

The Thomas Molnar Institute for Advanced Studies at the Ludovika University of Public Service (NKE)  
and the Jewish Theological Seminary – University of Jewish Studies (OR-ZSE)  
are pleased to announce a

joint academic conference on:

# CHOSEN NATION(S)

Historical and Cultural Interpretations of Exceptionalism

Caspar David Friedrich: Der einsame Baum (1822)  
Credit: Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Nationalgalerie / Jörg P. Anders ©



to be held in

**BUDAPEST, HUNGARY ON 10–11 JUNE 2026.**

The aim of this interdisciplinary conference is to present the elements of various religious, group, national, and imperial identities that refer to chosenness, historical vocation, and uniqueness in world history. This includes everything from the religious formulation of the chosen people, through the sense of civilizational mission, to the martyrdom concepts of individual groups and nations. We are particularly interested in examining how claims of chosenness function as instruments of legitimacy, exclusion, and moral hierarchy, and how they are contested, transformed, or inverted in different historical and cultural contexts.

## Conference Themes

We invite proposals for papers that engage with the following topics, among others:

- the concept of the chosen people in Jewish religious tradition and in modern Jewish secular thought
- the concept of chosenness in Christian and Muslim religious understanding
- secularized chosenness and political theology
- victimhood, sacrifice, and negative exceptionalism
- the Christian empire as the embodiment of universalism
- the civilizing mission of modern empires
- the religious foundations of the American republics
- the Russian World and Eurasianism
- American exceptionalism and Manifest Destiny
- the German Sonderweg and tragedy
- the vanguards of Communism and liberal democracy in the 20th century
- aesthetics of chosenness
- canon formation and cultural chosenness

**There is no conference participation fee, and accommodation is provided for speakers.**

## Key Details

**Date: 10–11 June 2026**

**Location: Budapest, Hungary**

**Language: English**

## Submission Guidelines

We welcome abstracts of no more than 300 words, accompanied by a brief biography (100 words), including current institutional affiliation. Individual presentations will be 20 minutes, followed by discussion. Proposals for individual papers and thematic panels are both encouraged.

Submissions should be sent to [chosennations2026@gmail.com](mailto:chosennations2026@gmail.com) by **1 May 2026**.

Notification of acceptance will be sent on a rolling basis, at the latest by 10 May 2026.

## Publication Opportunities

Selected papers from the conference may be considered for publication in a peer-reviewed volume.

## Contact

For further information, please contact [chosennations2026@gmail.com](mailto:chosennations2026@gmail.com).

We look forward to your contributions and to welcoming you to a stimulating dialogue on chosenness and exceptionalism in religion, history, and culture.

The conference is organized by the Ludovika University of Public Service (NKE) and the Jewish Theological Seminary - University of Jewish Studies (OR-ZSE)



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האוניברסיטה ללימודי היהדות בהונגריה

