction of the American civil religion but can also be interpreted to convey a post-secular form of politics. Religious beliefs are clearly present in the speeches without dominating entire discourses, but aligning secular

matters, like values of freedom and equality, to religious belief that creates higher meaning to those who hold religious faith themselves but does not prevent secular people from relating to them. It indicates a non-secular attitude towards politics, which considering the formal separation of church and state in the U.S. (for which the U.S. can be held secular), and thus it is reasonable to argue that the discursive practices not only reflect the American civil religion but are also post-secular in nature.

### 5.2.2. Obama's addresses

As in Bush's addresses, the speech acts in Obama's addresses when discussing the fight against terrorism are mainly assertions, in addition to some commands, requests and convincing. The assertions serve to portray U.S. actions in the fight against terrorism the way that the Obama administration wants them portrayed, and also provide the administration's views on how matters should be changed. For example, Obama (2009) stated his views about the nature of the conflict against terrorism with the assertion: "Our nation is at war, against a far-reaching network of violence and hatred", and described the effects of U.S. military campaigns abroad by asserting that "this generation of heroes has made the United States safer and more respected around the world" (Obama 2012). Obama (2013b) also expresses his views about how the fight should be conducted more peacefully by asserting that occupying other nations will not be necessary to meet the threat of terrorism.

Assertions are often supported by convincing or sometimes they can also be interpreted as indirect convincing. In his second inaugural address, Obama (2013a) states: "We, the people, still believe that enduring security and lasting peace do not require perpetual war." The clause asserts Obama's views about U.S. security, but as Obama uses the phrase *we the people*, he not only appeals to his fellow citizens but also makes an intertextual reference to the U.S. Constitution which begins with those words. By appealing to the Constitution, which has a special role in the American civil religion (Levinson 1979, 123), and equating the views of others with his own, Obama constructs legitimacy and credibility to his statement, and thus the clause can also be interpreted as convincing. Sometimes assertions, convincing, and orders are grouped together in the addresses to further reinforce Obama's message, as in the following quote:

Both al Qaeda and now ISIL pose a direct threat to our people, because in today's world, even a handful of terrorists who place no value on human

life, including their own, can do a lot of damage. They use the Internet to poison the minds of individuals inside our country. Their actions undermine and destabilize our allies. We have to take them out. (Obama 2016.)

First, Obama makes an assertion about the threat that al-Qaeda and ISIL pose, after which he supports his assertion by convincing, as he further explains the actions of the terrorists. And finally, Obama makes a command that al-Qaeda and ISIL have to be taken out. As the president's role is to give the Congress advice in State of the Union Addresses, instead of orders, most of Obama's commands are softened with the use of pronoun *we*, so that the command does not only concern the Congress, but the president also. For example, Obama (2015) stated that: "As Americans, we cherish our civil liberties, and we need to uphold that commitment if we want maximum cooperation from other countries and industry in our fight against terrorist networks." Nonetheless, these statements are clearly commands, as they seek to affect the actions of the Congress and the U.S. In terms of requests, Obama, for example, asks the Congress to authorise military action against ISIL (Obama 2015; 2016).

Only the speech acts in Obama's inaugural addresses indicate a relationship between religious beliefs and politics, for example as Obama (2009) asserts the belief that God calls the U.S. to "shape an uncertain destiny". Otherwise, the speech acts do not display an explicit connection to religious beliefs, other than the beliefs of the American civil religion. The idea of American exceptionalism is visible in the speech acts, as Obama seeks to convince his audience about the role of the U.S., for example, by the indirect command that: "America's moral example must always shine for all who yearn for freedom and justice and dignity." (Obama 2012.)

If coherence was only examined as a textual feature, Obama's addresses would seem coherent as they flow naturally from one subject to another. However, as coherence is to be examined as a matter of interpretation rather than a text feature, the addresses, especially from Obama's first presidential term, seem significantly less coherent when discussing the fight against terrorism. The fight is not discussed as a one whole conflict, like Bush did as he called it the War on Terror, but rather as separate conflicts that are connected to the larger security discussion. Obama does not always explicitly connect the different elements of the fight against terrorism to the efforts to counter terrorism, or he discusses the different elements only on a general level of the security discussion. Thus,

in order to connect the conflicts that Obama addresses to the fight against terrorism, one must be aware of the context and the different aspects of the fight.

For example, in 2009, Obama stated that: “As for our common defense, we reject as false the choice between our safety and our ideals”. Knowing the context, it can be concluded that Obama speaks of the threat of terrorism even though he does not specify it but speaks of security on a general level. In 2012, Obama spoke of “a wave of change” that had “washed across the Middle East and North Africa, from Tunis to Cairo; from Sana’a to Tripoli.” Although he does not specify the nature of the change, it is likely to be connected to the fight against terrorism as it was fought in the mentioned regions. Once the context reveals the exact conflict that Obama discusses, it is possible to discover more of Obama’s views about the fight against terrorism, as in the following quote:

As we consider the road that unfolds before us, we remember with humble gratitude those brave Americans who, at this very hour, patrol far-off deserts and distant mountains. [...] We honor them not only because they are guardians of our liberty, but because they embody the spirit of service; a willingness to find meaning in something greater than themselves. (Obama 2009.)

Context implies that Obama refers to the troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, which links Obama’s views to the fight against terrorism. After establishing this connection, it is possible to interpret that Obama believes that the freedom of the U.S. is threatened by terrorists, as he calls the troops fighting the terrorists “guardians of our liberty”.

The incoherent elements in Obama’s speeches are likely to be intentional to lower the profile of the fight against terrorism and scale down the perceived scope of the conflict, which is corresponding with the Obama administration’s agenda to make the fight against terrorism a less dominant part of their foreign policy (McCrisken 2011, 782). Obama’s addresses from his second term are more coherent in the parts where he discusses the fight against terrorism, as stronger connections are made between U.S. actions and their intentions to fight terrorism, like in his 2014 State of the Union Address:

While we have put al Qaeda’s core leadership on a path to defeat, the threat has evolved, as al Qaeda affiliates and other extremists take root in different parts of the world. In Yemen, Somalia, Iraq, and Mali, we have to keep working with partners to disrupt and disable these networks. In Syria, we’ll support the opposition that rejects the agenda of terrorist networks. (Obama 2012.)

The gaps in coherence do not serve any purpose to connect politics to religious beliefs or even to the American civil religion. They instead incorporate the discussion of the fight against terror to the larger security discussion, and in that way dissolve the Bush era narrative of the fight against terrorism as a distinct war rather than a security concern among others. Neither the force of utterances or coherence aspects of the addresses exhibit any strong efforts to hegemonise Obama's views about the fight against terrorism, as they seek to lower its profile and increase others'. However, the coherence aspect of Obama's addresses indicates ideological investment in the sense that they seek to restructure power relations, i.e. counter the Bush administration's narrative of the conflict against terrorism as a distinct war. Obama's later addresses do not only seek to restructure the earlier narrative about the nature of the war but sustain the new image that the Obama administration is trying to construct of the conflict.

Obama's inaugural addresses differ from the State of the Union Addresses by their intertextual features as well. In general, they have strong connections to the American civil religion and its themes and, unlike the State of the Union Addresses, some references to religious texts. The State of the Union Addresses have mainly references to Constitution and its ideals, to historic events to compare with contemporary problems, and some references to previous presidents to reinforce the influence of the addresses. Some intertextual references also reproduce the myths of the American civil religion, especially the myth of American exceptionalism, such as Obama's (2014) statement that: "[W]e counter terrorism not just through intelligence and military action, but by remaining true to our Constitutional ideals, and setting an example for the rest of the world."

In his first inaugural address, Obama (2009) appeals for example to the words of Scripture and ideas of the Founding Fathers to strengthen the influence of his address. What is notable in his reference to the Scripture is that it is clearly more connected to Christianity than other religious references that tend to be ambiguous, following the style of the American civil religion. In the second inaugural address, Obama (2013a) also makes intertextual references to religious texts and symbols connected to the American civil religion, such as the Declaration of Independence, as is evident in the following quote:

What makes us exceptional – what makes us American – is our allegiance to an idea articulated in a declaration made more than two centuries ago:

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” (Obama 2013a.)

Discursive practices in Obama’s addresses function to support the image, constructed by the Obama administration, about the administration’s policies regarding the fight against terrorism. The profile of the fight is lowered as the force of utterances and the deficiencies in coherence function to counter the Bush administration’s portrayal of the fight against terrorism as a separate, distinct war. Thus, the discursive practices are ideologically invested. While the analysis of coherence did not reveal noticeable connections to any religious beliefs or even to the American civil religion, the force of utterances and intertextuality reproduce the myths of the American civil religion, especially the myth of American exceptionalism. However, the influence of the American civil religion and its myths on the fight against terrorism is not as evident in Obama’s addresses as it is in Bush’s addresses, although they effect the motivations that underlie the U.S. actions abroad. In that sense, the myth of American exceptionalism in particular functions like an ideology and affect the Obama administration’s policies, too.

Otherwise, the discursive practices in the State of the Union Addresses are predominantly secular, whereas the inaugural addresses establish a relationship between religious beliefs and politics in a much similar manner than in Bush’s speeches; by portraying the underlying motive behind U.S. actions, such as the promotion of freedom, as originating from the will of a God. Speaking of *a* God is accurate, as Obama maintains the style of the American civil religion of not explicitly stating which God he is referring to, except for the mention of Scripture that indicates Christian faith. In that sense, the discursive practices in Obama’s inaugural addresses indicate a post-secular form of politics as Bush’s addresses since they, too, align seemingly secular matters such as freedom and equality with religious themes.

### 5.3. Analysis of social practice

The third level of the analysis, following Fairclough’s model, examines discourse’s relation to ideology and power as hegemony. As discursive practices are also social practices, hegemony and ideology have already been discussed in the context of discursive practices, but the third level of the analysis takes the discussion further. To be able to examine the social practices within which a discourse belongs, it is necessary to

first properly discuss the presidents' discourses about the fight against terrorism in their entirety. After that, the analysis proceeds to examine whether they have ideological features and if they engage in hegemonic struggle with other orders of discourse.

### 5.3.1. Bush's addresses

Three distinct discourses, each of which have one to four sub-discourses, are identifiable in Bush's discourses. The discourses were formed based on the findings of the two first dimensions of the analysis that are discussed in the previous chapters. The discourses are divided based on how Bush portrays a certain aspect of the War on Terror, and the different discourses and sub-discourses reveal the nature of the relationship between religious beliefs and that particular aspect of politics.

#### 1. *Freedom-discourse*

##### *Sub-discourses*

- i. Striving for peace
- ii. Safety

#### 2. *Value-discourse*

##### *Sub-discourses*

- i. Compassion
- ii. Reluctant fight
- iii. Democratic faith
- iv. Just cause

#### 3. *Responsibility-discourse*

##### *Sub-discourse*

- i. Justice

The *Freedom-discourse* constructs the idea that the U.S. is a freedom's champion that protects the freedoms of U.S. citizens and oppressed people abroad, as Bush talks of the privilege and responsibility to fight for the cause freedom and leading the advance of freedom (see e.g. Bush 2002; 2004; 2006). The U.S. is depicted as the only world leader in the cause of freedom, whose efforts are necessary for the cause of freedom but opposed by terrorists. This serves as a justification for the U.S. actions against terrorism. The discourse includes the belief that (a) God intended all humans to be free and thus, all humans have a natural will to be free (see e.g. Bush 2001; 2004). This belief also functions as a central justification for U.S. actions abroad: it constructs the idea that the U.S. fights

terrorists who oppress people and deny them their freedom, which is why, as a protector of freedom, the U.S. must fight them. Furthermore, the discourse involves a particular faith in freedom and its influence on people: Bush speaks of freedom being the right of every person, which is connected to the belief that freedom is God's gift to humanity (Bush 2003; 2006). The faith in freedom also includes the idea that free people are peaceful in nature, and not drawn to violent ideologies. Freedom portrayed as a force that can bring peace and hope on Earth, which is why achieving worldwide freedom for all people is considered a vital goal.

The faith in freedom is connected to a sub-discourse, *Striving for peace*. In his addresses, Bush constructs the idea that the U.S. acts abroad and is involved in the War on Terror so that peace on Earth may be achieved and tyranny ended everywhere (see e.g. Bush 2003; 2005b). Because freedom is connected to peace in the Freedom-discourse, the aspiration to end tyranny and achieve peace is portrayed as possible through spreading the U.S. concept of freedom around the world. The *Safety*-sub-discourse is connected to the Freedom-discourse in the context of the War on Terror. The sub-discourse constructs the idea that the safety and freedom of the U.S. is dependent on the level of freedom in the Middle East, and that the terrorists must be confronted and the fight taken to them in order to win the War on Terror. Bush establishes this belief by statements that emphasise the need to act abroad to secure the safety of the U.S. citizens at home (see e.g. Bush 2002; 2005a; 2005b). This is used as a justification for U.S. military operations abroad.

The *Value*-discourse is a top headline for a broader discourse that is divided into four sub-discourses. The discourse concerns U.S. values, such as liberty, decency, self-sacrifice, honour and human dignity, which are presented as to originate from the Founding of the U.S., connecting the discourse evidently to the American civil religion. The discourse holds that the U.S. mission against terror is based on and consistent with these values. Bush constructs this idea by emphasising the good that the U.S. does abroad, such as helping oppressed people gain their freedom and build democratic societies, and in general emphasising the U.S. aim to help people in need (see e.g. Bush 2001; 2004; 2007). The *Compassion*-sub-discourse describes the U.S. as a compassionate actor that aims to protect and help nations in need without imposing American culture or the way of government. Bush does this by emphasising the compassionate nature of U.S. troops and their actions abroad (Bush 2003; 2006; 2008). Compassion is portrayed in the sub-discourse as a central value in the American society, and the task of the U.S. as the duty



to spread this compassion to other countries (Bush 2001; 2005b; 2007). Thus, the sub-discourse constructs the idea that the military acts of the U.S. acts in the War on Terror are acts of compassion. The *Reluctant fight* -sub-discourse constructs the notion that terrorists started the War on Terror by attacking the U.S. on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001, and that the U.S. did nothing to initiate the conflict, which Bush emphasises in his addresses (Bush 2003; 2004; 2006). The sub-discourse portrays the U.S. as fighting the terrorists reluctantly in a war that was forced upon them and that the U.S. cannot exit the war without defeating the terrorists.

*The Democratic faith* -sub-discourse of the Value-discourse has some similarities to the Freedom-discourse. The sub-discourse encompasses the idea that spreading democracy to undemocratic areas will result in peace and more hopefulness among people. Bush portrays the spread of democracy as the means to defeat U.S. enemies, because the sub-discourse includes the idea that democracy is a source of hope and peacefulness that will lead to world peace (Bush 2005a; 2005b; 2006). Thus, the sub-discourse associates certain beliefs with democracy, similarly as the Freedom-discourse does with freedom. The Democratic faith -sub-discourse is included as a sub-category of the Value-discourse, rather than as a separate discourse like the Freedom-discourse, because democracy is presented as a central value of the U.S. society. The Freedom-discourse, however, cannot be included in the Value-discourse, even though freedom is a central value in the U.S. too, because the Freedom-discourse itself is broad and has enough aspects included in it to count as an independent discourse. The last sub-discourse of the Value-discourse is the *Just cause* -sub-discourse, which Bush constructs to legitimise U.S. actions in the War on Terror. The sub-discourse presents the military campaign of the U.S. as being based on a “just cause”, and that the waging of the war is justified because its cause and aims are legitimate and in accord with U.S. values. Bush presents the war as an ideological struggle or as a fight between good and evil, in which the U.S. represents the good and right values and protects the world from the evil of the terrorists. (See e.g. Bush 2002; 2005a; 2007.)

The third discourse, the *Responsibility*-discourse, concerns the global role of the U.S. and the motivations behind its military interventions abroad. Bush often mentions in his addresses that the U.S. is *called* to responsibilities in the world, and this affects the image that he constructs about the role of the U.S. as an international actor (see e.g. Bush 2001; 2003; 2004). The discourse constructs the idea that the U.S. chooses to answer a special call that compels it to take up responsibilities in the world and accept the unique

opportunity that is offered to it by staying involved in the matters of other nations. The source of the call is not explicitly concluded, as sometimes it is presented that the call originates from the U.S. history, sometimes from its conscience, and sometimes it is implied that the U.S. follows a higher plan as a chosen nation (Bush 2003; 2005a; 2008). Whatever the origin of the call is, what is central is that the discourse encompasses the idea that the modern-day U.S. is somehow called from the outside to responsibilities and that it chooses to accept them. The global involvement of the U.S. is portrayed as a historic commitment to freedom, democracy, liberating the oppressed and ending tyranny, so the responsibilities also have a historic nature. The calling is also presented as one reason behind the U.S. actions in the War on Terror, as Bush (2006) emphasises the U.S. responsibility to end oppression and tyranny, for example, which ties the discourse to the conflict in question. The *Justice*-sub-discourse is more specifically connected to the War on Terror as it portrays the U.S. as being involved in the war to bring terrorists to justice and punish them for their crimes (Bush 2002; 2004; 2008). This emphasises the image of the U.S. as the referee of the world and brings further legitimation to U.S. military campaigns abroad.

Bush gives the addresses alone and controls the discourses alone, so the addresses do not explicitly portray a struggle for hegemony. Bush does not straightforwardly address contesting views or ideologies often, but for example in his 2004 State of the Union Address discusses them to better argument for his administration's policies. These parts of the texts show that a struggle exists. One struggle concerns the whole nature of the conflict: is the War on Terror a war at all? Bush (2004) justifies his position by arguing that convicting some of the guilty for the attack on the World Trade Center and law enforcement and indictments are not enough, and that the U.S. answers the terrorists' declaration of war with war. Furthermore, in 2007, Bush stated that as long as the "evil" behind the terrorist attacks of 9/11 exists, the U.S. remains at war. This struggle concerns not only the nature of the conflict in itself, but the *Responsibility*-discourse and the sub-discourses of *Safety*, *Reluctant fight* and *Just cause*. The struggle is connected to the *Safety*-sub-discourse with regards to the idea that the U.S. must wage war abroad to secure itself and its citizens. This sub-discourse and one of the justifications for U.S. actions abroad lose their grounds if the nature of the conflict is reduced to something that is less than a war. The cause of the struggle is similar with the other sub-discourses.

The sub-discourses *Reluctant fight* and *Just cause* are largely based on portraying terrorists as the initiators of the war that the U.S. entered reluctantly with a just cause to defend its own safety, which would fulfil the jus ad bellum -criteria for the U.S. actions in the War on Terror. Hence, the discourses must construct the idea of a war to legitimise U.S. military campaigns abroad. The Reluctant fight -sub-discourse is also strongly connected to the American civil religion and the idea of the U.S. as an innocent nation, so the discourse also reproduces the American civil religion. The Just cause -sub-discourse describes the War on Terror as an ideological struggle, which even without clear specification of which ideologies are fighting against each other makes the sub-discourse ideologically invested. Thus, the ideological struggle is between the ideology of freedom and one that opposes it, as Bush presents the nature of the War on Terror in a way that culminates to the questions of safety, liberty and oppression.

Bush (2007) stated that the evil behind the attacks of 9/11 is still on the large in the world, which is why the U.S. is nation at war. This connects the struggle of the nature of the conflict to the Responsibility-discourse. Bush justifies U.S. actions in the War on Terror by indicating that the U.S. does not wage war only to protect the people of the U.S., but also to protect people outside of its borders. The Responsibility-discourse constructs the idea that it is the responsibility of the U.S. to help those in need and to fight against evil, so presenting the terrorists as evil and the nature of the conflict as severe and widespread enough to pass for a war is central for the discourse and the legitimation of U.S. military operations abroad. An ideological struggle that concerns the Responsibility-discourse and the legitimation of the U.S. to wage war abroad is connected to the myth of American exceptionalism. As an ideologically invested order of discourse, the American civil religion influences discursive practices and contributes to the legitimation of the U.S. actions by constructing the idea of the singular role of the U.S. and the responsibilities and exemptions that come with it.

Another struggle for hegemony that is implied in Bush's 2004 State of the Union Address concerns the war in Iraq. Bush (2004) states that: "Some in this chamber and in our country did not support the liberation of Iraq. [...] For all who love freedom and peace, the world without Saddam Hussein's regime is a better and safer place." This struggle is connected to the Freedom-discourse. By choosing to use the word *liberation*, Bush constructs a favourable idea about the nature of the U.S. mission in Iraq and about the motifs behind the invasion, corresponding to the idea of the U.S. as a protector of

freedom. He also equates Hussein's regime with evil and justifies the attack in Iraq by the love of freedom and peace that the U.S. holds. Another criticism connected to the Freedom-discourse that Bush mentions is whether democracy is a realistic goal for the Middle East (Bush 2004). Bush (ibid.) answers this doubt by stating that: "I believe that God has planted in every human heart the desire to live in freedom. And even when that desire is crushed by tyranny for decades, it will rise again." Bush uses religious justifications for what he presents as his administration's goals for the Middle East so that U.S. actions in the Middle East seem more justified. Bush (ibid.) states that the U.S. pursues a "strategy of freedom" in the Middle East as long as it "remains a place of tyranny and despair and anger", which relates to the faith in the special, peaceful qualities and consequences of freedom within the Freedom-discourse. The statement is also ideologically invested by the myth of American exceptionalism that allows the U.S. to interfere in other countries' matters because of its singular role.

These hegemonic struggles are significant as they concern the vital justifications that the Bush administration provides for U.S. actions in the War on Terror. It is important to Bush and his administration to hegemonise the discourses he constructs in his speeches in order to legitimise his administration's military campaigns. The Bush administration constructs a whole narrative about the conflict as a distinct war, so that it justifies U.S. actions abroad.

The relationship between politics and religious beliefs exists in the discourses of Bush's addresses. The Freedom-discourse and why the U.S. strives to act as a defender of freedom are based on the idea, constructed by Bush in his addresses, that God has intended all people to live in freedom and hence all people crave for it. Although the will to act as a defender of freedom could as well be based on secular views, in this discourse it, and thus U.S. actions for freedom, are based on religious beliefs and a relationship between religious beliefs and politics is established. Striving for peace -sub-discourse as such may seem secular, since it merely addresses the aim of the U.S. to achieve world peace. However, it too is based on the idea of God-given freedom and its peaceful qualities, which makes the background of that sub-discourse religious in nature also. The Safety-sub-discourse is as such secular as it does not have clear connections to religious beliefs.

The Value-discourse implicates a connection to both religious beliefs and the American civil religion. Bush's addresses seek to convince the audience that the values that originate from the Founding of the U.S. guide U.S. missions abroad. Thus, the effectiveness of the values is increased by appealing to the Founders and history. However, the religious beliefs are especially visible in the Compassion- and Just cause -sub-discourses. Bush (2006) states that the reason the U.S. shows compassion abroad is that they believe in the God-given dignity of people, and yet again uses a religious belief to explain and justify U.S. actions abroad. The Just cause -sub-discourse is connected to religious beliefs by the idea that the U.S. actions are guided by a higher plan and that the aims of the U.S. and Providence are correspondent (Bush 2003; 2005b). Aligning a higher plan with U.S. actions is used to convince the audience of the justness and righteousness of the U.S. cause and justify them. The Democratic faith -sub-discourse is not connected to any recognisable religious belief, other than the American civil religion and the value of democracy that is derived from it. In that sense, the sub-discourse may be deemed secular as it is not straightforwardly connected to any particular religious ideas but to a value that is central in the American civil religion. Although not all parts of the Value-discourse and its sub-discourses are connected to religious beliefs, the relationship between religion and politics clearly exists in the assumptions that underlie the discourse.

The underlying idea of the Responsibility-discourse is connected to the myth of American exceptionalism and thus to the American civil religion. The U.S. is presented as nation with a special role and privileges compared to other countries, which justifies its actions abroad. Also, constructing the idea of the U.S. responsibility to interfere in other countries' affairs constructs justification for U.S. actions abroad. Furthermore, the discourse seeks to naturalise the responsibilities of the U.S. by justifying them with U.S. history, constructing the idea about the historic work of the U.S. to promote freedom and the end of tyranny.

The connections to religious beliefs in the Responsibility-discourse are not as obvious as in the Freedom- and Value-discourses. Although Bush speaks of how the U.S. is called to act, which may be interpreted as a call from a higher power, the origin of the call remains unverified in the addresses. It is left open for interpretation: religiously inclined people may interpret it religiously, whereas secular people may be more likely to interpret that the call originates from U.S. values or from the international status of the U.S. as a world leader, for example. The Justice-sub-discourse as such is a secular discourse and

as it does not have any explicit connections to religious beliefs or to the American civil religion, it may as well be based on them or any secular thought and values.

To conclude, the discourses in Bush's addresses are constructed so that religious beliefs justify and legitimise politics. It is important for the Bush administration to hegemonise the discourses in Bush's addresses because they play a central role in the legitimation of their actions in the War on Terror, which is why the struggles for hegemony are centred around the legitimising features of the discourses. Religious beliefs underlie most visibly the Freedom-discourse and the Value-discourse, alongside their sub-discourses. It is more appropriate to refer to the religious connections as connections to religious beliefs than to any particular religion, since no particular religion or God can be identified from the speeches or discourses, correspondingly with the American civil religion.

How Bush presents the religious elements follows the pattern that Bellah noted in the speeches of John F. Kennedy: The God or religion are not identified so that people of all faiths and even non-religious people can relate to the president's words. The American civil religion influences the addresses like an ideology in the sense that it constructs reality and influences social relations, identities and values in a way that is not explicitly connected to any religion. However, since it may be argued that the American civil religion is largely based on Christianity, its religious influence cannot be ignored. The parts of the discourses that reproduce the American civil religion, such as the exceptional role of the U.S. and its origin, can be interpreted either religiously or secularly depending on the interpreter, as religious people may interpret that the American exceptionalism originates from the will of God, while secular people might say it originates from the political might of the U.S., for example. However, religious interpretations are supported by additional religious references. This does not indicate either a purely religious or a purely secular way of relating to the relationship between religious beliefs and politics, and thus indicates that the influence of the American civil religion on the U.S. policies regarding the fight against terrorism is post-secular in nature.

This interpretation is enabled by adopting a post-secular lens through which religions are reflect on, which due to its flexibility acknowledges more versatile religious phenomena than the lens of secularism in its more classical sense. After all, the American civil religion is a certain "charged" set of beliefs that influences American identity, which is why it is possible to consider it as a religion from a post-secular perspective. The

American civil religion leaves to the individual the option to interpret politics religiously, but religious interpretation is not made inevitable, which accommodates the plurality of ways to interpret reality. Furthermore, as the American civil religion connect religious beliefs to politics, it demonstrates a fault in the expectations of the secularisation theory, which provides a reason to call a phenomenon post-secular (Knott 2010, 23).

In short, both religious beliefs and the American civil religion underlie the discourses Bush constructs in his addresses. The relationship between religion and politics does not dominate the reasons and motives behind U.S. actions in the War on Terror but affect them significantly as religiously invested presuppositions and views. The discourses also reproduce myths and themes of the American civil religion, such as American exceptionalism, innocent nation, and the self-sacrifice of the Americans, and also continue the pattern of not specifying any religious belief. Furthermore, the American civil religion is used to embed the U.S. actions in the continuum of history to naturalise the actions and hegemonise the discourses.

### 5.3.2. Obama's addresses

Whereas Bush constructs clear discourses about the War on Terror in his addresses, Obama integrates the issue of the fight against terrorism into a larger security-discourse, thus dispersing the discourses that concern solely terrorism. Obama also expresses this idea visibly in his 2016 State of the Union Address:

The point is American leadership in the 21st century is not a choice between ignoring the rest of the world – except when we kill terrorists – or occupying and rebuilding whatever society is unraveling. Leadership means a wise application of military power, and rallying the world behind causes that are right. It means seeing our foreign assistance as a part of our national security, not something separate, not charity. (Obama 2016.)

The issue of the fight against terrorism is integrated within the main security-discourse that comprises all security threats against the U.S. and its sub-discourses that concern American values and the U.S. responsibility to remain active abroad. Thus, Obama connected the fight against terrorism to similar themes as Bush, even though the content of the sub-discourses varies. The entirety of the security-discourse or its sub-discourses are not discussed in this study as only their connections to the fight against terrorism concern the research problem.

The fight against terrorism is connected to the large security-discourse by depicting terrorists and terrorist networks, such as al-Qaeda and ISIL, as threats to U.S. national security and to U.S. citizens. The security-discourse also includes the idea that military action as the premise of the U.S. foreign policy should be replaced with more peaceful ways of influencing international affairs, such as diplomacy. This idea is also connected to the Obama administration's views about how the fight against terrorism should be conducted. The following quote expresses the role of the fight against terrorism within Obama's security-discourse well:

[T]o meet this threat, we don't need to send tens of thousands of our sons and daughters abroad or occupy other nations. [...] And where necessary, through a range of capabilities, we will continue to take direct action against those terrorists who pose the gravest threat to Americans. (Obama 2013b.)

The American values -sub-discourse of the safety-discourse further elaborates the Obama administration's views on how the U.S. security should be protected. Obama requires that American values and Constitutional ideals be enlisted in U.S. actions regarding security in general and the fight against terrorism, and claims that as the values and ideals guide the U.S., they also guide the rest of the world (see e.g. Obama 2009; 2013b; 2014). Constructing the idea that U.S. missions abroad are compatible with their values supports the Obama administration's new, lower-profile approach to the fight against terrorism, as it justifies the efforts to diminish U.S. military campaigns and remove the cruel treatment of the suspected terrorists and their allies. The values that Obama favours are elaborated in his praising words about the U.S. troops and civilians that protect the U.S., as he commends them on their courage, heroicism, spirit of service and self-sacrifice (see e.g. Obama 2009; 2012; 2013b).

The sub-discourse concerning the international responsibilities of the U.S., here referred to as the American responsibility -sub-discourse for clarity, addresses the U.S. responsibility to create a peaceful and safe world. In his second inaugural address, Obama stated:

America will remain the anchor of strong alliances in every corner of the globe. And we will renew those institutions that extend our capacity to manage crisis abroad, for no one has a greater stake in a peaceful world than its most powerful nation. (Obama 2013.)

The responsibilities of the U.S. are connected to the idea of U.S. leadership and how it is conducted. Obama emphasises a smart kind of leadership and one that does not make the



U.S. the “policeman” of the world, but nonetheless stresses the need of the U.S. to remain engaged in helping the world into a new, peaceful era (2009; 2015; 2016). While the special calling of the U.S. to act is prominent in Bush’s speeches, Obama rarely mentions it. However, he mentions the call of history and in his first inaugural address even the call of God, which constructs the idea that the responsibility of the U.S. to act is not only derived from their interests (Obama 2009; 2010; 2013a). The special calling is not otherwise emphasised.

The effect of religious beliefs is most evident in the American values -sub-discourse, mostly established by the inaugural addresses. In his first inaugural address, Obama (2009) speaks of carrying forward the “God-given promise that all are equal, all are free, and all deserve a chance to pursue their full measure of happiness”, which implies the aim and way of conduct of the U.S. policies both at home and abroad. Thus, Obama presents U.S. values as being largely based on religious beliefs, but also connects them to the American civil religion, as he appeals on their constitutionality and historicity, and emphasises the importance to hold on to the ideals that the Founding Fathers drafted (Obama 2009; 2014). The myth of American exceptionalism is visible in the construction of the idea that American values are superior and that they should serve as an example to the rest of the world. American exceptionalism is also manifest in the American responsibility -sub-discourse, as it emphasises the special role of the U.S. as the world leader. Furthermore, the sub-discourse indicates a weak relationship between religious beliefs and politics as Obama (2009) mentions God’s call upon the U.S. to “shape an “uncertain destiny” in his first inaugural address, but the meaning of this should not be over-emphasised since the style of the inaugural addresses is more religiously charged than the style of the State of the Union Addresses.

Otherwise, the larger security-discourse and its sub-discourses, in which the matter of the fight against terrorism is embedded, indicate secularism in relation to the fight. As befits the style of U.S. presidential addresses, God is recurrently mentioned in Obama’s addresses, but the influence of religious beliefs is not visible in the views constructed about the fight against terrorism, except in the inaugural addresses. Thus, the relationship between religious beliefs and politics regarding the fight is much smaller in Obama’s discourses than in Bush’s discourses. However, the American civil religion, and the myth of American exceptionalism in particular, retain their significance, and function like an ideology as they shape the U.S. identity and construct reality.

Ideological struggles in Obama's addresses are more easily discovered than in Bush's addresses, as Obama clearly contests the previous administration's views about the fight against terrorism. A visible ideological struggle concerns the conduct of the fight, as Obama advocates for the application of the American values in it. The advocacy is criticism towards the previous administration's actions. Obama seeks to reinforce his message and hegemonise it by appealing to the U.S. nation with using the pronoun *we*, as he did in 2009 by stating that: "[W]e reject a false the choice between our safety and our ideals", and by appealing to the historicity and Constitutionality of the values, and ultimately to the American civil religion (Obama 2009). Another ideological struggle connected to employing U.S. values to the fight is Obama's advocacy for diminishing the military presence of the U.S. abroad, as he emphasises more peaceful ways, such as diplomacy (Obama 2014). Obama also engages in the struggle about the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and argues that is necessary to end them, contrary to the views of the previous administration that started them. Obama does not contest the international role of the U.S. as he emphasises the importance of U.S. leadership and involvement in the world. However, the way in which the role should be conducted is disputed.

As Obama does not construct consistent discourses about the fight against terrorism but embeds the issue in other, larger discourses, he is opposing the Bush administration's narrative of the conflict as a distinct war. The addresses also lower the profile of the entire conflict, which is corresponding with the Obama administration's foreign policy agenda. In that sense, the hegemonic battle is between the Bush era narrative of the "War on Terror" and the Obama administration's lower profile portrayal of the conflict. Obama (2016) expresses this, for example, by the notion that: "[A]s we focus on destroying ISIL, over-the-top claims that this is World War III just play into their hands." Although the profile of the fight against terrorism is lowered and embedded in the larger security-discourse and its sub-discourses, Obama continues to speak of fighting terrorist networks. Thus, even though the topic is not as dominant in his administration's foreign policy agenda as it was during the George W. Bush era, it is not ignored.

## 6. DISCUSSION

The analysis, conducted on eight speeches from George W. Bush and nine speeches from Barack Obama, followed Norman Fairclough's three-dimensional model of critical discourse analysis. The model of analysis is based on Fairclough's three-dimensional concept of discourse. The three dimensions of the analysis are textual analysis, analysis of discursive practices, and analysis of social practices. All three dimensions were included in the analysis of the research material. The analysis sought to answer the questions: *What is the nature of the relationship between religious belief and politics in the discourses about the fight against terrorism? Are the discourses different from one another? And additionally: How do the discourses reproduce the American civil religion?*

The textual analysis was conducted using Janks's (2005) linguistic analysis rubric. In terms of textual characteristics such as voice, mood and tense, Bush's and Obama's addresses were highly similar, as they imply certainty about the administrations' policies and assure the audience of their effectiveness. However, Bush's addresses use more versatile techniques to construct discourses than Obama's addresses, and also discuss the fight against terrorism more extensively. Whereas Obama uses pronouns *us* and *them* to distinguish the U.S. from its allies and enemies as well, Bush uses them more strongly to recreate the myth of American exceptionalism by emphasising U.S. leadership over its allies. Bush also emphasises U.S. values and their superiority by means such as using definite article *the* to create an idea of the compassionate nature of U.S. military troops and their missions abroad.

The lexical features of both presidents' addresses proved central to the analysis, as they reveal much of how the presidents want their policies depicted and how the discourses are constructed. Obama's efforts to lower the profile of the fight against terrorism is implied already in lexicalisation as the addresses display over- and relexicalization of the fight against terrorism. Thus, Obama's addresses do not retain a consistent way of referring to the conflict or constructing a coherent idea of it, as Bush's addresses did by calling it the War on Terror. Although religious vocabulary is not dominant in either presidents' addresses, Bush's addresses reveal a strong relationship between religious beliefs and politics, as Bush often portrays God's will or plan as justification for and motivation behind U.S. actions in the fight against terrorism. Bush presents traits such as freedom and human dignity as God-given, which justifies U.S. actions that Bush claims

aim to protect them. Bush also implies that the U.S. is following a higher plan, which further legitimises U.S. actions. It also reproduces the myth of American exceptionalism which includes the idea of a manifest destiny by God (Marsden 2011, 326).

Whereas all Bush's addresses retain similar overall and lexical styles, Obama's inaugural addresses differ noticeably from his State of the Union Addresses. Obama's inaugural addresses establish explicit relationship between religious beliefs and policy concerning the fight against terrorism, as they also portray traits such as freedom and equality as God-given, whilst this relationship is not manifest in the State of the Union Addresses. The inaugural addresses also strongly demonstrate the influence of the American civil religion, as Obama often uses the symbols of the American civil religion, such as the Constitution and the Founding Fathers, to support his arguments. Obama's State of the Union Addresses also reproduce the myths of the American civil religion, especially the myth of American exceptionalism, as they emphasise the role of the U.S. in shaping a peaceful world and leading it by their superior values.

The analysis of discursive practices follows Fairclough's model and examines the force of utterances (i.e. speech acts), coherence, and intertextuality. Discursive practices in both presidents' addresses reproduce the American civil religion, especially the myth of American exceptionalism. While the discursive practices in all of Bush's addresses indicate grounds to interpret Bush's policies as post-secular as they align seemingly secular traits such as freedom and human equality with religious themes, only Obama's inaugural addresses portray the same phenomenon. The most prominent speech acts in Bush's and Obama's addresses are assertions, convincing and commands, whether indirect or direct, and seek to portray their administrations' policies favourably and influence the Congress to act according to them. Whereas the speech acts in Obama's addresses establish a relationship between religious beliefs and politics only in his inaugural addresses, Bush establishes this also in his State of the Union Addresses, for example by assertions that align U.S. policies with a higher plan. This also reproduces the myth of American exceptionalism.

The defects of coherence in Bush's addresses function to create meanings that are favourable to his policies, for example by constructing the idea that is the duty of the U.S. to intervene abroad. They also connect religious themes to seemingly secular matters, like freedom or the will to overthrow tyranny, and thus show ideological investment as they

uphold the presence of religious beliefs in politics. Although Obama's addresses also have defects in coherence, they do not construct meaning in a similar way than in Bush's addresses, but rather function to lower the profile of the fight against terrorism and integrate the subject in a larger security-discourse. Thus, the aspect of coherence, or the lack of it, does not connect religious beliefs to politics as in Bush's addresses, but does, however, indicate ideological investment as it seeks to restructure the Bush administration's narrative of the fight against terrorism as a distinct war.

The differing style and nature of Obama's inaugural addresses is also visible in their intertextual traits, as they make religious references to God, for example, in the context of the fight against terrorism, while the State of the Union Addresses do not. However, both forms of addresses make references to themes of the American civil religion, as Obama appeals to U.S. history and the Founding Fathers to reinforce his message. Bush also appeals to God and previous presidents to support his message in his addresses, and both manifest and constitutive intertextuality indicate a relationship between politics and religious beliefs.

To analyse social practices, i.e. the relation of discourses to ideology and hegemony, the discourses that the presidents construct in their addresses were examined. Whereas Bush constructs three distinct discourses with a total of seven sub-discourses, Obama embeds the subject of fight against terrorism into a larger safety-discourse without constructing separate discourses of the matter. The three main discourses that Bush constructs are the *Freedom*-discourse, *Value*-discourse and *Responsibility*-discourse. The Freedom-discourse establishes a clear relationship between religious beliefs and politics as it portrays the U.S. a protector of God's gift to humanity, freedom. The discourse also includes distinct beliefs about the peaceful features and effects of freedom that justify U.S. actions abroad. The Freedom-discourse has two sub-discourses, *Striving for peace* and *Safety*. The Striving for peace -sub-discourse constructs the idea that the U.S. is seeking to establish worldwide peace by its actions of promoting freedom, which is connected to the belief about the peaceful influence and characteristics of freedom and free people. The Safety-sub-discourse contains the idea that the security of the U.S. is dependent on the level and quality of freedom in the Middle East, which also functions as justification for U.S. actions abroad.

The *Value*-discourse has connections to both American civil religion and religious beliefs. It depicts U.S. values, such as liberty and human dignity, as originating from the Founding of the U.S. and also as God's gifts to humanity. Thus, it appeals to religious themes and themes of the American civil religion to legitimise these values. The discourse also includes the idea that the U.S. military operations in the War on Terror are based on these values. The *Compassion*-sub-discourse depicts the U.S. as a compassionate actor and U.S. actions in the War on Terror as acts of compassion, while the *Reluctant fight* -sub-discourse constructs the idea that war was forced upon the U.S. by the terrorist who started it. The *Democratic faith* -sub-discourse comprises the idea that spreading democracy around the world will generate peace. The *Just cause* -sub-discourse legitimises U.S. actions as it portrays them as just and guided by a higher power, which connects it to religious beliefs. The sub-discourses function to construct legitimacy and justifications for U.S. actions in the fight against terrorism.

Bush's last discourse about the War on Terror, the *Responsibility*-discourse, reproduces the myth of American exceptionalism. It constructs the idea that the U.S. is called to responsibilities and leadership in the world, and that it is historically committed to freedom, democracy and the liberation of the oppressed. The *Justice*-sub-discourse further legitimises U.S. actions as it conveys the idea that the U.S. engages in the war to bring terrorists to justice. Thus, the discourses in Bush's discourses not only function as legitimisation and justification for U.S. actions in the War on Terror, but also reproduce the American civil religion and demonstrate a relationship between religious beliefs and politics.

The main hegemonic struggle that the discourses engage in concerns the nature of the fight against terrorism. In order to legitimise U.S. actions abroad in the fight against terrorism, it is important for the Bush administration to portray the conflict as a distinct war. Constructing discourses that support the Bush administration's narrative of the conflict as a war supports the administration's policies, as waging war is portrayed necessary to protect the U.S. and its citizens. Bush also constructs the idea of an ideological struggle between those in favour of freedom, portrayed as an ideology, and those who are against it.

Obama counters Bush's high-profile status of the fight against terrorism by not constructing separate discourses about the fight and by integrating the matter in a larger

security-discourse and its sub-discourses. Thus, the hegemonic struggle is between the narrative and discourses of the Bush administration and the new way in which the Obama administration seeks to construct the issue of the fight against terrorism. The fight against terrorism is connected to the large security-discourse by portraying terrorists and terrorist networks as threats to the national security of the U.S. Obama's addresses constructs the idea that in order to better secure the safety of the U.S., U.S. military presence in foreign nations should be diminished. Thus, the addresses further counter the Bush administration's discourse that war must be waged to protect the U.S. The fight against terrorism is connected to the American value -sub-discourse because of Obama's emphasis on enlisting U.S. values and Constitutional ideals to the fight, which criticises the Bush administration's actions. While the American responsibility -sub-discourse does not contest the Bush administration's view of the U.S. as a world leader, it modifies the concept of the leadership as Obama emphasises more cooperative and peaceful ways of leading. This is reflected on the idea that the U.S. should conduct the fight against terrorism in ways that do not rely only on military interventions.

Thereby, similar themes, mainly about American values and international responsibilities, exist within discourses connected to the fight against terrorism in both presidents' addresses. However, these themes are interpreted differently, as Bush and Obama both emphasise the importance of U.S. values and leadership but disagree on their nature and application. The discourses of both presidents remain similar through their presidencies and Bush's discourses have some continuity to Obama's presidency in terms of the mentioned similar themes, but mostly the discourses of the two presidents differ widely from one another. Both presidents' discourses retain the American civil religion style of not explicitly clarifying the God or religion that their references concern, so that people of many faiths can identify with them. This is one way that the discourses reproduce the American civil religion, other being the reproduction of the different myths of it, especially the myth of American exceptionalism which is expressed in the emphasis on the superiority of U.S. values, its manifest destiny and special role as a world leader. Both Bush and Obama also mention God-given rights, such as freedom and human dignity, which is one more thing that the addresses have in common. Ultimately, however, the content of the discourses differ greatly from each other as Obama does not construct distinct discourses about the fight against terrorism, and even similar themes about U.S. values and responsibilities are interpreted differently. Furthermore, the whole narrative

of the conflict with terrorism is portrayed differently, as Bush portrays it as a war and Obama as a serious security-issue among others.

The analysis demonstrated that neither president completely separates politics from religious beliefs in the discourses concerning the fight against terrorism, although in Obama's State of the Union Addresses the relationship is hardly visible, unlike in his inaugural addresses. It is possible to examine U.S. policies regarding the fight against terrorism through Bhargava's (2013) idea about the first-level disconnection between state and religion. The second- and third-level disconnections, level of institutions and level of law and public policy respectively, do not concern policies about the fight against terrorism but rather the society and politics on a broader level, which is why only the first-level disconnection is applicable to the topic of this study. The first-level disconnection, the level of ends, concerns the separation between the objectives or religions and state. The disconnection is established if the state has independent objectives and does not serve any religion's end. (Bhargava 2013, 21–24.) This disconnection is not established in Bush's and Obama's discourses as they align their policies with a higher power and by portraying their policies as aiming to secure people their God-given rights (see e.g. Bush 2003; Bush 2004; Bush 2005b; Obama 2009; Obama 2013a). Due to the maintained connection between the ends that are connected to religious beliefs and the ends of the policies in both Obama's and Bush's discourses, the policies cannot be described secular.

The discourses also reproduce the American civil religion, especially the myth of American exceptionalism. The American civil religion functions like an ideology in the sense that it influences the formation of U.S. ideology and concept of reality, as it appeals to the U.S. history and myths about the nature and role of the U.S. to construct a certain image of the nation. However, the American civil religion cannot be entirely separated from religious beliefs as it sustains the role of religious beliefs in U.S. politics with its religious base and style of maintaining the presence of religious vocabulary in U.S. politics.

The conclusion of this study is that the discourses constructed in Bush's and Obama's addresses portray a post-secular relationship between religious beliefs and politics in the context of the fight against terrorism. The relationship is established in different levels of discourse as secular matters are connected to religious beliefs without the religious beliefs being dominant in the motives behind the actions. Religious beliefs and the American



civil religion underlie the motivations and justifications of U.S. actions, and although the influence of religious beliefs is stronger in Bush's policies than in Obama's, Bush's policies are not justified with only religious arguments, either. However, the influence still underlies the policies and the relationship between religious beliefs and politics exists, which is why neither presidents' politics regarding the fight against terrorism can be described secular.

The characterisation of Bush's and Obama's politics as post-secular does not, in this case, make any conclusions about the religiosity or secularity of U.S. politics in general or the U.S. society before the George W. Bush era. It refers to the alignment of religious beliefs with politics in a way that does not indicate either pure religiousness or secularism, but a new form of relationship between religious beliefs and politics that cannot be described with either of the two terms. The argument about the post-secular nature of the relationship between religious beliefs and politics in the context of the fight against terrorism is justified since contrary to Habermas's argument, it may be argued that the concept of the post-secular is applicable to the U.S. This is due to the formal separation of church and state in the U.S., the public awareness of the separation, and the typically autonomous way of choosing the form of worship, despite the influence of religion in U.S. culture and politics. (Dillon 2012, 257–258.)

The American civil religion is central to the discussion as it greatly influences both presidents' discourses. One possible meaning of the post-secular is the transformation of religions, a shift from their traditional versions to ones that embody the changing relationship between state and religious beliefs (Knott 2010, 34), which the American civil religion reflects. Since the American civil religion is not a contemporary phenomenon, it cannot be argued that it was born as a post-secular religion, but by adopting a post-secular way of considering religions allows it to be examined as such. Although Habermas does not consider the concept of post-secular applicable in the U.S., he spoke of the post-secular as a change of consciousness in the sense that people seek a new way of reacting to the continued existence and influence of religion in an increasingly secular environment. The American civil religion reflects this changed consciousness in Bush's and Obama's discourses as it is not a religion in the traditional sense of the word, but nonetheless conveys religious views and maintains religious influence in U.S. politics. It bridges a gap between different faiths and allows religious grounds to exist in politics in a way that allows people of different faiths to relate to the political message.

Consequently, even though Obama's State of the Union Addresses have little connections to any traditional religious faith, their strong connections to the American civil religion enable the politics they represent in the context of fight against terrorism to be called post-secular as well as Bush's politics.

Thus, the relationship portrayed in Bush's and Obama's addresses reflects an attitude towards the public role of religious beliefs that encompasses the diversity of different faiths in the society and to a certain extent maintains the religious interpretation of politics. Since religious arguments are not the only arguments used to justify politics, people with or without religious faith can relate to the political message despite the maintained influence of religious beliefs. Religious beliefs are not completely privatised to the private sphere as the secularisation theory expects, but still influence politics in the public sphere. However, the borders of the spheres are blurred as the final interpretation of the religious beliefs is largely left to the individual because of the ambiguous style of the American civil religion. In conclusion, the reproduction of the American civil religion in addition to the more obvious religious references are central in upholding the relationship between religious beliefs and politics in Bush's and Obama's discourses that concern the fight against terrorism.

## 7. CONCLUSION

This study contributes to the discussion about the relationship between religion and U.S. foreign policy by analysing discourses about the fight against terrorism in former U.S. presidents', George W. Bush's and Barack Obama's, addresses. Although the religious dimension of U.S. foreign policy has gained more interest in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it is still under studied especially from the viewpoint of secularism and the post-secular (Hackworth 2010, 357). Thus, a research gap for the subject of this study exists. Instead of focusing on the influence of any traditional religion or religious group, this study examines how religious beliefs and the American civil religion affect the U.S. presidents' discourses about the fight against terrorism. The Faircloughian three-dimensional critical discourse analysis answered the following research questions: *What is the nature of the relationship between religious beliefs and politics in the discourses about the fight against terrorism? Are the discourses different from one another? How do the discourses reproduce the American civil religion?*

The existence of the religious dimension in Bush's and Obama's discourses was expected as it was acknowledged in previous research. However, applying the three-part theoretical framework of secularism, the concept of post-secular, and the American civil religion enabled to analyse the research subject from a versatile approach and examine it from a previously rarely used perspective. Not only did the analysis discover the post-secular nature of the relationship between religious beliefs and politics in the context of the fight against terrorism, it also proved that the American civil religion is still, at least until recently, viable and influences U.S. politics. Furthermore, it is central in maintaining the relationship between religious beliefs and politics, as myths such as American exceptionalism uphold the idea of divine investment in the U.S. and its destiny.

Although the difference of religious involvement between Bush's and Obama's addresses could also be predicted, the scope of the differences in terms of the forming of discourses and their content were not expected, as Obama does not construct separate discourses about the fight against terrorism as Bush does. Thus, there is also little continuity between the presidents' discourses. However, this is corresponding to the Obama administration's foreign policy agenda to lower the profile of the fight against terrorism. The special role of inaugural addresses as rituals of the American civil religion was not particularly visible in Bush's inaugural address but highly visible in Obama's inaugural addresses that

differed in style from his State of the Union Addresses. Obama's inaugural addresses are the main source of the establishment of the relationship between religious beliefs and politics in his discourses, which is why the relationship is much weaker in his discourses than in Bush's discourses and should not be overstated. However, the relationship should not be discarded either as religious beliefs underlie the motives of U.S. actions and are used to justify them.

Since the scope of this study is limited, it does not provide a complete answer about the influence of religious beliefs in all of U.S. politics, which should be further examined. More extensive research needs to be conducted on the relationship between religious beliefs and U.S. politics to be able to draw larger conclusions, as this study only concerns two presidents' discourses about the fight against terrorism in a selection of their addresses. The differences between the Republican and Democratic parties should be considered also to avoid over-simplifying U.S. politics. In a supposedly secular West, the absence of religious influence should not be taken for granted as otherwise an important factor of politics will remain ignored. Knowledge of the American civil religion and its nature should be extended with more contemporary research, and it should not be excluded from the analysis of U.S. politics as its influence is evident. This requires an in-depth review of the U.S. history and its former presidents to discover how the American civil religion has taken shape and perhaps transformed over time. More contemporary discussion and examination of the American civil religion is required to fully understand its influence in the present day United States. This discussion should also be extended to other seemingly secular states, so that religious involvement in politics would not be ignored and secularism would not be taken for granted.

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## Appendix A

### Janks (2005) Linguistic Analysis Rubric

Linguistic feature	Explanation
<b>Lexicalisation</b> <b>Overlexicalisation</b> <b>Relexicalisation</b> <b>Lexical cohesion</b>  <b>Metaphor</b>  <b>Euphemism</b>	<p>The selection/choice of wordings. Different words construct the same idea differently.</p> <p>Many words for the same phenomenon. Renaming</p> <p>Created by synonymy, antonymy, repetition, collocation.</p> <p>Used for yoking ideas together and for the discursive construction of new ideas. Hides negative actions or implications.</p>
<b>Transitivity</b>	<p>Processes in verbs: are they verbs of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• doing: material process</li> <li>• being or having: relational processes</li> <li>• thinking/feeling/perceiving: mental</li> <li>• saying: verbal processes</li> <li>• physiological: behavioural processes</li> <li>• existential</li> </ul>
<b>Voice</b>	<p>Active and passive voice constructs participants as doers or as done-to's. Passive voice allows for the deletion of the agent.</p>
<b>Nominalisation</b>	<p>A process is turned into a thing or an event without participants or tense or modality. Central mechanism for reification.</p>
<b>Quoted speech</b> <b>Direct speech (DS)</b> <b>Indirect speech (IS)</b> <b>Free indirect speech (FIS).</b> <b>This is a mixture of direct and indirect speech features.</b> <b>Scare quotes or “so-called”</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who is quoted in DS/IS/FIS?</li> <li>• Who is quoted first/last/most?</li> <li>• Who is not quoted?</li> <li>• Has someone been misquoted or quoted out of context?</li> <li>• What reporting verb was chosen?</li> <li>• What is the effect of scare quotes?</li> </ul>

<b>Turn-taking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who gets the floor? How many turns do different participants get?</li> <li>• Who is silent/ silenced?</li> <li>• Who interrupts?</li> <li>• Who gets heard? Whose points are followed through?</li> <li>• Whose rules for turn taking are being used given that they are different in different cultures?</li> <li>• Who controls the topic?</li> </ul>
<b>Mood</b>	Is the clause a statement, question, offer or command?
<b>Polarity and tense</b>	<p>Positive polarity (definitely yes)          Negative polarity (definitely no)          Polarity is tied to the use of tense.          Tense sets up the definiteness of events occurring in time. The present tense is used for timeless truths and absolute certainty.</p>
<b>Modality</b> <b>Degrees of uncertainty</b>	<p>Logical possibility/probability          Social authority          Modality created by modals (may, might, could will), adverbs (possibly, certainly, hopefully) intonation, tag questions.</p>
<b>Pronouns</b>	<p>Inclusive we/exclusive we/you          Us and them: othering pronouns          Sexist/non sexist pronouns: generic “he”          The choice of first/ second/ third person.</p>
<b>Definite article (“the”)</b> <b>Indefinite article (“a”)</b>	<i>The</i> is used for shared information – to refer to something mentioned before or that the addressee can be assumed to know about. Reveals textual presuppositions.
<b>Thematisation – syntax: the first bit of the clause is called the theme</b>	<p>The theme is the launch pad for the clause.          Look for patterns of what is foregrounded in the clause by being in theme position.</p>
<b>Rheme – syntax: the last bit of the clause is called the rheme.</b>	<p>In written English the new information is usually at the end of the clause.          In spoken English it is indicated by tone.</p>

<p><b>Sequencing of information.</b></p> <p><b>Logical connectors – conjunctions set up the logic of the argument.</b></p>	<p>Sequence sets up cause and effect.</p> <p>Conjunctions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Additive: and, in addition</li><li>• Causal: because, so, therefore</li><li>• Adversative: although, yet</li><li>• Temporal: when, while, after, before</li></ul>
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Adopted from Janks (2005).



## Appendix B

Abbreviated table of the lexical analysis of Bush's addresses

2002	2003	2004	2005a	2005b	2006	2007	2008
“fight freedom’s fight”	“the liberty we prize is [...] is God's gift to humanity”	“enemies of freedom” “lead the cause of freedom”	“great liberating tradition of this Nation”	“Our generation's commitment to the advance of freedom”	“act boldly in freedom’s cause” “lead freedom’s advance”	“they want to force our [...] abandon the cause of liberty”	“The advance of liberty is opposed by [...] evil men”
“liberty and justice [...] are right and true and unchanging for all people”	“freedom is the right of every person and the future of every nation”		“the force of human freedom” “untamed fire of freedom”	“freedom’s power to change the world” “spread the peace that freedom brings”	“liberty is the right and hope of all humanity”	“free people are not drawn to violent and malignant ideologies”	“people, when given the chance, will choose a future of freedom and peace”  “confidence in freedom’s power”
“no people on Earth yearn to be oppressed or aspire to servitude”		“God has planted in every human heart the desire to live in freedom”	“the call of freedom comes to every mind and soul”				“liberty that resides in the hearts of all men and women”
	“we do not claim to know all the ways of providence, yet we can trust in them, placing our confidence in the loving God”	“trust in that greater power who guides” “His purposes are just and true”		“The road of Providence is uneven and unpredictable—yet we know where it leads: It leads to freedom.”			
“seek a just and peaceful world beyond the war on terror”	“into the world to help the afflicted and defend the peace”	“aim is democratic peace”	“the best hope for peace in our world is the expansion of freedom”	“goal of ending tyranny” “To promote peace and stability [...] fight [...] terror”		“the only alternative to American leadership is a dramatically more dangerous	

						and anxious world”	
“our cause is just”	“we will fight in a just cause and by just means”	“the cause we serve is right”		“we can know that His purposes are just and true”		“our cause in the world is right”	
“never forget the debt we owe [...] all who gave their lives for freedom”	“we sacrifice for the liberty of strangers”			“men and women, who died for our freedom”	“our men and women in uniform are making sacrifices”	“when America serves others in this way”	
“extending American compassion throughout the world”	“courage and compassion [...] determine our conduct abroad”			“one of the deepest values of our country is compassion”	“we show compassion abroad because Americans believe in the God-given dignity and worth”	“in such courage and compassion [...] we see the spirit and character of America”	“the armies  compassion  “America is a force for hope in the world because we are a compassionate people”
“axis of evil” “overcome evil with greater good” “evil is real, and it must be opposed”	“confronting and defeating the manmade evil of international terrorism”	“Hussein’s evil regime” “America has always been willing to do what it takes for what is right.”	“evil is real”		“we will never surrender to evil”	“the evil that inspired and rejoiced in 9/11”	“we can feel that same unity and pride whenever America acts for good”

“lead the world toward the values that will bring lasting peace”	“our Founders dedicated this country to the cause of human dignity, the rights of every person, and the possibilities of every life”	“America is a nation with a mission, and that mission comes from our most basic beliefs”		“the commitment of our nation to the guiding ideal of liberty for all”	“it is a privilege to serve the values that gave us birth”		“the terrorists oppose every principle of humanity and decency that we hold dear”
	“this nation fights reluctantly”	“the terrorists who started this war”		“the attack on freedom”	“ideological conflict we did nothing to invite”	“this war [...] is a decisive ideological struggle”	“the defining ideological struggle of the 21st century”
“History has called America and our allies to action” “we’ve been called to a unique role”	“this call of history has come to the right country” “calling as a blessed country”	“called to great responsibilities” “rising to the tasks of history”	“history has an ebb and flow of justice, but history also has a visible direction, set by liberty and the Author of Liberty”	“we are all part of a great venture”	“abroad, our nation is committed to an historic, long-term goal”  “call of history to deliver the oppressed and move this world toward peace”	“to whom much is given, much is required”	“calling of our conscience”
“bring terrorists to justice”	“terrorists are learning the meaning of American justice”	“delivering justice on the violent”	“no justice without freedom”		“one of the main sources of our national unity is our belief in equal justice”		“deliver justice to our enemies”

## Appendix C

Abbreviated table of the lexical analysis of Obama's addresses

2009	2010	2011	2012	2013a	2013b	2014	2015	2016
“at war, against a far-reaching network of violence and hatred.”	“we've renewed our focus on the terrorists who threaten our Nation” “take the fight to Al Qaida”	“taken the fight to al Qaeda and their allies abroad”	“safeguard America's own security against those who threaten our citizens, our friends, and our interests”		“where necessary, [...] we will continue to take direct action against those terrorists who pose the gravest threat to Americans”	“while our relationship with Afghanistan will change, one thing will not: our resolve that terrorists do not launch attacks against our country”	“We will continue to hunt down terrorists and dismantle their networks, and we reserve the right to act unilaterally”	“Both al Qaeda and now ISIL pose a direct threat to our people” “We just need to call them what [ISIL] are -- killers and fanatics who have to be rooted out, hunted down, and destroyed.”
	“This [Iraq] war is ending, and all of our troops are coming home”	“America's commitment has been kept. The Iraq war is coming to an end.”	“Ending the Iraq war has allowed us to strike decisive blows against our enemies”	“A decade of war is now ending” “enduring security and lasting peace do not require perpetual war”	“to meet this threat, we don't need to send tens of thousands of our sons and daughters abroad or occupy other nations”	“fight the battles that need to be fought, not those that terrorists prefer from us” “America must move off a permanent war footing”	“The American people expect us only to go to war as a last resort, and I intend to stay true to that wisdom”	
“God's grace upon us, we carried forth that great gift of freedom”				“while freedom is a gift from God, it must be secured by His people here on Earth”				

“we reject as false the choice between our safety and our ideals”	“reject the false choice between protecting our people and upholding our values”	“America’s moral example must always shine for all who yearn for freedom and justice and dignity”	“while it’s ultimately up to the people of the region to decide their fate, we will advocate for those values that have served our own country so well”		“we must enlist our values in the fight”	“we counter terrorism not just through intelligence and military action, but by remaining true to our Constitutional ideals”	“there’s one last pillar of our leadership, and that’s the example of our values”	
“We honor them not only because they are guardians of our liberty, but because they embody the spirit of service”		“our heroic troops and civilians”	“this generation of heroes has made the United States safer and more respected” “our freedom endures because of the men and women in uniform who defend it”	“our brave men and women in uniform, tempered by the flames of battle, are unmatched in skill and courage”	“all this work depends on the courage and sacrifice of those who serve in dangerous places at great personal risk”	“because of the extraordinary troops and civilians who risk and lay down their lives to keep us free, the United States is more secure”	“9/11 Generation who has served to keep us safe” “we owe [veterans] every opportunity to live the American Dream they helped defend”	
“America must play its role in ushering in a new era of peace”	“do what it takes to defend our Nation and forge a more hopeful future for America and for the world”	“This is just a part of how we’re shaping a world that favors peace and prosperity”	“As the tide of war recedes, a wave of change has washed across the Middle East and North Africa”	“no one has a greater stake in a peaceful world than its most powerful nation”	“America must remain a beacon to all who seek freedom during this period of historic change”	“we will continue to work [...] to usher in the future the Syrian people deserve – a future free of dictatorship, terror and fear”		“America will always act, alone if necessary, to protect our people and our allies”

“we are ready to lead once more”	“That's the leadership we are providing: engagement that advances the common security”	“whether we sustain the leadership that has made America [...] the light to the world”	“The renewal of American leadership can be felt across the globe”			“our leadership is defined not just by our defense against threats, but by the enormous opportunities to do good”	“In Iraq and Syria, American leadership -- including our military power -- is stopping ISIL's advance.”	“how do we keep America safe and lead the world without becoming its policeman”
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