

Metaphors in The Language of U.S. Presidents in Times of Economic Crisis: From the New Deal to a Rescue Plan for the Middle Class

Claudia Monacelli
UNINT University, Rome

Doi: 10.19044/llc.v5no2a2

[URL:http://dx.doi.org/10.19044/llc.v5no2a2](http://dx.doi.org/10.19044/llc.v5no2a2)

Abstract

This paper examines metaphors in the language of U.S. presidents in times of economic crisis in the last century. Our corpus comprises seven speeches that are analyzed in terms of moral metaphors that extend throughout the texts, intertwined with other metaphors, in a qualitative analysis. A quantitative analysis measures metaphor density and also draws on data from Sketch Engine, a corpus manager and analysis program, where keywords are examined that combine with metaphors in texts. Findings suggest that the umbrella moral metaphors of NURTURANT PARENT and STRICT FATHER factor with substantial prominence in corpus texts and that keywords enhance the impact of moral metaphors.

Keywords: Metaphors, Moral metaphors, Keywords, Financial crisis, Economic crisis.

1. Introduction

The values conservatives and liberals portray have different priorities, expressed through language choices that, in time, have entered the minds of voters. Examining presidential talk in periods of economic crisis allows us to better understand how the language used reveals conceptual insights into a political leader's worldview. We analyze the language of six U.S. presidents in the periods of three major economic crises in the last century: the Great Depression, the energy crisis of the 1970s, and the global financial crisis – 2007-2009. The objective of this study is to investigate how specific metaphors trigger opportunities to foster consensus. This paper includes both a qualitative and quantitative analysis of metaphors. In qualitative terms, we explore the varied metaphor themes that run through corpus texts, extracting significant text samples illustrating these themes and relative metaphors they represent. Particular emphasis is placed on moral metaphors, after Lakoff (2008, 2016). In quantitative terms, metaphor density is measured in texts to

assess what this indicator may reveal. We use the corpus manager and analysis program Sketch Engine²⁹ to seek single- and multi-word keyness to understand whether this has an impact on the use of metaphors (e.g. Philip 2010). The meaning of keywords and their keyness (Bondi 2010) derives from comparative quantitative corpus analysis, which identifies words which are statistically prominent in particular texts and text collections (Stubbs 2010: 22).³⁰

We first discuss presidential speeches as a genre (§2), then lay out our theoretical platform by expounding on metaphors (§3). We frame periods of economic crises over the last century both historically and geopolitically and present our corpus (§4). In §4 we extract corpus text samples of metaphors, as discussed in §3 and illustrate how metaphors are laced with specific keywords to create potentially powerful consensus-seeking messages in periods of economic crises (§5). In §5 we examine our quantitative data and draw conclusions in §6.

2. Presidential speeches as genre

The types of presidential rhetoric we examine in this paper are akin to traditional rhetorical forms, but are specifically shaped by the presidency. Presidential speeches can be classified by setting and by audience (talks to congress, other countries, at press conferences, etc.) and, in this sense, we can claim that presidential speeches as a genre represent a rhetorical form that is couched within the framework of institutional functions or settings (Kohrs Campbell and Hall Jamieson 1990: 7).

Adopting a generic perspective in relation to presidential speeches involves three types of evaluation: (1) assessing how well a speech is adapted to achieve its goals, (2) identifying outstanding examples of the text type and, given the institutional focus of presidential speeches, (3) judging how well the rhetoric is used to sustain and adapt the presidency as an institution. For the purposes of this analysis we are leaning on defining factors that Kohrs Campbell and Hall Jamieson (1990: 14-15) employ to distinguish what presidential talk does:

- unifies the audience by reconstituting its members as the people, who can witness and ratify the ceremony or occasion;
- rehearses common values drawn from the past;
- sets forth the political principles that govern the new, or current administration; and
- demonstrates, through enactment, that the president appreciates – and

29 <https://the.sketchengine.co.uk/>

30 For more information on how the keyness score of a word is calculated, see <https://www.sketchengine.co.uk/documentation/statistics-used-in-sketch-engine/>

respects – the requirements and limitations of executive functions.

The corpus texts chosen contemplate speeches specifically related to one of the three periods of economic crisis outlined in §4, which address matters related to those crises. This is effected with the aim of meeting the three types of evaluation listed above: a speech adapted to achieve its goals, an outstanding example of text type and an evaluation of how the rhetoric sustains and adapts the presidency.

3. Metaphors

There is a metaphor that, more than others, is rooted in the American collective consciousness in terms of political thought, namely that of NATION AS FAMILY.³¹ This is the umbrella metaphor that allows us to comprehend how both liberals and conservatives think. The nation is seen as a family and this leads to two, different perspectives: the NURTURANT PARENT according to the moral model of liberals, and the STRICT FATHER corresponding to the conservative moral model.

The importance that liberals generally accord to social security is a case in point, an evident example of the NURTURANT PARENT moral model, i.e. a parent (government) looking out for his family (citizens). On the other hand, conservatives hold a concept of the STRICT FATHER as a figure – head of the family – who commands respect. This is the figure of a father who is strong enough to protect his own children from the evils of the world and whose children believe their father to be their only source of salvation. Here both the notions of reward and punishment are relevant (Musolff 2016: 25-37).

The system of metaphors for morality as whole is of great relevance. In other words, people deem moral that which can bring them advantages and can be associated with their own well-being (Lakoff, 1996: 41). Thus a moral metaphor is espoused if it is able to sell its beneficial nature in this sense and – even more importantly – if it is deemed ethically sound in the eyes of voters.

Lakoff (2008) also suggests that the following moral metaphors are of prime value in U.S. politics:

- MORALITY AS STRENGTH
- MORALITY AS FAIRNESS $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{L} \\ \text{SEP} \end{array} \right\}$
- MORALITY AS CLEANLINESS $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{L} \\ \text{SEP} \end{array} \right\}$
- MORALITY AS PURITY $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{L} \\ \text{SEP} \end{array} \right\}$

There are many others that branch out into subcategories (e.g. radial categories and prototypes) (Lakoff 2016). However, there are two, main moral metaphors that result as being fundamental to liberals and conservatives: MORALITY IS CARE (for the nurturant parent, liberals) and MORALITY IS OBEDIENCE to authority (for the strict father, conservatives) (*ibid.*: 105). We

31 All metaphors are indicated throughout the paper in SMALL CAPS.

begin to understand that forms of moral metaphor act as networks permeating the very core of discourse, often to comprise other metaphors that are not necessarily related to a speaker's moral stance.

4. Critical economic periods and presidential speeches addressing these crises

This section contextualizes our corpus texts within one of three major periods of economic crises in the last century. Seven speeches read by six, different presidents of the U.S. were chosen and are listed in Table 1 below, that also includes the economic crisis at the time, the speech type, typology or title and the date it was pronounced.³² A diachronical politico-linguistic analysis of these speeches is carried out that aims to detect recurring frames that these presidents appeal to, in an effort to enhance consensus among constituents (Fairclough 1995, Lakoff 2004). Our corpus texts span the years 1932-2008, with the first three texts framed within the Great Depression (two by Franklin D. Roosevelt: FDR1-1932, FDR3-1933, one by Herbert Hoover: HH2-1932), two texts pronounced during the energy crises in the 1970s (Richard Nixon: RN4-1971, Gerald Ford: GF5-1974) and two speeches made during the 2007-2009 global financial crisis (George W. Bush: GWB6-2008, Barack Obama: BO7-2008).

President	Party	Crisis	Speech	Date
Franklin D. Roosevelt	Dem. FDR1	Great Depression	Nomination Address	2 July 1932
Herbert Hoover	Rep. HH2	Great Depression	The Consequences of the Proposed New Deal	21 October 1932
Franklin D. Roosevelt	Dem. FDR3	Great Depression	First Inaugural Address	4 March 1933
Richard Nixon	Rep. RN4	Energy Crisis 1970s	The Challenge of Peace	15 August 1971
Gerald Ford	Rep. GF5	Energy Crisis 1970s	Whip Inflation Now	8 October 1974
George W. Bush	Rep. GWB6	Global financial crisis 2007-2009	Our Economy is in Danger	24 Sept. 2008
Barack Obama	Dem. BO7	Global financial crisis 2007-2009	A Rescue Plan for the Middle Class	13 October 2008

32 In Table 1, under the Party heading are the letters used to refer to the specific corpus text. Text samples are listed using these letters which are followed by the year the speech was pronounced, for example: Text samples – FDR1 1932.

Table 1. Corpus texts

Of the countless metaphor themes running through these texts, I have chosen the most representative ones and show examples of each. The same goes for moral metaphors that appear and act as networks throughout texts, as we will see. All samples are presented in tabular format (Tables 2-8) where metaphors are listed in the first column in SMALL CAPS followed by text samples in the second column with relevant parts indicated in **bold** and metaphor themes are listed in the last column in *italics*.

4.1 The Great Depression: Franklin D. Roosevelt and Herbert Hoover

The Great Depression originated in the United States in the 1930s. It hit countries across the globe from 1929 to 1941. It was the longest and most widespread depression of the 20th century. It is commonly used as an example of just how far the world's economy can decline (Garraty 1987). The depression started after a major fall in stock prices that began around 4 September 1929 and became international news with the stock market crash of 29 October 1929, known as Black Tuesday.

When the stock market collapsed in 1929 Republican President Herbert Hoover was in office and was held accountable for the rampant unemployment which ensued. In 1932 the Democratic National Convention formally notified Franklin D. Roosevelt that he was selected as their presidential candidate. In his nomination address, Roosevelt espouses the party's platform and opens by recalling the late Woodrow Wilson, 28th Democratic President of the U.S., who had passed away three years after having served two terms in office 1913-1921.

Table 2 shows how FDR1-1932 typically makes use of moral themes that are quite common for both liberals and conservatives: religion, personification, movement.

Metaphors	Text Samples	Metaphor Themes
LANGUAGE AS RELIGION	I shall not stop that preaching .	<i>Religion</i>
CITY/GOVERNMENT AS PERSON	Washington has alternated between putting its head in the sand .	<i>Personification</i>
CHANGE AS MOTION	Credit contracted . Industry stopped . Commerce declined , and unemployment mounted .	<i>Movement</i>
Moral Metaphors		
MORALITY AS FAIR DISTRIBUTION	Throughout the Nation, men and women [...] look to us here for guidance and for more equitable opportunity to share in the distribution of national wealth .	<i>Fairness</i>

NURTURANT PARENT MORALITY AS EMPATHY	Yes, when – not if – when we get the chance, the Federal Government will assume bold leadership in distress relief. For years Washington has alternated between putting its head in the sand and saying there is no large number of destitute people in our midst who need food and clothing, and then saying the States should take care of them, if there are.	<i>Empathy</i>
MORAL ACCOUNTING	You have nominated me and I know it, and I am here to thank you for the honor.	<i>Moral transaction</i>

Table 2 Corpus text 1 – FDR1-1932

In this speech Roosevelt addresses the Democratic National Convention and opens by recontextualizing³³ the memory of a former president, "...there still lives with us, if not the body, the great indomitable, unquenchable, progressive soul of our Commander-in-Chief, Woodrow Wilson".³⁴ With this he creates a bridge between Wilson's presidency (democrat), the country's "interrupted march along the path of real progress" (when three subsequent republican presidents were in office) and his own future presidency as a democrat, were he to be elected, which he indeed was.

In his use of the LANGUAGE AS RELIGION metaphor (Soskice 1985), Roosevelt dons the cloak of a holier-than-thou politician, albeit one who meekly regales us with the image of someone who comes from another (religious) institution, who is now challenging an established (12 years of Republican presidents in office) power. Roosevelt confirms himself to be a master of rhetoric with this speech, as history has shown (Morris 2014). The soon-to-be thirty-second President of the United States of America is accepting his democratic nomination for candidacy. His entire speech is strewn with metaphors interlaced with powerful imagery, lexis that packs a punch and an overall promise of his readiness to stand to the challenge of defeating the republican incumbent who was nefariously equated with having ridden the wave into the Great Depression.

Even those metaphors used in all of my corpus texts, such as CHANGE AS MOTION, have a stronger, more powerful drive behind them, since when – as Roosevelt does – other rhetorical devices are added to metaphors, thus creating phrases such as "Credit contracted. Industry stopped. Commerce

³³ Recontextualization is generally considered a common means of text production and text-to-text interaction (e.g. Wodak and De Cillia 2007: 323) and as a sub-type of intertextuality or text-external referencing, whereby an element or argument is extracted from one, often dominant, context or text for some strategic purpose (Chilton and Schäffner 2002: 17) and reframed in a new one.

³⁴ www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=75174

declined, and unemployment mounted”, a sequence of two-worded arguments composed of uncountable nouns without articles and intransitive verbs denoting movement. They represent facts, even if not referred to verifiable data in this speech. Clean, cut, dry, effective.

Further, Roosevelt’s use of moral metaphors are drawn from the NURTURANT PARENT umbrella metaphor where – in this case – themes of fairness and empathy distinguish this president-to-be. Of interest here is how he uses the general metaphor of MORAL ACCOUNTING (Lakoff 2016: 46). In expressing gratitude to his electors for having elected him, Roosevelt offers thanks by enacting a transaction of sorts: “You have nominated me [...] and I am here to thank you for the honor.” This is retribution in its most positive sense.

It is important to note that metaphor themes of MORAL ACCOUNTING differ greatly in terms of their intention. For example ‘an eye for an eye’ suggests a theme of revenge. Table 3 illustrates samples from corpus text HH2-1932 where we also find the theme of retribution listed under moral metaphors, but where the meaning extends to retribution, through the metaphor MORALITY AS PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY.

In Table 3 we can see that, comparatively, Hoover makes use of a wider range of themes. The theme of health/healing is a case in point, where the metaphor GOVERNMENT AS BODY experiences measures that restore ‘recovery’, ‘healing’ an enormous ‘wound.’ The battle/war and construction metaphors are also quite prominent in his speech. Another interesting phenomenon we see in Hoover’s speech is the delineation of what was later to be coined ‘compassionate conservatism’, a political/discoursal strategy employed by Republican President George W. Bush (Lowe 2007). It presents as a double-edged sword: some perceive it as espousing conservative virtues such as volunteerism and local governments acting with the goal of alleviating poverty and improving schools; others believe compassionate conservatism to be an attempt to make controversial conservative policy initiatives more palatable by, for example, making the reduction of welfare payments seem ‘kinder’ to some extent and gentler. Hoover (Table 3) exploits the EMPATHY AS INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM metaphor to allow the theme of compassionate conservatism to emerge (see Lakoff 2016: 426).

Metaphor	Text Samples	Metaphor Themes
RESPONSIBILITY AS WEIGHT	we have lifted infinite drudgery from women and men	<i>Movement</i>
NATION AS BODY	Every time the Federal Government extends its arm	<i>Personification</i>
ARGUMENT AS WAR	the constant battle which must be carried on against incompetence, corruption, tyranny of government expanded into business activities	<i>War</i>
NATION AS FAMILY	providing security and comfort of life to all of the firesides of 25 million homes in America	<i>Family</i>
GOVERNMENT AS BODY	And we installed measures which today are bringing back recovery . Employment, agriculture, and business — all of these show the steady, if slow, healing of an enormous wound .	<i>Health-Healing</i>
Moral Metaphors		
MORALITY AS SELF-INTEREST	I say to you that our system of government has enabled us [...] to prevent the disaster [...]. It has enabled us further to develop measures and programs which are now demonstrating their ability to bring about restoration and progress.	<i>Appeal to individuals within a system</i>
MORALITY AS PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY	Our Government is rounded on a conception that in times of great emergency [...] the great reserve powers of the Federal Government should be brought into action to protect the people. But when these forces have ceased there must be a return to State, local, and individual responsibility.	<i>Retribution</i>
STRICT FATHER MORAL BOUNDARIES	My countrymen, the proposals of our opponents represent [...] less in concrete proposal, bad as that may be, than by implication and by evasion. [...] they represent a radical departure from the foundations of 150 years which have made this the greatest Nation in the world.	Boundaries: Departure from LIFE IS A JOURNEY
EMPATHY AS INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM	There has thus grown within us, to gigantic importance, a new conception. That is the conception of voluntary cooperation within the community; cooperation to perfect the social organizations; cooperation for the care of those in distress; cooperation for the advancement of knowledge, of scientific research, of education [...] It is the most powerful development of individual freedom and equality of opportunity that has taken place in the century and a half since our fundamental institutions were founded.	<i>Compassionate conservative</i>

Table 3 Corpus text 2 – HH2-1932

Another prominent metaphor theme widely used in HH2-1932 is the travel metaphor, but – notably – a departure from the LIFE IS A JOURNEY metaphor. How so? Within the STRICT FATHER metaphor umbrella, Hoover seems to actually ‘build’ MORAL BOUNDARIES: “concrete proposal”, “foundations”. Here he delineates a line of demarcation between ‘us’ (republicans) and ‘them’ (democrats).

Interestingly, our third corpus text FDR3-1933 (Table 4) – pronounced by the newly instated President Roosevelt – picks up the creation of MORAL BOUNDARIES and runs with it, but this time under the umbrella of the NURTURANT PARENT: “They only know the rules” (republicans), “they have no vision” (republicans), as opposed to ‘us’ (democrats).

The creation of this divide allows Roosevelt to truly move into doing what democrats do best, i.e. nurturing, through their primary task “to put people to work.” He indeed sets out to wage war, uniting the public in an “attack”, albeit a “disciplined” one. This is done as he communicates that LEADERS AS NATIONAL IDENTITY – as occurs amongst the royal – “have abdicated.”

Metaphors	Text Samples	Metaphor Themes
NATURE AS WELL-BEING	Nature still offers her bounty	<i>Personification</i>
WEALTH AS WELL-BEING	in the mad chase of evanescent profits	<i>Movement</i>
UNITY IN COMBAT	dedicated to a disciplined attack upon our common problems	<i>War</i>
LEADERS AS NATIONAL IDENTITY	rulers of the exchange of mankind’s goods have failed through their own stubbornness and their own incompetence, have admitted their failure, and have abdicated	<i>Royal family</i>
SACRED CIVILIZATION	The money changers have fled from their high seats in the temple of our civilization . We may now restore that temple to the ancient truths.	<i>Religion</i>
Moral Metaphors		
NURTURANT PARENT MORAL BOUNDARIES	They know only the rules of a generation of self-seekers. They have no vision , and when there is no vision the people perish.	<i>Boundaries</i>
NURTURANCE AS WORK	Our greatest primary task is to put people to work . This is no unsolvable problem if we face it wisely and courageously.	<i>Employment</i>
NATION AS FAMILY	With this pledge taken, I assume unhesitatingly the leadership of this great army of our people dedicated to a disciplined attack upon our common problems .	<i>Moral strength to nurture</i>

Table 4 Corpus text 3 – FDR3-1933

The overriding theme of religion in metaphor (see Shoemaker 2014) is employed by both democrats and republicans alike, and is done so in a multitude of ways. In Table 4 we see the mastery of Roosevelt’s rhetoric as he brings forward the NURTURANT PARENT MORAL BOUNDARIES divide and erects the nation, the country and government – all in one – to a SACRED

CIVILIZATION. Here we begin to see how moral metaphors are interlaced throughout texts and carefully built upon other, widely-used metaphor themes, such as religion, war, etc.

4.2 The energy crisis of the 1970s: Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford

By the early 1970s, American oil consumption in the form of gasoline and other products was rising even as domestic oil production was declining, leading to an increasing dependence on oil imported from abroad. Despite this, Americans worried little about a dwindling supply or a spike in prices, and were encouraged in this attitude by policymakers in Washington, who believed that Arab oil exporters couldn't afford to lose the revenue from the U.S. market. These assumptions were demolished in 1973, when an oil embargo imposed by members of the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC) led to fuel shortages and sky-high prices throughout much of the decade. The crisis began to unravel as the production of petroleum in the U.S. and other parts of the world began to peak in the late 1960s and 1970s and led to stagnant economic growth as oil prices rose. This combination of stagnant growth and price inflation led to what came to be known as 'stagflation' (Rybczynski 1976).

Table 5 lists text samples from Richard Nixon's speech in 1971 where he, too, makes ample use of religious metaphors, where the POLITICIAN AS PREACHER is depicted as "preaching a gospel." However, the politician is a 'preacher' that is part of the GOVERNMENT AS STRICT PARENT, personified as not able to "hold the key to the success of a people." Nixon here wields his moral authority by first mentioning "bold leadership" but also the importance of "the greatness in a great people."

Metaphors	Text Samples	Metaphor Themes
GOVERNMENT AS STRICT PARENT	But government, with all of its powers, does not hold the key to the success of a people.	<i>Personification</i>
ECONOMY UNCONTROLLED MOVEMENT	spiraling prices and costs	<i>Movement</i>
POLITICIAN AS PREACHER	preaching a gospel of gloom and defeat	<i>Religion</i>
Moral Metaphors		
MORAL AUTHORITY	This not only requires bold leadership ready to take bold action – it calls forth the greatness in a great people.	<i>Authority</i>
MORAL STRENGTH	But we can and we must do better than that.	<i>Self-discipline</i>
MORAL ESSENCE INFLATION AS FOE	Working together, we will break the back of inflation , and we will do it without the mandatory wage and price controls that crush economic and personal freedom.	<i>Strength of character</i>

MORAL ACCOUNTING	To offset the loss of revenue from these tax cuts which directly stimulate new jobs , I have ordered today a \$4.7 billion cut in Federal spending. Tax cuts to stimulate employment must be matched by spending cuts to restrain inflation.	<i>Compassionate conservative</i>
------------------	---	-----------------------------------

Table 5 Corpus text 4 – RN4-1971

Nixon points to a theme of movement (“spiraling prices and costs”) in the metaphor ECONOMY AS UNCONTROLLED MOVEMENT, strongly appealing to the public’s emotions. The economy is undeniably out of control. If – as Nixon tells us – our government is a STRICT PARENT, and if the main task of a control metaphor is “to express the standard ways of conceptualizing how we come to have our emotions under control, and how we lose control over them” (Pérez Rull 2001-2: 180), then it is indeed possible to understand how ‘we’ are all responsible for the economic crisis and Nixon has brilliantly communicated this overall responsibility. He appeals to the moral character of his people: to their strength, “we can and we must do better than that”, and to the essence of how this strength should play out, “Working together [...] without the mandatory wage and price controls”, sporting a battle against INFLATION AS FOE, “we will break the back of inflation.” Nixon also supplies us with an interesting spin on the moral ACCOUNTING METAPHOR, in the role of a compassionate conservative, by deontically (“must be matched”) ‘suggesting’ that, in order to counterbalance the loss of revenue from tax cuts, employment is to be stimulated, thus creating new jobs.

History reminds us that President Nixon was impeached following the Watergate scandal and – in this economic climate – Vice President Gerald Ford became the acting president. In a speech that came to be known as his Whip Inflation Now speech, he was compelled to mount his morality horse, precisely because of the circumstances that had led to his instatement. Whip Inflation Now (WIN) was an attempt by President Ford to incite a grassroots movement to fight inflation in the U.S. by boosting personal savings and restrained spending practices, combined with public measures. The metaphor, however, failed to incite public support since it was not consistent with Ford's political commitments. The use of the metaphor of war had to contend with rival metaphors that weakened its effectiveness (Stelzner 1977).

At the outset of his speech President Ford recontextualizes President Roosevelt’s inaugural address (Corpus text 3 – FDR3-1933), recognizing his own predicament as similar, if not identical, to the circumstances that led to the election of President Roosevelt following the Great Depression:

In his first inaugural address, President Franklin D. Roosevelt said, and I quote: The people of the United States have not failed [...] They want direct, vigorous action, and they have asked for discipline and direction under our

leadership.

Metaphors	Text Samples	Metaphor Themes
INSTITUTION AS CONTROL	I have ordered the Council on Wage and Price Stability to be the watchdog over inflationary costs of all governmental actions	<i>Personification</i>
SUCCESS/FAILURE AS MEAN PERFORMANCE	That is not a very good batting average	<i>Sports</i>
NATION AS FAMILY	let us put our own economic house in order	<i>Government/Home</i>
Moral Metaphors		
MORAL ACCOUNTING	All of us have heard much talk on this very floor about Congress recovering its rightful share of national leadership. I now intend to offer you that chance.	<i>Retribution</i>
INSURING PUNISHMENT	My conclusions are very simply stated. There is only one point on which all advisers have agreed: We must whip inflation right now.	<i>Retribution</i>
UPHOLDING MORAL ORDER	None of the remedies proposed [...] stands a chance unless they are combined in a considered package , in a concerted effort, in a grand design.	<i>Moral order</i>
MORAL ACCOUNTING	The tax reform bill now in the House Committee on Ways and Means, which I favor, already provides approximately \$1.6 billion of tax relief to these groups . Compensating new revenues are provided in this prospective legislation by a windfall tax, profits tax on oil producers, and by closing other loopholes. If enacted, this will be a major contribution by the Congress in our common effort to make our tax system fairer to all.	<i>Compassionate conservative</i>

Table 6 Corpus text 5 – GF5-1974

In Table 6 we see the attempt to both depict institutions as effecting control, “the Council on Wage and Price Stability to be the watchdog” and – through MORAL ACCOUNTING – in a theme of retribution, alongside his wish to restore Congress “its rightful leadership”, once again INSURING PUNISHMENT in a theme of retribution because it is time to “whip inflation now”. He then uses the metaphor of UPHOLDING MORAL ORDER, beseeching everyone to become part of a “concerted effort”. Of course, after what almost seems like series of metaphorical tirades, we may even come to expect his compassionate conservative side to emerge – as it does – in a metaphor of MORAL ACCOUNTING, by making the tax system “fairer to all”.

4.3 Global financial crisis 2007-2009: George W. Bush and Barack Obama

The crisis began in the subprime mortgage market in the U.S. and developed into an international banking crisis, with the collapse of the investment bank Lehman Brothers. This crisis was followed by a global economic downward spiral, the Great Recession (Williams, 2010). For the most part, there were bailouts by national governments which prevented the collapse of large financial institutions, but stock markets dropped around the world. In many areas the housing market also suffered, which also made for prolonged unemployment (Fried, 2012).

The Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation (FHLMC), known as Freddie Mac, is a public government sponsored enterprise with headquarters in the state of Virginia. It was created in 1970 along with the Federal National Mortgage Association, known as Fannie Mae. They both operated in what is known as the secondary market for mortgages, which increases the supply of money available for mortgage lending and increases the money available for new home purchases. Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae were taken over by the federal government in 2008 (Archarya *et al.*: 2011).

Even though, as we have seen, there have been previous examples of republican presidents demonstrating compassionate conservatism, it was President G. W. Bush who started the trend of actually using a perspective of compassionate conservatism in the U.S. (Koller and Semino 2007: 29) in an attempt to soften the image of conservative politics. Lowe (2007) clarifies that, “since its emergence in 1998, the term ‘compassionate conservatism’ has drawn media attention as to how it synthesized religious conceptions of charity and service with American conservatism.”

Metaphors	Text Samples	Metaphor Themes
HEALTH AS WEALTH	It would remove the risk posed by the troubled assets now clogging the financial system	<i>Movement+Body</i>
FINANCE AS CONTAINER FOR EMOTIONS	these troubled assets	<i>Personification</i>
FAMILY	Two of the leading purchasers of mortgage-backed securities were Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac	<i>Personification</i>
Moral Metaphors		
MORAL ACCOUNTING	The government is the one institution with the patience and resources to buy these assets at their current low prices and hold them until markets return to normal. And when that happens, money will flow back to the Treasury as these assets are sold. And we expect that much, if not all, of the tax dollars we invest will be paid back.	<i>Reward</i>

UPHOLDING MORAL ORDER	Financial assets related to home mortgages have lost value during the housing decline. And the banks holding these assets have restricted credit. [...] This rescue effort is not aimed at preserving any individual company or industry — it is aimed at preserving America’s overall economy . [...] it will help send a signal to markets around the world that America’s financial system is back on track.	<i>Moral order</i>
UPHOLDING MORALITY OF REWARD AND PUNISHMENT	It is difficult to pass a bill that commits so much of the taxpayers’ hard-earned money. I also understand the frustration of responsible Americans who pay their mortgages on time, file their tax returns every April 15th, and are reluctant to pay the cost of excesses on Wall Street. But given the situation we are facing, not passing a bill now would cost these Americans much more later	<i>Strict father authority</i>
MORAL ALTRUISM	Fellow citizens: We must not let this happen. [...] There is a spirit of cooperation between Democrats and Republicans, and between Congress and this administration. In that spirit, I’ve invited Senators McCain and Obama to join congressional leaders of both parties at the White House tomorrow to help speed our discussions toward a bipartisan bill.	<i>Compassionate conservative</i>

Table 7 Corpus text 6 – GWB6-2008

Through the metaphor themes of movement, body and personification, Bush communicates the metaphor of HEALTH AS WEALTH and FINANCE AS CONTAINER FOR EMOTIONS. The personification theme also extends to “Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac” who are conveyed as FAMILY. Both having been taken over by the government, they are indeed family for the American people, by extension.

Moral metaphors employed by G. W. Bush aim to offer MORAL ACCOUNTING (“much, if not all, of the tax dollars we invest will be paid back”), uphold MORAL ORDER (“aimed at preserving America’s overall economy”) and the MORALITY OF REWARD AND PUNISHMENT (“not passing a bill now would cost these Americans much more later”).

In 2008 President G. W. Bush is on his way out of the White House, having served for two consecutive terms (2001-2009). He is, and can afford to be, magnanimous in his speech (Table 7). Paternalistic, in the true sense of the word, he embraces both republican and democratic presidential candidates, including them in his speech in a show of MORAL ALTRUISM in the tradition of the compassionate conservative that he has become known for.

Table 8 includes text samples from the then Senator Barack Obama on his campaign trail. His opening statement recontextualizes the period of economic depression of the 1930s: “We are in a financial crisis as serious as any we’ve faced since the Great Depression”. This sets the stage for a series of

comparisons that allow Sen. Obama to continue his use of the collective personal pronoun ‘we’ in an effort to communicate that the NATION AS FAMILY is in this together, himself included, since there is “no real separation between Main Street and Wall Street”.

All through his speech Obama deftly uses the theme of vision in the metaphor VISION AS MOVEMENT (“shift before our eyes”) but, at the same time, he sets moral boundaries by describing the work of lobbyists as having MONEY AS FORCE (“bought their way into”) that has encroached upon mutual territory (“our government”), thus ‘we’, again, are all in this together, all being effected in the same way. Through the metaphor LIFE AS A GAMBLE, Obama gives us insight into the intricate workings of speculators who “gamed the system”, making for a LACK OF ECONOMIC WEALTH AS POOR HEALTH where “wages are flat-lining”, literally creating ‘game over’ for the American people. But Obama is waging ECONOMIC WAR through repetition (“fight”) and he lays out the four parts of his rescue plan.

Metaphors	Text Samples	Metaphor Themes
VISION AS MOVEMENT	we've seen our financial landscape shift before our eyes	<i>Vision</i>
MONEY AS FORCE	lobbyists who bought their way into our government	<i>Money</i>
LIFE AS A GAMBLE	It's the result of speculators who gamed the system	<i>Game</i>
LACK OF ECONOMIC WEALTH AS POOR HEALTH	Wages are flat-lining	<i>Movement</i>
ECONOMIC WAR	an investment that will lead to new industries and five million new jobs that pay well and can't ever be outsourced. Because the fight for American manufacturing is the fight for America's future - and I believe that's a fight this country will win	<i>War</i>
NATION AS FAMILY	no real separation between Main Street and Wall Street	<i>Family</i>
Moral Metaphors		
MORAL STRENGTH TO NURTURE	Because together, we cannot fail . Not now. Not when we have a crisis to solve and an economy to save. Not when there are so many Americans without jobs and without homes. [...] -Not when there is a generation that is counting on us to give them the same opportunities and the same chances that we had for ourselves.	<i>Moral strength</i>
NURTURANCE OF CHILDREN	We can do this. Americans have done this before. Some of us had grandparents or parents who said maybe I can't go to college but my child can [...] I might live in a small village but maybe someday my son can be president of the United States of America.	<i>Moral growth</i>

MORAL AUTHORITY OVER COMMUNITY/FAMILY	Now it falls to us. Together, we cannot fail. And I need you to make it happen [...] -I ask you to knock on some doors, make some calls, talk to your neighbors, and give me your vote on November 4th. And if you do, I promise you - we will win Michigan, we will win this election, and then you and I - together - will change this country and change this world.	<i>Moral authority</i>
---------------------------------------	--	------------------------

Table 8 Corpus text 7 – BO7-2008

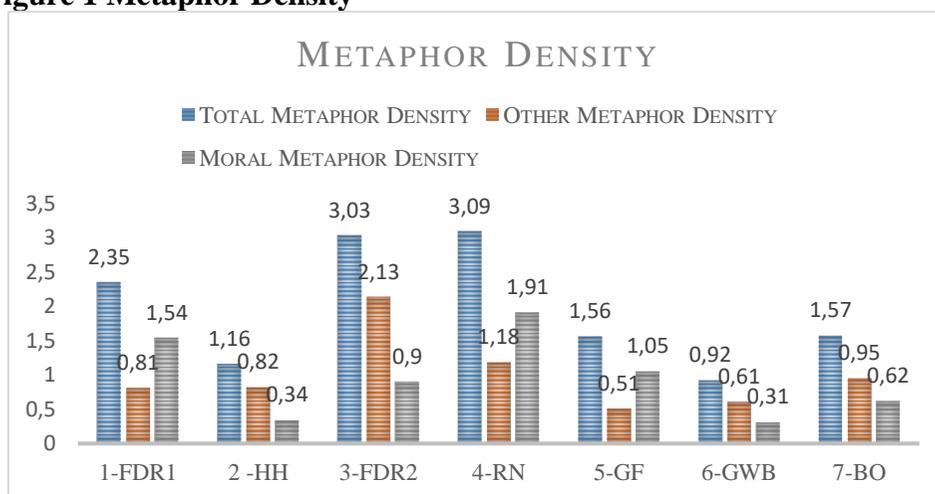
Embracing the themes of moral strength, moral growth and moral authority, Sen. Obama offers MORAL STRENGTH TO NURTURE (“we cannot fail [...] there is a generation that is counting on us”), notably the NURTURANCE OF CHILDREN (“maybe someday my son can be president...”). Then he takes his rightful place as MORAL AUTHORITY OVER COMMUNITY/FAMILY by once again using the collective personal pronoun (“Now it falls to us”) and communicating, again, that ‘we’ are in this together: “Together, we cannot fail. And I need you to make it happen”, “give me your vote on November 4th”, “then you and I – together – will change this country and change this world.”

5. Quantitative analysis: Metaphor density and keyness

Quantitatively, is it possible to ‘measure’ metaphors? And, if so, what can metaphor density tell us about a speech? Metaphors can be identified within texts and – for the most part – the wording can be delimited and actually counted. However, as discussed in §3, moral metaphors act as networks permeating discourse, and they comprise other metaphors.

Figure 1 illustrates total metaphor density for each corpus text, which is also broken down into moral metaphor density and other metaphor density. Metaphor density is calculated dividing the number of metaphors by the total number of words in the text, times one hundred, the resulting value representing density expressed as a percentage.

Figure 1 Metaphor Density



Having examined each text individually when discussing metaphors that emerged (§4), it was quite revealing to graphically view a quantitative assessment of each text’s count of metaphors. The objective of this study is to explore how specific metaphors in the language of U.S. presidents in times of economic crisis trigger opportunities to foster consensus. What stands out in the graph is that corpus text 4, President Richard Nixon’s speech pronounced in 1971, has the highest metaphor density when compared to other corpus texts. This initially came as a surprise, but when I realized that President Nixon ended the Bretton Woods international monetary system of fixed exchange rates. He initiated this process on 15 August 1971 with this speech (RN4-1971). Nixon announces the implementation of his new economic policy and speaks in detail about the measures taken to increase prosperity in the United States and does so through the use of a remarkable number of metaphors (3.09%), most of them moral metaphors (1.91%).

The numerous moral metaphors President Nixon employs range from MORAL AUTHORITY and MORAL SELF-INTEREST to MORAL STRENGTH and MORAL ORDER while, at the same time, his discourse shows an ever so slight propensity toward compassionate conservatism, albeit discourse with high density economic-speak.

Once a measure of metaphor density became apparent, we observed how single- and multi-word keyness interacted with metaphors in corpus texts.

Single-word	Score	F	Reff	Multi-word	Score	F	Reff
<input type="checkbox"/> speculator	W 612.92	4	31,922	<input type="checkbox"/> new prosperity	W 1,982.18	6	13
<input type="checkbox"/> peacetime	W 502.75	2	10,607	<input type="checkbox"/> competitive spirit	W 999.61	3	12
<input type="checkbox"/> prosperity	W 375.05	10	200,463	<input type="checkbox"/> international money	W 938.51	3	20
<input type="checkbox"/> workingman	W 350.64	1	1,202	<input type="checkbox"/> wage-price freeze	W 737.38	2	0
<input type="checkbox"/> bugaboo	W 332.17	1	2,533	<input type="checkbox"/> percent cut	W 712.44	2	4
<input type="checkbox"/> convertibility	W 330.56	1	2,656	<input type="checkbox"/> new economic policy	W 712.44	2	4

Figure 2 is a screenshot taken from Sketch Engine's analysis of single- and multi-word keyness. You will note that high on the lists is not always the word or words that have the highest frequency. In an attempt to avoid adding further length to this paper, I here extract an example from RN4-1971, President Richard Nixon's speech.

Figure 5 Keyness in corpus text 4 – RN4-1971

In President Richard Nixon's speech (Figure 5 RN4-1971) the multi-term "new prosperity" is embedded within the metaphor of MORAL PURITY:

As we move into a generation of peace, as we blaze the trail toward the **new prosperity**, I say to every American: Let us raise our spirits. Let us raise our sights. Let all of us contribute all we can to this great and good country that has contributed so much to the progress of mankind.

Working with both qualitative and quantitative data allows analysts to perceive different angles of findings. It also makes it possible to realize how discourse becomes woven into a moral platform on which both liberal or conservative political ideologies are crafted.

6. Concluding remarks

This paper first distinguished the political speech as a genre and then lay a theoretical framework on metaphor required to identify and analyze metaphors in corpus texts. An historical, geopolitical background was provided for the three periods of crisis and for the political leaders involved in this study. Since metaphor forms a considerable part of rhetoric, this study aimed at examining metaphor use in crisis discourse, more specifically economic and financial crisis. Metaphors in speeches were first examined qualitatively, then examined quantitatively in terms of metaphor density in order to understand its relevance for this study. Quantitatively we also examined the keyness of particular lexis in relation to the use of metaphors in order to understand their impact.

All political leaders carry a burden during times of crisis, and the way in which they address the nation to respond to fears and uncertainties can have a great impact on the way they are perceived by the people. While crisis management is a well-researched topic, there is far less research on the rhetoric characterizing times of economic crisis (see 't Hart & Tindall 2009). This study aimed to contribute to our understanding of how political consensus was gathered through oral texts pronounced in periods of economic and financial crisis in the last century.

Due to the limits of space, our analysis is restricted to the extraction of samples from corpus texts. Our findings show the importance of moral metaphors in the language of political leaders and how these types of metaphors pervade corpus texts. Moreover, the keyness of single- and multi-

word keywords are involved in the development of metaphors in all corpus texts, notably in moral metaphors. Quite surprisingly, the assessment of metaphor density allowed us to highlight the text that made most use of metaphorical language and, even more surprisingly, this resulted as being corpus text 4 (RN4-1971), a speech highly laced with facts, figures and hard data.

Methodologically, it was challenging to pinpoint the overall number of moral metaphors in a text. Nonetheless, the reliability of my data stems from the fact that – ultimately – I, as analyst, identify and quantify both forms of metaphor, thus qualifying at a micro level for a degree of validity, i.e. the degree to which a study's measurements and observations represent what they are supposed to characterize. Also, at a macro level, validity can be construed as the degree to which the results of a study represent what the researcher thinks they represent (Baayen 2008).

In terms of effectiveness of individual corpus texts, Lakoff (2016) and Musolff (2016) both conclude that the language of conservatives is strategically crafted with far more acumen than the language of liberals, leading to clarity in their communication of a vision. In this study I have shown that 'liberal speak' has also infiltrated all republican presidents' talk in what has come to be known as compassionate conservatism. Perhaps this is where the conservatives' ability lies: employing bipartisan modes of communicating, i.e. borrowing from the NURTURANT PARENT domain of metaphor.

However, it is important to note, that today new political leaders seem to defy our expectations and consensus is gathered from large pools of social media data, for example. Moreover, whereas we can safely say that political leaders' talk will always be comprised of words, metaphors figuring high on the list of rhetorical devices employed, the way in which political power is both secured and wielded may differ greatly in the near future, as will what we today consider to be political correctness, an area of study that finds ample room for development, alongside the analysis of the media used to convey political messages today, whose contents are often constrained by the 140 characters of a tweet.

References:

1. Archarya, V. V., Richardson, M., van Nieuwerburgh, S., White, L. J. (2011), *Guaranteed to Fail: Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, and the Debacle of Mortgage Finance*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
2. Baayen, R. H. (2008). *Analyzing linguistic data: A practical introduction to statistics using R*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University.

3. Bondi, M. (2010) Perspectives on key words and keyness: An introduction, in M. Bondi and M. Scott (eds.) *Keyness in Texts*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1-18.
4. Chilton P. and Schäffner C. (2002) Introduction: Themes and principles in the analysis of political discourse, in P. Chilton and C. Schäffner (eds.), *Politics as Text and Talk: Analytic Approaches to Political Discourse*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1- 41.
5. Fairclough, N. (1995) *Critical Discourse Analysis*. Oxford/New York: Routledge.
6. Fried, J. (2012), *Who Really Drove the Economy into the Ditch?* New York: Algora Publishing.
7. Garraty, J. A. (1987) *The Great Depression: An Inquiry into the Causes, Course, and Consequences of the Worldwide Depression of the Nineteen-Thirties, as Seen by Contemporaries and in the Light of History*. Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Press of Doubleday.
8. Koller, V. and Semino, E. (2009) Metaphor, Politics and Gender: A case study from Germany. In K. Ahrens (ed.) *Politics, Gender and Conceptual Metaphors*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan: 9-35.
9. Kohrs Campbell, K. and Hall Jamieson, K. (1990) *Deeds Done in Words: Presidential Rhetoric and the Genres of Governance*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
10. Lakoff, G. (2016) *Moral Politics. How Liberals and Conservatives Think*, 3rd edition. Chicago/London: Chicago University Press.
11. Lakoff, G. (2008) *The Political Mind*, New York: Penguin.
12. Lakoff, G. (2004) *Don't think of an elephant!* White River Junction, Vermont: Chelsea Green Publishing.
13. Lowe, B. M. (2007) Mapping the Landscape of Compassionate Conservatism: Analyzing the Moral Vocabulary of a Religious and Political Discourse, in *Quarterly Journal of Ideology* vol. 30(1-2), 1-55.
14. Morris, H. (2014) A Rhetorical Examination of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's First Inaugural Address, in *Scholarly Horizons* vol. 1(1), University of Minnesota. Morris Digital Well, 1-30.
15. Musolff, A. (2016) *Political Metaphor Analysis. Discourse and Scenarios*. London/New York: Bloomsbury.
16. Pérez Rull, C. (2001-2) The Emotional Control Metaphors, in *Journal of English Studies* vol. 3, 179-192.
17. Philip, G. (2010) Metaphorical keyness in specialised corpora, in M. Bondi and M. Scott (eds.) *Keyness in Texts*, Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 185-203
18. Rybczynski, T. M. (1976) *The Economics of the Oil Crisis*. London/Basingstoke: Macmillan Press.

19. Shoemaker, T. (2014) Revisiting Sacred Metaphors, in *Journal of Religion & Society*, vol. 16, 1-16.
20. Soskice, J. (1985) *Metaphor and Religious Language*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
21. Stelzner, H. G. (1977) Ford's War on Inflation: A metaphor that did not cross, in *Communication Monographs*, vol. 44(4), 284-297.
22. Stubbs, M. (2010) Three Concepts of Keywords, in M. Bondi and M. Scott (eds.) *Keyness in Texts*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 21-42.
23. 't Hart, P. and Tindall, K. (2009) Understanding crisis exploitation: leadership, rhetoric and framing contests in response to the economic meltdown, in P. 't Hart and K. Tindall (eds.) *Framing the global economic downturn: crisis rhetoric and the politics of recession*, Canberra: ANU E Press, 21-35.
24. Williams, M. (2010), *Uncontrolled Risk*. New York: McGraw-Hill Education.
25. Wodak R. and De Cillia R. (2007) Commemorating the past: the discursive construction of official narratives about the 'Rebirth of the Second Austrian Republic', in *Discourse and Communication* 1(3), 315-41.

Appendix 1 Corpus Texts

26. Franklin D. Roosevelt (2 July 1932) Address Accepting the Presidential Nomination at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago
27. www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=75174
28. Accessed 2 November 2017
29. Herbert Hoover (31 October 31 1932) Address at Madison Square Garden in New York City
30. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=23317>
31. Accessed 2 November 2017
32. Franklin D. Roosevelt (4 March 1933) Inaugural Address
<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=14473>
33. Accessed 2 November 2017
34. Richard Nixon (15 August 1971) Address to the Nation Outlining a New Economic Policy
35. <http://www.24hgold.com/english/contributor.aspx?article=803452874G10020&contributor=History+of+Gold>
36. Accessed 2 November 2017
37. Gerald Ford (8 October 1974) Address to a Joint Session of the Congress on the Economy
<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=4434>
38. Accessed 2 November 2017

39. George W. Bush (24 September 2008) Speech to the Nation on the Economic Crisis
40. <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/09/24/business/economy/24text-bush.html>
41. Accessed 2 November 2017
42. Barack Obama (13 October 2008) A Rescue Plan for the Middle Class
43. http://www.astrid-online.it/static/upload/protected/Midd/Middle-class_RESCUE-PLAN_13_10_08.pdf
44. Accessed 2 November 2017.