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**OUR PEOPLE – A TIGHT-KNIT FAMILY UNDER  
THE SAME PROTECTIVE ROOF**

A CRITICAL STUDY OF GENDERED CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS  
AT WORK IN RADICAL RIGHT POPULISM

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ACADEMIC DISSERTATION

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## ABSTRACT

Contemporary globalisation processes witness the articulation of an allegedly homogeneous totality that has coalesced in direct opposition to the very globalisation processes that have enabled it. This totality is commonly labelled 'our *people*' and reunites the citizens inhabiting the political–social–cultural space of a specific polity. Radical right populist parties – claiming to defend the political interests of the *people* – have gained increasing visibility and acceptance across Europe. Particularly salient among the symbols these parties have employed to portray their ideological stances is the depiction of the *people* as the tightly–knit family, under the guardianship of a man/father/leader, sheltered together under their home's protective roof. However, there is a lack of gender–sensitive research on radical right populist ideology.

The present study consequently aims to uncover the means through which both concepts – that of *family*, and respectively *people* – are discursively gendered, in the sense that they reify gender–based distinctions, thereby naturalising the traditional hierarchal gender binary. The dissertation focuses on two case studies: the Greater Romania Party (*Partidul România Mare*, PRM) and the Sweden Democrats (*Sverigedemokraterna*, SD). It examines how the leaders of radical right populist parties in Romania and in Sweden explain discursively with the aid of conceptual structures – particularly, the conceptual metaphor of THE NATION IS A FAMILY and adjoining metaphorical clusters – their ideological conception of the hierarchical gender binary.

The present study represents in other words an interdisciplinary dialogue between political science – particularly the study of radical right populism; communication studies – mainly the relationship between the radical right populist leader and contemporary media logic; conceptual metaphor theory – especially the critical analysis of conceptual metaphors, enriched with a genealogical perspective; from a decidedly feminist vantage point.

## ABBREVIATIONS

- Bulgarian National Union Attack (*Национален съюз Атака, Ataka*)  
Centre Party (*Centerpartiet, C*)  
Christian Democrats (*Kristdemokraterna, KD*)  
Christian–Democratic National Peasants’ Party (*Partidul Național Țărănesc Creștin Democrat, PNTȚ–CD*)  
Danish People’s Party (*Dansk Folkeparti, DF*)  
Democratic Party (*Partidul Democrat, PD*)  
Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania (*Uniunea Democrată Maghiară din România, UDMR/Româniai Magyar Demokrata Szövetség, RMDSZ*)  
French National Front (*le Front National, FN*)  
Greater Romania Magazine (*Revista România Mare, RRM*)  
Greater Romania Party (*Partidul România Mare, PRM*)  
Left Party (*Vänsterpartiet, V*)  
Liberal People’s Party (*Folkpartiet liberalerna, FP*)  
Moderate (Coalition) Party (*Moderata samlingspartiet, M*)  
Movement for a Better Hungary (*Jobbik Magyarországért Mozgalom, Jobbik*)  
National Democrats (*Nationaldemokraterna, ND*)  
National Front (*le Front National, FN*)  
National Liberal Party (*Partidul Național Liberal, PNL*)  
New Democracy (*Ny Demokrati, NyD*)  
New Generation Party (*Partidul Noua Generație, PNG*)  
New Right (*la Nouvelle Droite, ND*)  
Norwegian Progress Party (*Fremskrittspartiet/Framstegspartiet, FrP*)  
Party of Social Democracy in Romania (*Partidul Democrației Sociale în România, PDSR*)  
Romanian Social Democratic Party (*Partidul Social Democrat Român, PSDR*)  
Romanian Humanist Party (*Partidul Umanist Român, PUR*)  
Social Democratic Party (Romania) (*Partidul Social Democrat, PSD*)  
Social Democratic Party (Sweden) (*Sveriges socialdemokratiska arbetareparti, SAP*)  
Sweden Democrats (*Sverigedemokraterna, SD*)  
Sweden Democrat Courier (*SD–Kuriren, SD–K*)  
Swedish Green Party (*Miljöpartiet de Gröna, MP*)  
(True) Finns (Party) (*Perussuomalaiset, PS/Sannfinländarna, SF*)

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*Ov Cristian Norocel*

## 1 FOR FOLK – FOR FAMILY: STUDYING RADICAL RIGHT POPULISM FROM A GENDER PERSPECTIVE

'The Family', an interwar painting, portrays a group of six characters in a pastoral setting. At the centre two young adults: fair-haired and blue-eyed the man and a woman seem to form a married couple – thereby the title. They are depicted seated, against the backdrop of what the viewer might interpret as their home. The two are encircled by three children, apparently their offspring, also fair-haired and blue-eyed. The sixth character, a baby, is breastfed by the woman under her husband's proud gaze, who embraces protectively both the mother and eldest daughter. The latter seems to concentrate on how her mother is nursing the new family member, which can be interpreted as an omen of her own motherhood. At their feet, oblivious of the ritual caregiving unfolding above, a young boy is concentrated on moulding the earth with his bare hands. His younger sister watches his hands attentively and holds protectively a doll, in a move which mirrors closely that of her mother's nursing of the infant. The characters identified as feminine – the young mother and her presumably two daughters – appear in positions of caring, contemplation, and expectancy, thereby passively accepting the effects of- and assisting in- the actions of the masculine characters – the father and his son – who protect and create. In addition, both the young mother and her daughters are wearing blue garments – a Marian symbol of purity and reverence, whilst the father and boy wear clothes in earthly hues. This glimpse into the idealised family life takes place, as already mentioned, with the family home serving as background. The half-timbered thatched-roofed house and rich vegetation that frame in the characters suggest a bucolic setting. While rich in symbolism, the painting is sanitised from clear historical references and any manifestations of complex modernity (in terms of eluding any references to urbanisation and industrialisation; class hierarchies and waged exploitation; to women's emancipation and their joining the labour force, or the presence of an ethnic Other within the national borders). Instead, a vigorous sunflower – a symbol of closeness to the divinity – is turned towards the infant over the woman's right shoulder, a woven basket overflowed with golden fruits – a symbol of fertility and abundance – lies at the feet of the young mother, whilst a spade – the symbol of the Adamic punishment to toil the land, but also referring to the foundation of a new edifice – rests in the grass nearby the boy.

'The Family', painted by Wolfgang Willrich, appears to synthesise the artist's envisioned and ideologically grounded solution for a *people* at the crossroads: to craft a common future on the rubble left by a devastating event – the First World War; to rebuild solidarity and trust among the antagonised classes within a highly divided society – the late Weimar Republic; to identify the cause of downfall and pursue the project of building a pure novel society – the emergence of national socialism. 'The Family' indicates Willrich's unambiguous option for an

exclusionary interpretation of the *völkische Bewegung* (*völkisch*, or better said folksy movement), which idealised the *Volk* (German cognate of the English *people*, incorporating strong ethnic and territorial aspects), and incorporated not only anti-capitalist, but also anti-communist, anti-immigration, and even anti-parliamentarian attitudes. Willrich's work appears, in this context, to express 'the politics of cultural despair' that marked the 'estrangement from modernity and dissatisfaction with the maladies of mass society' that characterised the late years of Weimar Republic (Arieli-Horowitz, 2001: 752). Even more so, I argue that it resonates strongly with the national socialist ideology. This regarded the traditional family – with emphasis on patriarchal gender roles, reflecting men's uncontested dominance both outside and within the family home, and women's role as subordinated reproductive vessels of the nation – as a necessary counterweight to the social corruption of modern democracy. This included falling birth rates, late marriages, increase of divorce rates, and increase in percentage of women in salaried work outside the home. Additionally, depicting the traditional family – fertile, uncorrupted, and pure – as key to the survival of the nation fitted the agenda of racialised supremacist domination – ensuring the numerical superiority of German *people* in their battle with those dismissively regarded as belonging to 'inferior races' (cf. Theweleit, 2007a; 2007b).

This is not to say, however, that national socialism or other radical right ideologies have had a monopoly over references about the importance of traditional family constructions<sup>1</sup> for the survival and reproduction of a *people* understood as a political community. What needs to be noted here is that, as aptly observed by feminist scholars, membership in the political community is based on birth, and membership in the family is based on the law emanating from and enforced within said political community<sup>2</sup> (Stevens, 1999: 52). Even more so,

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1 Already in the eighteenth century, Jean-Jacque Rousseau had commented on the political nature of family, noting that it 'is the first model of political societies. The head of society corresponds to the position of the father; whereas the *people*, themselves, correspond to the image of the children.' (Rousseau in Thomas, 2006: 10) (*Italics – mine*) On the other hand, Johann Gottfried Herder had regarded the nation as an enlarged family, based on a spatial and temporal organicist view of a *people* that 'can maintain its national character for a thousand of years... For a *people* is a natural growth like a family, only spread more widely' (Herder in Freedden, 1998b: 762) (*Italics – mine*). In turn, Friedrich Engels had indicated the interconnection between economic relations within the state and family relations, especially with regard to women's exploitation, arguing that 'the first class antagonism which appears in history coincides with the development of the antagonism between man and woman in monogamian marriage, and the first class oppression with that of the female sex by the male.' (Engels in Carver, 2004: 244) One should not forget, however, that the definition of, and place given to the family construct in any given society has always been dependent on that specific context; in a sense, the family and society (as well as the national project) around it have always been interdependent and contingent conceptual constructs (cf. Stevens, 1999).

2 Illustratively, 'alien' – the word denoting a person *not* belonging to the family constituting the political community – has a Latin etymology, *aliĕnum* (neuter) meaning 'foreign by birth', 'unfamiliar'. An online free dictionary readily indicates that in modern usage in English entails both 'a person owing political allegiance to another country', and 'a person from another very different family, people, or place' (www.thefreedictionary.com).

appeals to the *people* as denominator for the political community, which is envisaged to be rooted in or at least modelled upon the family construct, are common across the political spectrum. In contrast to its usage in other political contexts, radical right populist ideology appropriates a very narrow definition of the concept and it does so, I maintain, assuming a decidedly patriarchal version of it. One should neither rush to conclude that contemporary radical right populism, in its various manifestations across Europe, is one and the same as early national socialism – there are, however, a series of inescapable similarities and a certain air of familiarity between the two (Derks, 2006: 182; Ignazi, 2003: 32–33; Zaslove, 2009: 310); but I delve into these at length in the coming chapters of the present study.

What I want to emphasise here, drawing a parallel to the period I just made reference to above, is that the contemporary globalising processes have also been accompanied by the emergence of certain political parties, which I herein label radical right populist parties. The radical right populist parties have argued for a radical departure from intricate forms of government – generally dismissed as harbingers of corruption and degeneration, thereby alienating the *people*, employed as a shorthand for common citizenry – and militated in turn for the unmediated dictatorial rule of the popular majority – its simplicity being presented as a symbol of ‘realness’, innocence, and ‘purity’<sup>3</sup>. It is suffice to say, at this stage, that I consider such terms as estrangement and dissatisfaction of cardinal importance, if one were to consider the present political–socio–cultural–economic situation across Europe in the context of accelerated globalisation processes. These processes are often described as unstoppable and uncontrollable. The opposition to these processes has been coalesced around the ‘our *people*’ construct, which lies at the heart of radical right populist parties<sup>4</sup>.

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3 For a preliminary definition of such political manifestations, one that is both comprehensive yet also restrained from too narrow a focus on a specific social content, a suitable starting point would be Donald MacRae’s (1969) classical conceptualisation on the topic – provided the aforesaid excessive emphasis on particularism is eliminated. Radical right populism thereby entails a situation in which:

[A] segment of society asserts as its charter of political action its belief in a community and (usually) a *Volk* as uniquely virtuous, it is egalitarian and against all and any elite, looks to a mythical past to regenerate the present and confounds usurpation and alien conspiracy, refuses to accept any doctrine of social, political, or historical inevitability and, in consequence, turns to belief in an instant, imminent apocalypse mediated by the charisma of heroic leaders and legislators – a kind of new Lycurgus.

(MacRae, 1969: 162) (*Italics in original*)

4 Contemporary globalisation processes bring forth, in fact, the crystallisation of such an allegedly homogeneous totality, generally labelled ‘our *people*’ – reuniting the citizens inhabiting the political–social–cultural space delimited by state borders – that gains consistency through the reification of its ‘opposition’ to the globalising processes that enabled it in the first place. The *people*, in this context, embody a specific ideological response to the aforementioned processes; it represents, in other words, an attempt to ‘neutralise’ the effects of globalisation on its own territory (Şandru, 2010: 294).

What is noteworthy here is that the rise of such parties has taken different paths across Europe. Having registered various levels of success in politics at national level – in countries that oftentimes have been regarded as the core of European Union (EU), such as Belgium, France, Italy, or the Netherlands – several radical right populist parties have even succeeded in making an impact on EU politics, crafting in January 2007 a political alliance in the European Parliament, titled ‘Identity, Tradition, Sovereignty’ (ITS)<sup>5</sup>. These political forces seem to have become a common sight in national politics across the continent, even in the European periphery, understood both geographically – Northern Europe, for instance –, and politico–economically – Central and Eastern Europe, for example.

Illustratively, the Greater Romania Party (*Partidul România Mare*, PRM) has been a constant political presence since the violent unseating of the Ceaușescu regime and the reintroduction of parliamentary democracy in Romania; the PRM’s agenda has strong anti–Semitic, anti–Hungarian, anti–Romani, and anti–establishment populist appeals. In the 2000 Parliamentary elections, the PRM registered its best electoral score to date, polling 19.5 percent of the votes for the Lower Chamber of Romanian Parliament, and 21 percent for the Upper Chamber, thereby becoming the main opposition party during that parliamentary cycle (Popescu, 2003: 331). Arguably, the PRM representatives in the European Parliament have played an important role in founding the ITS, providing the necessary number of members of the European Parliament (MEPs) from different EU member states for the group to be acknowledged officially.

Northern Europe has witnessed as well the emergence of radical right populist parties. Rising constantly in the electoral preferences in Finland, the (True) Finns (Party) (*Perussuomalaiset*, PS/*Sannfinländarna*, SF)<sup>6</sup> has pursued an agenda of value–conservatism, anti–establishment, anti–immigration, and Euro–scepticism (Norocel, 2009: 243). The PS/SF recorded 4.1 percent in the 2007 Finnish Parliamentary elections and subsequently polled 19.1 percent in the 2011 Parliamentary elections, becoming the main opposition party (Nurmi & Nurmi, 2012: 236). Even in Sweden, long regarded as immune to such political

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5 The group consisted initially of 20 MEPs: seven MEPs from the French National Front (*le Front National*, FN); five MEPs from the PRM; three MEPs from the Belgian Flemish Interest (*Vlaams Belang*, VB); one MEP from the Bulgarian National Union Attack (*Национален съюз Атака*, Ataka); two Italian MEPs, one from the Mussolini List (*Lista Mussolini*, LM), and one from the Tricolour Flame (*Fiamma Tricolore*, FT); two independent MEPs, one from Austria and one from the United Kingdom (Mahony, 09.01.2007). However, the group disbanded in November 2007, as a result of, ironically, xenophobic slurs addressed by the group’s Italian MEPs to their Romanian counterparts (Mahony, 14.11.2007).

6 The established though informal English version of the party’s name has been that of ‘True Finns’, in which ‘true’ is conterminous with ‘common’ or ‘ordinary’. In August 2011 the PS/SF chose the appellation ‘the Finns (Party)’ (YLE, 21.08.2011). Such a choice for the party name’s English translation lies closely to the common appellation of the country’s inhabitants in international contexts – the Finns – and in a sense may be regarded as an indication of the party’s ambition to represent the entirety of Finnish people. In order to avoid such analytical ambiguity, I chose herein to refer to the party as the PS/SF.

manifestations, the Sweden Democrats (*Sverigedemokraterna*, SD) have received 5.7 percent of the votes in the 2010 Swedish Parliamentary elections, thereby gaining parliamentary representation (Widfeldt, 2011: 586). The SD considers itself a nationalist party pursuing a value–conservative agenda and it constantly battles with a past tainted by close collaboration with openly undemocratic, neo–Nazi, and other extreme–right fringe groupings (Mattsson, 2009). Halfway through their mandate in the Swedish Parliament, the SD has continued its upward trajectory. It entered 2013 witnessing 9.2 percent support in opinion polls, and a chair whose leadership has been consolidated, despite internal struggles and increased media monitoring (Demoskop, 12.01.2013). It is precisely the manifestation of radical right populist ideology in Romania (namely the PRM), respectively in Sweden (the SD) that constitute the object of present study.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, several prominent members among these parties have criticised contemporary artistic manifestations (cf. Kvist, 2012: 22; Roijer, 2007: 9). The iconoclasm of contemporary modern art, understood as the active interrogation on the meanings of the artistic act, and the continuous strive to push further the boundaries of contemporary artistic expressions, has been oftentimes met with fierce criticism from the representatives of these political forces. What is preferred, in turn, are sanitised representations of ‘perennial symbols’ among which the traditional heteronormative family – understood here as the normative stance according to which family life is consumed within a (legally sanctioned) monogamous union between a man and a woman that has led to the procreation of a numerous offspring – is of exceptional symbolic value. A case in point, particularly salient among the symbols these parties have generally employed is the depiction of the *people* as the tightly–knit family – under the guardianship of a man/father/leader – which is sheltered together under their home’s protective roof.

Before going any further, a few clarifications are necessary. The understanding of gender at work in the present study subscribes to the definition put forward by Terrell Carver (2004), which in turn acknowledges the seminal contribution of Judith Butler (1990; 1993; 1995) to the development of contemporary feminist scholarship. His working definition of gender is ‘ways that sex and sexuality become political’ (Carver, 2004: 4), whereby underlining its incomplete, *in–the–making* aspect. Gender is thereby a politically productive device for the social division of power. Or, as explicated by Butler, gender is to be regarded as a continuous process of one individual’s performative<sup>7</sup> of masculinity/ femininity, with little, if any, connection to that individual’s biological sex (Butler, 1993: 95; 1995: 138). According to Carver, such an approach to theorising gender ‘is

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7 In here I employ the term ‘performative of gender’ or ‘gender performative’ with the purpose of emphasising the contingent, fluid, and negotiated nature of gender. I also make a distinction between the conceptualisation of gender as ‘performative’ and ‘performance’, as understood in theatre studies, following Butler’s earlier work (Butler, 1993). A detailed discussion on the term’s usage in the present study is provided in section 3.1.

intended to alert readers to the ways that the term can be useful in identifying power–relations that are binary and hierarchical’ (Carver, 2004: 4). Being aware of the structure and extent of such gender hierarchy enables researchers ‘to examine both how social constructions of masculinity and femininity shape our ways of thinking and knowing how women’s and men’s lives are patterned differently as a consequence of gendered practices’ (Peterson & Runyan, 1993: 190). The binary aspect of gender has been further emphasised by Carver. He has argued that when researching men, one inescapably discusses women (and the other way around), since gender ‘is organised around a binary, and in asserting what is the case on one side, there is no escape from some implication from what obtains with respect to the other’ (Carver, 2004: 235). In this context, the analysis of traditional heteronormative family construction offers valuable insights into the power relations that enable the reification of the hierarchical gender binary.

On this matter, returning briefly to the painting discussed above, the protagonists and their performative of their genders (for instance, the adult woman incarnating the motherly ideal of femininity: breastfeeding her newborn child, and invested with Marian attributes, whilst the man embodying the ideal family father: protectively watching his offspring being taken care of by his wife) dutifully submit to the traditional gender binary that posits women as subservient vessels for reproduction of the family. For this study we may also generically substitute the community of the *people*, under the watchful guardianship of their men, for the family. With this in mind, my endeavour is to uncover the means through which both concepts – that of *family*, and respectively *people* – are discursively gendered, in the sense that they reify gender–based distinctions, thereby naturalising the traditional hierarchal gender binary as described above. So far, I have teased out the ideological underpinnings at work in ‘the Family’ painting, and having in mind that paintings may be considered visual discursive manifestations, this could be considered a sketch of a tentative analysis of the wider manifestation of ideology through discourse<sup>8</sup>. It is precisely the connection between the gender binary and ideology, and especially the performative of masculinities and femininities, which underpin the radical right populist ideology in its discursive manifestation that will be discussed at length in the present study. Consequently, the following section addresses the conceptualisation of ideology, positioning the present study in the post–Marxist context of the ‘linguistic turn’, thereby acknowledging the role of language – understood to incorporate text, symbols, discourse, and meaning – as constitutive of the reality it tries to represent and describe (Carver, 2009: 470; Norval, 2000: 316–317). Furthermore, the next section explicates the aims and research questions that are addressed in

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<sup>8</sup> At the moment it suffices to mention that discourse, very generally, is understood to subsume language use, text, talk, and communication (be it verbal or visual), thereby following the minimalist definition suggested by an influential scholar of discourse (van Dijk, 1998: 6). In the present investigation, however, I employ a more narrow definition of discourse, which is detailed in the following section.

the present thesis. The inherent limitations of this academic endeavour are then indicated (in terms of cases to be analysed, timeframes, and languages). The present chapter is then concluded with a concise presentation of the disposition of present study.

## 1.1 THE ANALYSIS OF POLITICAL IDEOLOGY: RADICAL RIGHT POPULISM

The concept of ideology, akin to other constructs that researchers have reverently assigned a key position in structuring the study of political life – consider, for instance, such concepts as ‘discourse’, ‘people’, ‘power’, to name just a few – has proven to be rather vague and difficult to fully encapsulate in a comprehensive yet concise definition. When first brought to academic attention in the eighteenth century France, ideology was envisaged to denote the ‘science of ideas’. Its initial meaning has been nonetheless altered, and has later come to embody a stark polarisation between a collective ‘Us’, and a common opponent ‘Them’, oftentimes with a negative connotation, in the sense that ‘Ours is the Truth, Theirs is the Ideology’ (van Dijk, 1998: 2). When characterised as ‘false consciousness’, as Friedrich Engels referred to it (Carver, 1995: 8; van Dijk, 2006: 117), ideology entailed ‘a system of wrong, false, distorted or otherwise misguided beliefs, typically associated with our [...] political opponents’ (van Dijk, 1998: 2). These negative definitions notwithstanding, most scholars appear to agree on the usefulness of employing the concept of ideology in studying contemporary contexts<sup>9</sup>, since ideology operates through providing ‘monolithic certainties’, which enable the decision making process, in the context of multiplying diversity as a direct effect of globalising processes (Canovan, 2002: 30; Carver, 2009: 462; Freedon, 1998a: 76–77; Şandru, 2010: 275–278).

In a similar manner, the concept of political ideology at work in the present study enables the analysis of ‘the interaction between ideas and politics, especially systems of ideas that make claims, whether justificatory or hortatory’ (Carver, 1995: 10). More clearly, I subscribe to the academic tradition that regards ideology as a coherent system of meaning comprising a set of ideas, understood as founding principles, symbols, and myths (Canovan, 2002: 29–30; Carver, 1995: 4–11; Charteris–Black, 2009: 140–144; Freedon 1998a: 50–54; Lazar, 2005: 6–9;

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<sup>9</sup> It should be noted, however, that the present study employs ideology in a manner more akin to that present in the works of Carver (1995; 2009) and Freedon (1998a; 1998b). While not dismissive of their conceptual usefulness, I do not engage in a dialogue with those psychoanalytic accounts of ideology (cf. Laclau, 1990; Laclau & Mouffe, 2001; Žižek, 1989) – for a comprehensive review of the differences and communalities between the aforementioned approaches to the study of ideology, see Norval (2000).

Stanley, 2008: 98; Şandru, 2010: 157; van Dijk, 2006: 120–121). Importantly, the system of meaning that a certain political ideology represents is generally appropriated by a specific political party – or political grouping – within a given society, and employed to produce and reify shared ideas, which in turn enable the said party to legitimise its existence both in relation to its members (the in–group) but also to other political actors (the out–group).

Returning to the matter at stake, the definition of radical right populist ideology at work in the present study acknowledges that its ideological production is indicative of a thin–centred ideology, in a similar fashion to nationalism (cf. Canovan, 1999; Freedon, 1998b; Mudde, 2004; Stanley, 2008). The ineliminable components of radical right populist ideology are the identification of a Manichean opposition between a ‘corrupt elite’ and a ‘pure *people*’. The said *people* of radical right populist ideology is not only pure, but also constitutes an indivisible whole, whose sovereign will finds its most appropriate manifestation in the figure of a respected leader. What is worth underlining here is that the aforementioned purity of *people*, and the intrinsically interrelated fear of pollution, rests on exclusivist definitions of the ‘rightful’ inhabitants of a certain nation–state, in a decidedly nativist nationalist manner (Betz & Johnson, 2004: 323; Betz & Meret, 2009: 318; Canovan, 2002: 34; Meret & Siim, 2013: 93; Mudde, 2007: 19). This has a key economic aspect – namely, welfare chauvinism – which delineates the ‘pure’ *people* and their birthright to the nation–state’s welfare infrastructure from those underserving Others: a dynamic category that may include allegedly parasitical social groups, resented ethnic/‘racial’, religious, and/or sexual minorities, along a logic of nationalist solidarity (Derks, 2006: 181–182; Mudde, 2007: 136–137; Zaslove, 2009: 314–315). A caveat: this is only a preliminary definition of radical right populist ideology, since such a theorisation is manifestly gender–blind; however, I address this issue later, by bringing gender into the study of radical right populism with the help of feminist scholarship on nationalism (cf. Anand, 2008; Cusak, 2000; Mulinari, 2010; Peterson, 1999; Petö, 2006; 2010; Yuval–Davis, 1980; 1997).

Several researchers have maintained in this context that ideology, as a form of political thought, enables the leaders of a political party to connect with their faithful (cf. Canovan, 2002; Charteris–Black, 2009; Freedon, 1998a; Şandru, 2010). Put differently, in the framework of contemporary democratic multi–party regimes, the distance between the *people*, understood as the citizenry searching for appropriate representatives for their political interests, and political leaders, searching to be elected and represent ‘their people’ as being the *people*, is bridged by ideology, which in fact provides ‘a simplified map of the political world and motivate[s] their followers by bestowing an almost religious significance on political doctrines and symbols’ (Canovan, 2002: 29).

An immediate consequence of ideology functioning as a bridge between a political party and its possible electorate is its dependence upon social and historical circumstances, displaying a significant degree of geographical variation

(Freeden, 1998a: 54; Stanley, 2008: 98; Şandru, 2010: 221). More clearly, political ideology is contingent upon the specificities of the countries in which its manifestation is examined, both in terms of historical context and political, social, cultural and economic particularities of each country selected for investigation. The ideological production may therefore be regarded as a continuous process, through which interested political actors create, borrow, and accommodate consecrated ideas, within the framework of generally permissible and legitimated meanings of the ideology. Consequently, an ideology may ‘follow a developmental sequence during which its components will subtly change. Over a long period of time [...] its core may shed or acquire concepts, and its morphology may undergo some transformation.’ (Freeden, 1998a: 89) Particularly this developmental sequence of ideological production and its inherent contingency upon specific historical and social conditions are of interest in the present study.

### **1.1.1 POLITICAL IDEOLOGY, DISCOURSE, AND LANGUAGE: ENTER CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS**

One should bear in mind that ideology finds in discourse the most appropriate medium for its manifestation and reproduction. At this point, some theoretical explanations are required. The conceptualisation of discourse that I employ in the present study follows Teun van Dijk’s multidisciplinary perspective, which in turn ‘combines an analysis of linguistic, cognitive, social and cultural aspects of text and talk in context, and does so from a critical, socio–political perspective’ (van Dijk, 1998: 193). Discourse has nonetheless a restrictive meaning here, in that it concerns only verbal and written means of expression, thereby excluding other semiotic codes – such as motion pictures, or different forms of non–verbal communication (Fairclough, 2003: 1–11; Koller, 2009: 121; van Dijk, 1998: 193–199; Wodak, 2006: 180–181).

With this in mind, here discourse entails a multi–layered definition. At first, discourse is understood as a written communicative event that positions the definition of discourse at the level of daily practice. For example, such a communicative act minimally involves a writer/speaker (of interest here are political leaders) and a receptive audience. Maintaining the same line of reasoning, the leaders’ envisaged followers are ‘their people’; this category also allows for the presence of an external observer, namely the researcher. It also presumes a particular context: for instance this could be what is written in the pages of the party organ during a certain timeframe. In addition, such a written discourse is required to be globally coherent. As such, the discourse of a certain political leader has to form a meaning unit – more clearly, a coherent system of meaning – ‘not only a physical unit of continuous expression’ (van Dijk, 1998: 195). These aspects notwithstanding, discourse entails even a more abstract level, as text of a social domain or genre (topically here, political discourse), though it

entails ‘a socially constituted set of such genres, associated with a social domain’ (van Dijk, 1998: 196).

An important observation, in relation to the matter at stake, is that discourse itself is not a mere vessel that transports ideological messages from the ideologues to receptive audiences, but actually is a constitutive part of the ideological construct<sup>10</sup>. In other words, the language – which can be broken down further into words, grammar, and structure – employed by the party chair to convey radical right populist discourse to the targeted audience is not innocent. Some of the words employed by the party chair might also be used by, for instance, a trade union leader but the meaning given to these words, and the conceptual framework they call into mind, are very specific and pertain to the manner in which the radical right ideology makes sense of the ‘real world’. More clearly I regard language, which enables the manifestation, transfer, and communication of gendered meaning through discourse, as a major means for the circulation of ideology within a given political setting since language is a constitutive environment for the crafting of gendered political identities, and naturalising certain ideological representations of men and women as ‘natural truths’, and ‘common sense’ (cf. Bucholtz & Hall, 2004: 492; Cameron, 2006: 148; Holborow, 2007: 53; Lazar, 2005: 11–14; Norval, 2000: 316; Weiss & Wodak, 2007: 15).

Among these ideological representations, one of particular interest here is the depiction of the family as ‘naturally’ consisting of a man (oftentimes, though not always explicitly, acknowledged as the head of said family unit) and a woman (implicitly, as a matter of ‘common sense’, relegated a subordinate and dependant position) involved in a (legally sanctioned) monogamous heterosexual union, which results in (numerous) offspring. The family thus ideologically construed may be then used for political ends, for example, extrapolating the binary gendered hierarchy described above, with the help of metaphorical constructions, to organise the social relations of an entire *people* within a given country.

At the level of discourse, then, metaphor, both in its most tangible form as metaphorical expression easily distinguishable in text but also in its abstract cognitive form that requires specific awareness of particular conceptual structures at work in language, represents ‘one of a number of linguistic, cognitive and symbolic resources employed by political leaders for communicating ideology’ (Charteris–Black, 2009: 143). On this matter it is worth noting that the Conceptual Metaphor Theory, which is concerned with the study of metaphor in language very much like Critical Discourse Analysis, represents a research paradigm in the study of language, reuniting several distinct but cognate research

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<sup>10</sup> Affirming the mutually constitutive relationship between discourse and ideology, I operate a key theoretical delimitation for the study of radical right populism. In other words, I maintain that radical right populism is more than just a style of doing politics (Deegan–Krause & Haughton, 2009), or a normative judgement (cf. Laclau, 2005; Leaman, 2004; Rupnik, 2007). Positioning radical right populism as a self-sufficient, albeit thin-centred political ideology, I have indicated that the analysis of selected empirical material has been undertaken from this theoretical standpoint.

programmes. In this sense, a critical investigation of conceptual metaphors – in the context of the present study those conceptual structures that directly pertain to the national community construed along a family logic, and the gendered hierarchy at work in such a construct – entails an approach that builds on the productive extension of the discourse’s ability to do ideological work, which characterises Critical Discourse Analysis. In other words, it marks the emergence of Critical Conceptual Metaphor Theory in the study of conceptual structures (cf. Charteris-Black, 2004; 2011; Hart, 2010; Semino, 2008).

### 1.1.2 A GENEALOGY OF GENDERED CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS: AIMS AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The present investigation, which aims to unveil the ideological support provided by certain conceptual metaphors at work in radical right populist discourses, may be regarded as an effort to widen the critical discourse analysis tradition, which primarily questions how power relations are constituted, consolidated, and reified through discourse (Fairclough, 2003: 75–77; Hart, 2010: 6–8; Stenvoll, 2008: 36–37; van Dijk, 1998: 164; Wodak, 2006: 179–181; Wodak & Meyer, 2009: 13–15). The present study also entails a further expansion of the analysis of ‘gender, power, and ideology in discourse’ that characterises feminist critical discourse analysis (Lazar, 2005) in the direction of examining gendered conceptual metaphors (Ahrens & Lee, 2009).

What sets it apart, however, is particularly the preoccupation with the gendered aspect of such conceptual structures, thereby representing an interdisciplinary dialogue between political science – especially the study of radical right populism; communication studies – mainly the relationship between the radical right populist leader and contemporary media logic; and conceptual metaphor theory – particularly the critical analysis of conceptual metaphors; from a decidedly feminist perspective. It aims to account for the ideological work the aforementioned metaphorical structures do in depicting, reifying, and productively preserving across time patriarchal gendered hierarchies – with the traditional heteronormative family as the ideal – in the context of radical right populist discourses. To afford more clarity to the present study, the following closely interrelated research questions are posed:

- *How does radical right populist ideology work through discourse to give specific expression to the hierarchical gender binary?* The focus here is on the discursive means afforded to ideology to create and reify the hierarchical gender binary. In other words, it is not only a matter of researching how the hierarchical gender binary is reproduced in radical right populist discourse; rather, it reflects the importance of the ideological construct behind the discourse that does that. So my effort is

to highlight ideology as central, and discourse as a means of its manifestation.

- Considering the appropriation of the heteronormative family construct to that of the *people* in radical right populist discourses with the aid of conceptual metaphors<sup>11</sup>, I concentrate on two cases: the radical right populist parties in Romania and Sweden. With this in mind, the more specific research question becomes: *How do the two party leaders in these countries use the NATION IS A FAMILY conceptual metaphor and its adjoining metaphorical cluster to construe the hierarchical gender binary and with what effects?*
- Finally, while concentrating more closely on the successive discursive articulations of selected conceptual metaphor: *How do the two party leaders construe masculinity performatives with the help of conceptual metaphors?* Of interest here is to investigate how the two party leaders account for their own masculinity performative particularly among the other performatives of masculinity and more generally among performatives of gender in the national family context.

### 1.1.3 DELIMITATIONS: EMPIRICAL MATERIAL, TIMEFRAME, CASES, AND LANGUAGE(S)

On the matter of discursive production, reification, and dissemination of ideology, a highly influential channel for such processes is represented by newspapers, and other such media institutions. Furthermore, several researchers have maintained that editorial columns represent not only the dominant editorial views of the respective media outlet, but are in fact diligent organs in the service of their owners, and thereby mirror faithfully the organisation's driving ideology (Hart, 2010: 16–19; van Dijk, 1998: 187–189; 2006: 138). Such a stance needs, however, to be corroborated with the findings of researchers of radical right populism that have concluded that the media have played a crucial role in emergence of such political forces to the forefront of mainstream politics in various national settings. Equally important, to judge from their findings, has been the radical right populist leader as the main voice representing their party's ideological stance and the most suitable for satisfying the contemporary media logic that appears highly responsive to emotive and passionate appeals, abrasive language, and public protest (Bos, van der Brug & de Vreese, 2010: 157–159; 2011: 184–185; Ellinas, 2010: 32–33; Mazzoleni, 2003: 6–7). However, the present study does not operate a drastic separation of leaders from the parties they chair; rather, acknowledging

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<sup>11</sup> The present study subscribes to the practice adopted in cognitive linguistics to employ small upper case to represent abstract reasoning – conceptual metaphors as they are to be defined later in the text – (Kövecses, 2002: 4). In so doing, I acknowledge the impact of said discipline on other social sciences concerned with the study of metaphors.

that in the electoral competition ‘the party leader factor is, by and large, a function of the party factor’ (Karvonen, 2010: 84), the analysis concentrates on the media production of these leaders as illustrative articulations of the radical populist ideology in discourse.

More clearly, while acknowledging the role of media outlets in the rise to prominence of radical right populist leaders as the main representatives of radical right populist ideology, in order to counter the possible distortions that mainstream media channels might be operating in mediating (from radical right populist leaders to their intended audience and possible political supporters) these ideological messages, I am focusing in the present study on those media outlets directly connected to the radical right populist parties. Even more narrowly considered, key here are the editorials authored by radical right populist leaders. These editorial columns have been supplemented at times with interviews of the party leaders published in the selected party organs in which they would comment specifically on various socio-political developments that otherwise have not been addressed in their authored editorials<sup>12</sup>. In so doing, my aim has been to gain unmediated access to the discursive manifestations of radical right populism as envisaged by the party leaders. At the same time, I have also attempted to address the challenge posited by the presence of a *cordon sanitaire* that mainstream media might build around radical right populist parties and their leaders, effectively boycotting their attempts to make their stances known to a wider swathe of voters (Ellinas, 2010: 76–124; Rydgren, 2006: 106–108).

Concerning the investigation of radical right populist expressions in Romania, the empirical material has been compiled from the pages of the PRM organ, the weekly Greater Romania Magazine (*Revista România Mare*; ISSN 1220–7616). The material was gathered taking into consideration the selected timeframe, from January 2000 – the issue anticipating the Romanian Parliamentary and Presidential elections that took place later that year – to June 2009 – the issue published after the European Parliamentary elections. Since the newspaper in question has not been available online, photocopies have been made of the relevant issues. These have been archived at the PRM regional headquarters in Cluj–Napoca/Kolozsvár<sup>13</sup> – in May 2007, respectively in June 2010. It is worth noting that only those pages containing the leader’s weekly editorials and press

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<sup>12</sup> In order to ensure a comprehensive, coherent, and unitary referencing system for the collected empirical material in both cases, I have implemented a specific referencing style. More clearly, each empirical item is not referenced by author, but by indicating the issue number in each case, followed by the year of publication, and the corresponding page number. A detailed list of the cited empirical items has been annexed to the end of this study.

<sup>13</sup> Officially, the name is recorded only in Romanian (Cluj–Napoca). The city also has an unofficial Hungarian name (Kolozsvár). These names testify to the city’s historical cultural–economic importance for both ethnic communities. Despite the significant Hungarian minority in the city, it has never become officially bilingual. In turn, the city witnessed a period of fervent Romanian nationalism, for over a decade after the fall of the Ceausescu’s regime. I use both forms one next to another in sign of respect and tolerance for both communities.

releases have been selected for the purpose of this study, since the newspaper itself generally has voluminous issues (generally, 24 pages per issue).

With regard to the examination of radical right populist manifestations in Sweden, the empirical material has been collected from the pages of the SD newspaper, namely the Sweden Democrat Courier (*SD-Kuriren*; ISSN 1103–4009 (0284–6861)). In this case, the empirical material has been gradually gathered during an extended visiting fellowship at the Stockholm University, which commenced in April 2008 and lasted until the study's conclusion. The newspaper has been available in hard copy (with an average of 12 pages per issue) for subscription. Nevertheless, I have opted to download all issues within the chosen timeframe, from October 2005 – the newspaper's first issue in the aftermath of SD leadership change – to October 2010 – the post-elections issue. I have performed the download directly from the party's official website, which earlier had a direct link to the newspaper's own pages<sup>14</sup>. In this case, I have widened the selection of empirical material, including the leader's editorials, his press releases and debate articles, and other pieces in which he had been interviewed on daily political matters.

I have focused in the present study on the inherent ideological transformations that, in my view, enable the selected radical right populist parties not only to craft their ideological profile to be distinguishable from other parties in their respective countries but also permit the researched parties to react to various historical and social circumstances. In a sense they engage in a constant (re)interpretation of their cardinal ideological tenets with the purpose of gaining parliamentary representation and participate in the forming of governing coalitions. Such a stance is, to a certain extent, related to the 'lifespan model' employed by Susi Meret (2010) in her study of radical right populist ideology. I maintain nonetheless that over-drawing the metaphor of the lifespan of a radical right populist party being like that of a human being may deflect scholarly attention from precisely those various ideological transformations and adaptations of interest. Additionally, the present study has a specific timeframe, which neither contains the selected radical right populist parties' foundation, nor their political demise; rather, it represents a clearly defined temporal slice of the political activity of selected radical right populist parties.

A second distinction I make is between the specificity of researching how the discursive manifestations of radical right populist ideology under scrutiny gain consistency through the use of particular conceptual structures and rhetorical political analysis. While also interested in the analysis of the substantive content of political discourse, scholars of rhetorical political analysis position their studies in a decidedly dialogic context. Consequently, they pay attention to political

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<sup>14</sup> In late August 2010 and then again in the eve of elections day, several cyber-attacks were directed against the SD official webpages (those of the party's main organisation, the newspaper, and several others). Consequently, the newspaper archive has been placed behind a password-protected wall.

arguments, regarded as loci for political persuasion. In other words, of interest for rhetorical political analysis is the dynamic between those political actors involved in the argumentative situation under study (cf. Finlayson, 2007; 2012). In my view, such a take is not particularly suitable for the present analysis, since the radical right populist parties have often been treated with indifference, if not fenced off outright from the political arguments in which established parties engage, as noted above.

I have therefore opted to concentrate the analysis on the effective adaptations of radical right ideology to the specificities of historical, geographical, and cultural contexts they are located in, and as such to make use of the party programmes of chosen radical right populist parties as anchoring posts, rather than as main empirics for the present examination. Under these circumstances, I have deemed a genealogical approach – as suggested by Michel Foucault (cf. 1990; 1998; 2000) – a more appropriate methodological means to investigate these transformations. More clearly, selecting as empirical material for the present investigation the media production of radical right populist leaders, I have attempted to account for the ideology's operative (re)positioning and (re)interpretation, which in my view afford a more vivid and veridical picture of radical right populist ideology (Freeden, 1998a: 79–80; Meret, 2010: 58–61).

Another important delimitation concerns the choice and number of cases that I have selected for the analysis. Having in mind that the present study has a decidedly qualitative aspect, it would not have been feasible to consider a large number of cases. In this context, I have selected the two cases through a two-step process. The first step pertained to focusing explicitly on a set of conceptual structures – more clearly, the *NATION IS A FAMILY* and the *STRICT FATHER* conceptual metaphors – to be researched in the context of radical right populist discourses. The second step involved a careful evaluation of the cases' complexity and specificity, in the sense of selecting those cases that I have considered might provide competing perspectives on the use of the aforesaid conceptual constructions. This was undertaken with particular attention to the countries' different historical, socio-economic and political developments in the European periphery. The Romanian case (the PRM) illustrates the development of radical right populism in Central and Eastern Europe, whilst the Swedish case (the SD) problematises the previously considered failed case of radical right populism in Northern Europe (Carmel, 1999: 143; George & Bennett, 2005: 83–84; Landman, 2005: 41; Platt, 2007: 110). It is worth noting in this context that I regard the two selected cases – the PRM in Romania and the SD in Sweden – as 'heuristic case studies', since the ambition of this study is to relate to and contribute to theory building in a deliberate fashion, thereby purposefully pursuing generalisable relations in Critical Metaphor Theory (Eckstein, 1992: 143–147; George & Bennett, 2005: 75).

A final remark on the matter: I am aware that such a qualitative analysis is heavily dependent on the author's subjective abilities and limitations to interpret the collected empirical material, and as such these may have a serious impact on the validity and reliability of such a study. In my attempt to address this challenge, I have relied on feminist reflexivity as praxis in undertaking my research (Lazar, 2005: 14–19). I thereby acknowledge that the skills I am equipped with, which I have employed in the present investigation, have been influenced by my personal academic trajectory and exposure to specific scholarly communities (most importantly, membership in the feminist research community), my acquired language skills – in both Romanian, and Swedish – and my intellectual capacity to decode, and interpret specific cultural codes, and to convey the results of such cognitive processes in English<sup>15</sup>. Put differently, I have made use of my intricate insider, yet outsider, relationship I have developed over the years with the two countries, cultures, and languages where the objects of my study are located in order to produce the most effective insights into the collected empirics (Carmel, 1999: 145). Although I am aware that a perfect replication – in the qualitative understanding of the process – may probably not be possible, I have been motivated to undertake such an analysis by other feminist researchers' appeals for a situated subjectivity in the analysis of conceptual metaphor in discourse (Mottier, 2008: 188).

## 1.2 DISPOSITION OF THE STUDY

At the time this study was initiated, in early 2007, radical right populist parties across Europe hovered somehow below the radar of wider public attention, being mainly under the scrutiny of several scholars whose works were considered as the field's theoretical cannon (cf. Betz, 2002; 2005; Betz & Immerfall, 1998; Canovan, 1981; 2002; 2005; Eatwell, 2000; 2005; Ignazi, 2003; Kitschelt & McGann, 1997; Mudde, 2000; 2004; 2005; Norris, 2005; Ramet, 1999; Rydgren, 2002; 2006; Taggart, 2000). The electoral performance of these parties differed dramatically from the present situation. In Romania the PRM had a total of 48 representatives (MPs) in the Romanian Houses of Parliament. The PRM was a significant political actor in Romanian politics and an important member of the parliamentary opposition. The PRM, like other Romanian parties, was preparing for the first Parliamentary elections decoupled from the Presidential ones, which were

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<sup>15</sup> To enable a seamless line of reasoning, in the main body of the text I have provided the English translations of the Romanian and Swedish original empirical material. I have performed these translations myself, if not stated otherwise, and I then had them checked by two native speakers of Romanian and Swedish respectively – to ensure the correctness of the translation. In so doing, I have attempted to convey, as much as possible, the various nuances of original language, thereby opting for providing rich and nuanced English translations. This notwithstanding, I have at times opted to relay certain words in their original form whenever I have considered they had a strong connection to the cognitive structures under investigation.

scheduled to take place on 30 November 2008. The party appeared to have a devoted core electorate and researchers considered the PRM to be a typical example of radical right populism in the region with a discourse characterised by anti-Semitic, anti-Hungarian, and anti-Romani appeals (cf. Andreescu, 2005; Chen, 2003; Gallagher, 2005; Mudde, 2005; Shafir, 2008).

In Northern Europe, in contrast, the radical right populist parties did not enjoy such strong numbers. For example, from the 2007 Finnish Parliamentary elections the PS/SF had only 5 MPs; the lowest number of elected representatives of any party in the national Parliament. Similarly in Sweden, the SD had not even managed to go past the 4 percent electoral threshold, and consequently had no representatives in the Swedish Parliament. Some researchers even deemed Sweden to be an exceptional case of having immunity from the rising radical right populist presence across Europe by indicating the previously failed attempt of a party with a similar political agenda to take root in mainstream Swedish politics, and the extensive media embargo against the SD, coupled with a strong opposition from the political establishment as the main explanations for such a development (cf. Hannerz, 2006; Dahlström & Esaiasson, 2013; Mudde, 2007; Rydgren, 2002; 2006; Taggart, 2000; Widfeldt, 2000; 2007).

Presently, the situation differs dramatically. Just months before the 2008 Parliamentary elections in Romania, Law no. 35/2008 introduced an elaborate mixed majoritarian electoral system and, subsequently Governmental Ordinance no. 802/2008 established the single-candidate electoral colleges within the existing administrative units, some of them varying significantly from the earlier introduced legal stipulations. The PRM had vociferously opposed these developments accusing the governing coalition of gerrymandering; alas, the Supreme Court rejected their claims. In the ensuing elections, only 39.2 percent of the Romanian population with a voting right cast their ballot. The PRM performed poorly, polling only 3.4 percent for the two Chambers of Parliament, significantly below the 5 percent electoral threshold and thereby lost its parliamentary seats (cf. Downs, 2009; Marian & King, 2010; Stan & Vancea, 2009). However, it appears that the PRM succeeded in maintaining part of its loyal electorate; in the 2009 European Parliamentary elections, the PRM polled 8.6 percent of the votes and sent three representatives to the European Parliament (Sum, 2010: 21). In the Presidential elections the same year, the PRM leader received 5.6 percent of the votes in the first round, insufficient to allow him to progress into the second round (Muntean, Pop-Eleches, Popescu, 2010: 756).

In contrast to the downward evolution of the PRM in Romania, in Sweden it appears that the SD is no longer the exceptional failed case confirming the rise of such parties elsewhere across Europe. Indeed, at a closer look, the SD has registered a constant albeit very slow-paced increase in its electoral support among Swedish voters. Although in the 2006 Parliamentary elections the SD has polled only 2.9 percent, this entailed a more than a doubling of their vote from the

previous elections in 2002 (Agius, 2007: 586; Mattsson, 2009: 35; Widfeldt, 2007: 823–823). Following this pattern, in the 2009 European Parliamentary elections the SD received the support of 3.3 percent of the Swedish voters – still below the electoral threshold. Eventually, in the 2010 Swedish Parliamentary elections, the SD achieved its parliamentary breakthrough, polling 5.7 percent of the votes – safely past the 4 percent threshold, and slightly above the results of two other established parties in Swedish politics (Hellström, Nilsson & Stoltz, 2012: 186; Widfeldt, 2011: 586).

In light of the political developments in Romania and Sweden described above, the aim of the present study has been to document the genealogical articulations across time – the aforesaid repositioning and (re)interpretations – that the conceptual metaphors of interest here – the *NATION IS A FAMILY*, respectively the *STRICT FATHER* – reveal across radical right populist discourses. The focus in this context has been put on the discourses of the leaders of those parties espousing such an ideological stance. As such, the ambition has been to undertake a feminist genealogical analysis of the conceptual metaphors that underpin radical right populist ideology. With this in mind, the present study has been structured as follows.

Chapter two has a twofold purpose. On the one hand, I provide a comprehensive overview of the radical right populist scholarship, fleshing out the field's theoretical diversity. I then evidence what I deem to be the main tenets of radical right populism that various canonical theoretical approaches appear to agree on. On the other hand, I challenge the silence of this theoretical canon about gender when defining the ideological apparatus that underpins radical right populist manifestations. The stance I thereby introduce at this point is that not being aware of men's own gendered identity and not researching the power binary hierarchies between men and women at work within radical right populist parties, in fact projects men in a normative position rendering white ethnic majority middle-class heterosexual masculinity invisible. This places the burden of intelligibility on all those falling off the normative spectrum, in other words all those individuals that are different from this norm in terms of gender, ethnicity/'race'<sup>16</sup>, social class, and sexual orientation.

Chapter three consequently brings gender into the study of populism. Such an approach is enabled by exploiting productively the contact points between theories of populism and those of nationalism, especially the commonalities shared by the building block of radical right populist ideology – the *people* – with that of nationalism – the *nation*. More clearly, I make use of the feminist

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<sup>16</sup> Employing the scare quotes when referring to matters related to alleged distinctions between people based on racial classifications, I follow in the footsteps of Anthony Appiah Kwame who has contested the reality of 'races' and unveiled it to be socially constructed and historically contingent (Kwame, 1993). I am nonetheless aware of the critique of such practice raised by Jaqueline Stevens, who has argued that by the same measure scholars should employ scare quotes for such concepts as gender, nation, and ethnicity or run the risk of ascribing them an ontological status (Stevens, 1999: 23).

theorising of nationalism, being particularly interested in the ideological interconnectedness between nationalism and gender. In relation to this, I consider the symbiotic relation between patriarchal gender binary structuring – that postulates women’s submission to men – and the construction of the nation – that celebrates men’s power as leaders and defenders of the national construct and sanctifies women’s motherhood – of key importance for the present study. I thereby argue that the *people* is envisioned as a family construction that contours a heteronormative worldview ordering the society according to a paternalist logic that contains women in an inferior and dependent position – even when temporarily and conditionally allowed in politics. The representative of sovereign *people* appears invested masculine attributes – *people’s* pride needs to be restored and their insecurities in the rapidly changing environment of the new millennium need to be dispelled by a (male) leader.

Chapter four revolves around the tasks of designing a suitable methodology and explicating the choice of empirical material for the present academic undertaking. In this context, I argue that metaphor – the crucial concept of this study – is actively enforcing a specific understating of how social relations are to be perceived, of how certain political issues are to be discussed, and brings to the top of the political agenda specific issues while concomitantly obscuring some others. Put simply, I maintain that the use of metaphor by political actors is ideologically motivated. As such, I underline the essential difference between conceptual and surface realisation of metaphor, defining *metaphorical concepts* in contrast to *metaphorical expressions*. Furthermore, I make explicit *metaphorical clusters* to represent a cohesive system of metaphorical concepts, and their subsequent discursive articulations that depart from a common condition or image to transmit a specific experience or idea. Then I introduce the two key conceptual metaphors at work in this study: the NATION IS A FAMILY and the STRICT FATHER, which, I argue, articulate a distinctive metaphorical cluster that structures the intelligibility of right-wing conservative discourse and thereby provides it with a specific ideological consistency. Considered from a feminist perspective, the two conceptual metaphors appear constrained to a compulsory family-centred heterosexuality. This engenders the entrapment of both women and men into patriarchal heteronormativity, which posits the family’s head as the source of authority and guardian of the ‘natural order’. In my attempt to broaden the analytical scope of metaphor research to account for the wider discursive context and inherent ideological transformations across time, I develop a *genealogical perspective* that enables a cyclical argumentation of the analysis. More clearly, I underline the importance of the context in which the analysed events are embedded, and of the minute documentation of the consecutive repositioning and (re)interpretation of the conceptual structures – accounting for the development and ramifications of the metaphorical cluster under scrutiny. Subsequently, I detail and explain the choice of the two particular manifestations

of radical right populist discourses in Europe of interest for the present analysis, namely the PRM and the SD.

Chapter five explores the radical right populist ideology in the Romanian context. I analyse the genealogical articulations of the NATION IS A FAMILY conceptual metaphor, at first identifying the alleged moral wholeness of the Romanian national family. On this matter, I underline the productive juxtaposition between ethnic ‘purity’ and Orthodox Christianity as its quintessential values. This, I argue, confirms the moral supremacy of the Romanian national family, and concurrently naturalises a gendered hierarchy with the figure of male ethnic Romanians at the top. Delving into the opportunity opened to women to participate in parliamentary politics and thereby represent the national family, I show the institutionalisation of masculinity in politics in general and the reification of aggressiveness as inherent to the political discourse in particular. This conceptual metaphor, I maintain further, is developed to position Romanian men as epitomes of political agency and financial supporters of their extended families. Additionally, it relegates women to the domestic sphere as ‘natural’ caregivers of other dependants – the offspring of their Romanian men, the elderly, the sick, and those socially disadvantaged – and a position of *less-than-men* in politics. The genealogical expansion of the NATION IS A FAMILY also circumscribes those failing the conditions of being a part of the national family, either in the form of outside Others – the Jews, Hungarians, and Romani – or those internal Others not fulfilling the heteronormative expectations – particularly homosexual men. Connected to this, I identify the STRICT FATHER conceptual metaphor, which constitutes the radical right populist chair as the providential leader to enforce a new moral order and bring about national redemption. I conclude that the heteronormative matrix appears to be safely secured in place and proves to be flexible enough to accommodate ever more categories of exclusion.

Chapter six, in turn, details the articulations of radical right populist ideology in the Swedish context. Focusing on the (re)interpretations of the *folkhem* (in translation, the home/house of [Swedish] people) – taken as demonstrating the NATION IS A FAMILY conceptual metaphor in Sweden – I show the centrality of welfare chauvinism within this discourse. The identification of the *folkhem*’s true inhabitants with the disenfranchised citizenry among the Swedish ethnic majority allows for the crystallisation of a critique of mainstream politics, espousing a strictly conservative heteronormative stance that thinly disguises a xenophobic attitude. Such a stance is articulated by defining the national family’s Others – either as the *not-being* Swedish migrant Other, or the *less-than-perfect* Swedish members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBTQI) community. Additionally, it incorporates an ideal of patriarchal family structuring – in which women active in politics are criticised for being *less-than-men* (misgoverned by feelings, and incapable of rational thinking), and failing in their expected position of devoted mothers of Swedish offspring. Under these circumstances, I argue, the

claims that both the SD as well as its leader have reached ‘maturity’, and their delimitation from the antiquated political establishment is evidence of the crystallisation of a metaphorical construct centred on an ideal of masculinity underpinned by a combative political participation, youthfulness, and preoccupation with an idealised past. Such a construct however departs significantly from that of the STRICT FATHER employed by other European radical right populist parties and understood to surmount the national family construct. These particularities notwithstanding, I conclude, the metaphorical cluster at work in Swedish radical right populism emphasises heteronormative hegemonic structuring, which is underpinned by deeply entrenched xenophobia, coupled with fear for miscegenation and homophobia.

Chapter seven assembles together the study’s principal arguments, presents the main conclusions and identifies some key issues that are to be considered for further research. The main findings of the detailed analyses in the two national settings are thus corroborated to synthesise a model for the critical evaluation of the metaphorical cluster centred on the conception of national family. In this context, I show that centrally located within this cluster lie specific masculinity performatives (in their diverse manifestation, either as a strict father figure, or a youthful challenger) that are unveiled to be in an intrinsic dynamic relation with certain femininity performatives (that negatively depict emancipation and equality as facets of alienation). The gender dyad thus in place is uncovered to be ideologically sanctioned as desirable ideals within radical right populist discourses. This notwithstanding, I underline the specificities that characterise the manifestation of the metaphorical cluster when comparing the ideological manifestations through discourse of selected radical right populist parties. On this matter I discuss the place of the political man in the national family, and indicate how this manifests in the form of a fatherly figure, or a youthful challenger, both underpinned by staunchly patriarchal understandings of the national construct. I eventually return to the ideological productivity of gendered conceptual metaphors and indicate several new avenues of research that may bring forth valuable insights on how the conception of structuring the national construct along family lines may be manifest in some other national settings within radical right populist discourses.

## 2 THEORETICAL AND ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK (I): CHALLENGING THE LACK OF GENDER IN THEORIES OF RADICAL RIGHT POPULISM

The *people* terminology is oftentimes used to denote a generic reunion of an indefinite number of human beings. Grammatically, the *people* appears as a multifaceted element, either as a collective noun for a plurality of individuals with specific unifying traits, as for instance in the phrase ‘these people are righteous’, or as the suppletive plural of the noun ‘person’. Rhetorically, the *people* can also be employed as a singular form for an indefinite ethnic group or nation in such phrases as ‘our people’ or ‘the Romanian people’. When used for political purposes, the *people* proves yet again its versatility. It can convey a meaning of solidarity – a nation for instance – when used in such phrases as ‘the Romanian people’ above. Alternatively, it can embody an allegedly legitimate segment of the population or a class, as for instance in the phrase ‘the common people are righteous’, which usually represents a presumably genuine and ‘normal’ *people* in a stark opposition to another fluid political entity – that is the ‘elite’. In this regard, Margaret Canovan has perhaps managed to capture most successfully the concept’s ambiguity. This versatility, in turn, represents a serious analytical challenge for those scholars who decide to analyse its shifting conceptual contents:

The great charm of ‘the people’ for a politician – and the fundamental source of exasperation for a political scientist – is that the term manages to be both empty of precise meaning and full of rhetorical resonance. When used to mean ‘everyone’, it is conveniently vague and *sounds* definite, conveying a sense of solidity and harmony. When used to mean a particular class or section of the population, it gains in definition but somehow manages to avoid losing its overtones of comprehensiveness and legitimacy.

*(Canovan, 1981: 285–286) (Italics in original)*

With this in mind, the theorising of radical right populist manifestations in Europe unveils a high degree of diversity with numerous conceptual labels, which are rather similar in meaning, describing the same political ideology – that of radical right populism – and referring to the same political forces; the populist parties of the radical right. For the purpose of present study, radical right populism denotes the umbrella–concept that incorporates scholarship researching radical right parties (cf. Art, 2011; Kitschelt, 2007; Loch, 2001; Minkenberg & Perrineau, 2007; Norris, 2005; Startin, 2010; Učeň, 2007), extreme–right parties (cf. Caiani & della Porta, 2011; Eatwell, 2000; Hainsworth & Mitchell, 2000; Ignazi, 2003; Mudde, 2000; Newell, 2000; Rydgren, 2005), the new populist right parties (cf. Laycock, 2005; Mudde, 2004), far right parties (cf. Morjé Howard, 2010; Taggart, 2004), anti–immigration populist parties (cf. Morjé

Howard, 2000; Van Spanje & Van der Brug, 2007), right–wing populist parties (cf. Betz & Meret, 2009; Cuperus, 2003; Helms, 1997; Kriesi *et al*, 2008; Laclau, 2005), right–wing radical parties (cf. Luther, 2000; Williams, 2006), neo–nationalist parties (Banks & Gingrich, 2006), national–populist parties (cf. Hermet, 1997; Perrineau, 1997; Taguieff, 1997; Winock, 1997), radical right populist parties (cf. Betz & Immerfall, 1998; Hellström & Nilsson, 2010; Rydgren, 2003; 2006) and conversely the populist radical right parties (cf. Egedy, 2009; Mudde, 2007; Zaslove, 2009), or simply the populist parties (cf. Abts & Rummens, 2007; Canovan, 1999; Fella & Ruzza, 2009; Ghodsee, 2008; Jasiewicz, 2008; Ruzza & Fella, 2011). Rather unsurprisingly, researchers have been employing these terms interchangeably across time in a field that has expanded exponentially in the past two decades. Nonetheless, they seem to generally agree on the ‘family resemblance’ of these parties, which is underpinned by a shared ‘thin–centred ideology’ – a point that is addressed in the subsequent section. It is worth noting, in this context, that I review scholarship dealing with those parties espousing a radical right populist ideology that appear to accept – at least nominally – the basic rules of parliamentary democracy, thereby not focusing on scholarship analysing neo–fascist, or other such extreme fringe movements. This has been a cardinal criterion for selecting the scholarship for review.

On closer inspection, however, the wealth of scholarship addressing radical right populism commonly appears to disregard the gender implications of its theorising. It only acknowledges the disproportionate presence of men amongst radical right populist parties’ rank and file and their supporters, and the overwhelming majority of male leaders at the helm of these parties (cf. Hellström & Nilsson, 2010; Ignazi, 2003; Laycock, 2005; Luther, 2000; Mudde, 2007; Rydgren, 2006; Widfeldt, 2000; Winkler & Schumann, 1998). An illustrative example of such an attitude comes from the influential work of Cas Mudde (2007). Although recognising that radical right populist parties have oftentimes been considered ‘men’s parties’ (*Männerparteien*), Mudde has nonetheless challenged the few feminist analytical inroads in the field. Having gender equality as the norm of understanding party politics was dismissed as a ‘feminist bias’; he has concomitantly disputed the assumption that all women hold non–patriarchal, feminist views on the gender roles (Mudde, 2007: 91). Mudde then concurred with other researchers that most women are present in the radical right parties because of their male partners or continue the politics initiated by their fathers (cf. Klandermans & Mayer, 2005), and merely acknowledged that women oftentimes play subordinate roles in these parties, as the ‘party lists are filled up with the names of partners and siblings of male candidates’ (Mudde, 2007: 107). Mudde concluded his criticism of feminist analyses in the field suggesting that the different socialisation of men and women is the main factor that leads ‘to a lower level of political efficacy among women; this in turn explains why more women

than men vote conservatively, i.e. for established centre parties, and shy away from parties that are new and perceived as extreme' (Mudde, 2007: 118).

Nevertheless, such a line of reasoning seems to be buttressed by factual error, in the sense that it interprets gender in a reductionist manner that accounts for where women and men – seen in a rather monolithic fashion, as wholly distinctive and unitary gender identities – are present in these parties. In my opinion, this overlooks the gendered aspect of power relations and how these are reflected in the identity constructions at stake – the interplay between masculinities and femininities – and how these in turn are performed – in the Butlerian sense, as in being constantly reiterated, contested and renegotiated, and then enforced (cf. Butler, 1990; 1993; 1995; 2004). More clearly, I maintain that the major pitfall of gender-blind scholarship on populism is that it constantly disregards the importance of gender and interrelated axes of social structuring in the ideological constructions of identity. I maintain further that such a gender-blind theorising posits the problem of constructing a whole field of knowledge as apathetic to gender, and thereby reifying a system of power relations that ignore the importance of analysing gendered hierarchies in social relations. More clearly, what I make reference to here is the power-knowledge nexus, which was investigated by Foucault in his seminal *Discipline and Punish* (1995). Foucault warned that the constitution of a field of knowledge is an effect of power relations and encouraged researchers to engage more critically in their analyses:

We should admit rather that power produces knowledge [...]; that power and knowledge directly imply one another; that there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations. [...] In short, it is not the activity of the subject of knowledge that produces a corpus of knowledge, useful or resistant to power, but power-knowledge, the processes and struggles that traverse it and of which it is made up, that determines the forms and possible domains of knowledge.

(Foucault, 1995: 27–28)

More clearly on the matter at stake in this chapter, a gender-blind theorisation of radical right populism runs the risk of legitimising the preference for what feminist scholars uncovered to be a masculinist, hard, and 'real' writing of political theory. Such a masculinist theorisation of the field merely reproduces existing power relations since the 'conceptual ordering of masculine over feminine is inextricable from political ordering imposed in state making and reproduced through masculinist discourse (political theory, religious dogma) that legitimises the state's hierarchical relations' (Peterson, 1999: 40). This has an immediate and direct effect on ourselves as social beings, because, as Monique Wittig had warned, 'there is nothing abstract about the power that sciences and theories have, to act materially and actually upon our bodies and minds, even if the discourse that

produces it is abstract. [...] All of the oppressed know this power and have had to deal with it' (Wittig, 1980: 160). Even more so, she continued, the scientific discourse dismisses the contesting voices as not being scientific, or not reaching the required level of theoretical abstraction, in other words naïvely confusing discourse and reality, or simply misunderstanding science altogether (Wittig, 1980: 160). Corroborating the aforesaid criticism regarding the impact of 'masculinist' science on the articulation of knowledge and refusal to allow contending voices to participate in crafting the discourse of knowledge with the Foucauldian argument on the intricate relationship between power and knowledge, I argue that this kind of theoretical silence about gender is troublesome. The present research project comes as a response to appeals for innovative ways to explore radical right populism (Mulinari & Neergaard, 2010), and particularly to examine the hierarchical gender binary – in general – and the masculinities – in particular – that underpin such political discourses (cf. Geden, 2005).

The present chapter has a twofold purpose. First, it presents the main tenets of radical right populist ideology theorising, detailing on the radical right populist 'party family' (cf. Ignazi, 2003; Kriesi *et al*, 2008; Mudde, 2000; 2007; Rydgren, 2005). Five features appear to characterise European radical right populism: nationalism and nativism, racism, xenophobia, new forms of democratic governance, and appeals for a strong state (Hermet, 1997: 45–46; Ignazi, 2003: 27; Mudde, 2000: 11; Taggart, 2004: 271–274). Second, the chapter emphasises the contact points between the theories of populism and those of nationalism, and consequently demonstrates that the constitutive elements of populist ideology – the idea of popular sovereignty embodied into the figure of the leader, and the Manichean opposition between a homogenous people and a purportedly corrupted and detached elite – are rarely investigated from a gender–informed vantage point. It thus prepares the ground for the subsequent chapter, which introduces a gender–sensitive perspective into the theory of populism making use of the wealth of previous feminist scholarship theorising nationalism (cf. Enloe, 1989; Nagel, 1998; 2000; Yuval–Davis, 1997; Walby, 2000; Waetjen, 2001), and underlines the construction of gendered hierarchies underpinned by centrally located ideals of masculinity (cf. Anand, 2007; Bracewell, 2000; Huyseune, 2000; Ferber, 2000; Norocel, 2010c).

## **2.1 THEORISING RADICAL RIGHT POPULISM: THE SILENCE ABOUT GENDER**

Scholars of radical right populism generally concur on the difficulty of defining the subject of their research. There seems nonetheless to be a certain degree of agreement on problematising it as a 'thin–centred ideology' (cf. Abts & Rummens,

2007; Canovan, 1999; Ignazi, 2003; Jungar, 2010; Mudde, 2000; 2007; Ruzza & Fella, 2011; Stanley, 2008) that portrays society to ‘*be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups, “the pure people” versus “the corrupt elite”, and which argues that politics should be an expression of the *volonté générale* (general will) of the people.*’ (Mudde, 2004: 543) (*Italics in original*) By and large, such theorising mentions three elements as constitutive of this thin ideology. First, the theoretical construct appears to rest on the dichotomous relationship between the *people* and elites (cf. Abts & Rummens, 2007; Barr, 2009; Canovan, 1999; Jungar, 2010; Laclau, 2005; Panizza, 2005). While there is a certain level of consensus among researchers that the establishment is criticised for its privileges, lack of accountability and alienation from the grievances of the commoners, some have suggested a Manichean distinction between the *people* and elites (Hermet, 1997; Mudde, 2004). More concretely, such a view parts the society dualistically into two clearly defined and hermetically contained entities: the *people* and their allies, on the one hand, and their enemies on the other. Some other researchers have argued, however, that populism, in general terms, should be seen as a means for a redemptive type of politics (Canovan, 1999). Second, (radical right) populism has been theorised as the ideology claiming to restore popular sovereignty and thus to override ossified structures (Canovan, 1999, Kriesi *et al*, 2008), or to put it simply, to open up the field to popular initiatives and referenda (Abts & Rummens, 2007). Third, the construction of the people renders a genuine, homogeneous (Albertazzi & McDonnell, 2008), and democratic sovereign (Canovan, 1999; Jungar, 2010), thereby an ideal totality (Laclau, 2005; Panizza, 2005). Nonetheless, the inherent tension between a genuine inclination for the betterment of the common *people* – on the one hand – and populist demagoguery – on the other – has been noted by scholars who warned that:

‘Populism’, in the common parlance of the day, embodies the tense coexistence between the ideas of demophilia and demagoguery. In other words ‘populism’, in its constitutive ambiguity, can be regarded as an ideological corruption of democracy, if the latter, which is founded upon transmittable principles, implies [...] the desire to instruct and educate the people, rather than to seduce it and make it act in the desired fashion.

(Taguieff, 1997: 11)

The type of populism that caught most scholarly attention in Europe, particularly since the beginning of the 1990s, is that arguably positioned to the right. It stems from the so-called ‘new right’ movement – or simply the New Right (*la Nouvelle Droite*, ND) – centred on the French philosopher Alain de Benoist in the 1970s. It is noteworthy that there is an inherent genealogical connection between these parties and the fascist and national-socialist parties of the interwar period, which is centred on, among others, their strong nationalism, centralist ideals of social organisation, and the idea of a ‘race-community’ (which later on

morphed into that of a unitary *people*) preserved and promoted through resisting foreign influences (Eley, 1990: 52; Ignazi, 2003: 32–33; Steiner, 1995: 13). Mudde has nonetheless argued that the fundamental difference between the extreme right – fascism, national–socialism, and their more recent ‘neo–’ developments – and the radical right populism founded on the ND principles resides in the latter’s at least nominal acceptance of democracy (Mudde, 2007: 31). Indeed, de Benoist has been instrumental in presenting to a wider audience the ideas of the Research and Study Group for European Civilization (*le Groupement de Recherches et d’Etudes pour la Civilisation Européenne*, GRECE) that he lead. The organisation was founded in 1968 as a ‘community of work and thought’ and not as a political movement, and its acronym (GRECE, means Greece in French) indicates the groups’ resolute rejection of Christianity and monotheism in general, and its admiration of the democratic model of the Greek city–states of antiquity. GRECE’s declared aim has been to engage into a meta–politics or, put simply, in a critique of the analytical, synthetic, and normative language of post–war politics.

Alain de Benoist is generally regarded as GRECE’s grey eminence. His declared intention has been to create an intellectual nexus for the French right, and to crystallise a ‘new culture of the right’ capable of addressing the ‘pressing problems of modernity’, which result from what he considered the melange of Judeo–Christian traditions and Marxist ideology that reins through terror among the French intellectuals and academics (Sévilla, 2000; Valla, 1977: 61–69). Detailing his opposition to the universalistic ‘equalitarian myth’ based on the Judeo–Christian values, he coined the term ‘ethno–pluralism’, which asserts a ‘right to difference’ understood in terms of ethnic and racial separatism (de Benoist, 2006). Illustratively, while criticising modern democracies, de Benoist praised Athenian democracy for being communitarian – narrowly defined to include natives, the ‘true’ *people* reunited by a desire to preserve and exercise their freedom:

The democracy of antiquity was communitarian and ‘holist’; modern democracy is primarily individualist. Ancient democracy defined citizenship by a man’s origins, and provided him with the opportunity to participate in the life of the city. Modern democracy organises atomized individuals into citizens viewed through the prism of abstract egalitarianism. Ancient democracy was based on the idea of organic community; modern democracy, heir to Christianity and the philosophy of the Enlightenment, on the individual. In both cases the meaning of the words ‘city,’ ‘people,’ ‘nation,’ and ‘liberty,’ are totally changed.

(de Benoist, 2003: 55)

In this context, it has been argued, the stigmatised discourse of ‘racial difference’ of neo–Nazism was exchanged by de Benoist and subsequently by the ND for the more palatable one appealing for the preservation of the ‘cultural

heritage' of European nations, thereby identifying an inherent 'cultural difference' between natives – the people as a homogenous national body – and newcomers; the representatives of a menacing globalising modernity (cf. Hermet, 1997; Ignazi, 2003; Kriesi *et al*, 2008; Mudde, 2000). These ideas would later be employed by the French radical right populist Jean-Marie Le Pen, and his the National Front (*le Front National*, FN), and have a major impact on the discourses of radical right populist parties across Europe (cf. Betz & Meret, 2009; Bornschier, 2008; Fennema, 2005; Ignazi, 2003; Mudde, 2000).

The main tenets of the ND, on closer examination, appear to be firstly criticising liberalism – particularly its late modern neoliberal manifestations – for its alleged commodification of every human relationship. Secondly, denouncing Westernisation and American cultural hegemony, which it held responsible for the alleged annihilation of cultural specificities, and thirdly, distancing itself from the representative liberal democratic model in a quest for new means of political participation (Ignazi, 2003: 23–25). The ND has also attempted to overcome the traditional left–right divide and has discarded egalitarianism as a secondary product of the coalescence of mass–society and neoliberal individualism in late modernity (Ignazi, 2003: 23). In this light, some researchers have posited that radical right populism has emerged as a reaction to the deep socio–economic and socio–cultural transformations in post–industrial Europe (cf. Art, 2011; Betz, 1998; Betz & Meret, 2009; Cuperus, 2003; Kitschelt, 2007; Kriesi *et al*, 2008). Even more so, some have argued that radical right populism is, to a certain extent, also inspired by neo–conservatism, in terms of moral traditionalism, recasting of national pride, communitarianism as counterweight to the state, and uneasiness with multiculturalism (Ignazi, 2003: 25–27). On this matter, radical right populism appears to engender a counter–reaction to an elite political culture 'imbued with liberal values of individualism, internationalism, multiculturalism, permissiveness and belief in progress' (Canovan, 1999: 4), and a call to address the urgencies of a vaguely defined *people*, that upon necessity can refer to 'the dispossessed, the hard–working middle classes, the burdened taxpayers, the "common man", the moral majority, and so on' (Arditi, 2003: 22). In an increasingly complex and globalised world, have some researchers argued, 'such reified and populist personifications of responsibility for social malaise have resurfaced along with conspiracy theories over the last decade.' (Rensmann, 2011: 128) As such, the French FN has not only successfully translated the doctrinal agenda of the ND into politics, but has arguably served as a poignant example to other similar political manifestations, in a process of cross–national learning (Betz & Meret, 2009: 314). This has led scholars to talk about a 'party family' that unites the various radical right populist parties across Europe (cf. Fennema, 2005; Ignazi, 2003; Lachat & Kriesi, 2008; Mudde, 2000; 2007; Rydgren, 2005).

### 2.1.1 THE RADICAL RIGHT POPULIST PARTY FAMILY

One crucial aspect of the concept of radical right populism is that it makes reference to parties – subsequently referred to here as **radical right populist parties** – that generally and at least declaratively subscribe to the democratic rules of governance and engage in competition with other political parties in order to achieve parliamentary representation and partake in government building procedures (Ignazi, 2003: 26; Mudde, 2000: 1). The rather vague appellative ‘democratic’ above embodies an identity marker of Western societies (Kurunmäki & Strang, 2010: 9), thus signalling an affiliation to an envisioned common European heritage and future – ranging from the Athenian democracy to the European Union’s (EU) much debated democratic deficit – at a time of intensified globalisation processes and pressing multicultural dilemmas. At the same time, what appears to be specific to the radical right populist agenda is the voicing of a general dissatisfaction with the present state of democracy and democratic processes. Their radicalism, under these circumstances, resides in their vehemence to restore a supposed popular sovereignty, which appears to bypass the existing system of checks and balances as a model of parliamentary democratic governance and ease the direct communication between the voters – understood as the sovereign *people* – and their elected representatives. Bypassing the separation of powers has oftentimes been envisioned as a return to the Athenian model of direct, plebiscite democracy, in which the *people* – here conterminous with the citizenry – would vote on all matters of concern, ranging from the implementation of new taxes to granting new rights to minority groups. Nevertheless, there has been suggested a second interpretation of the matter, one which underlines the importance of the radical right populist leader, to whom the *people* are to entrust their sovereignty and who in turn would govern in the name of *all people*. The inherent ambiguity in the radical right populist model of democratic rule has been aptly summarised by Ignazi:

[Some] of these demands and needs converge in the defence of the natural community, at national or sub–national levels, from alien and polluting presences – hence racism and xenophobia – and respond to the identity crisis produced by atomisation at the societal level, by globalisation at the economic level, and by supra–nationalism at the political level [...] On the other hand, the demand for more law and order, the search for a ‘charismatic’ leader, the need for harmony and security, and the uneasiness over representative mechanisms and procedures, express a desire for an authoritative guide in a society where self–achievement and individualism have disrupted the protective network of traditional social bonds. Finally, the return of rigid moral standards is a definite counterpart of post–materialist libertarianism.

(Ignazi, 2003: 34)

These parties thus differ from the extreme fringe groupings that aspire to overthrow the democratic system of doing politics altogether. The radical right populist critique emphasises nevertheless the uneasy transition to post-modern societies, the perceived problematic nature of multiculturalism, and the challenges that native populations experience in the process of accommodating increasingly diverse societies. Transition is generally equated to insecurity, which in turn is exploited politically by the radical right populist parties. Their vociferous appeals to the restoration of revered old standards and values, of order and authority, imply ‘punishing’ the political establishment for its alleged abuses of power, governmental mismanagement, enforcement of political correctness, liberal permissiveness and tolerance of certain non-majority groups that populists portray as non-normative and non-native parasitic elements on the national body. Radical right populists thus hold responsible these groups for increased crime rates and insecurity, and the alleged social moral decline (Betz & Meret, 2009: 333; Blokker, 2005: 371; Bornschieer, 2008: 89; Cuperus, 2003: 91, Fennema, 2005: 19–21). To sum up, radical right populist parties appear to embody an answer to a series of demands and needs that have emerged in the last decade of the twentieth century across the European continent, which allegedly have not been met by the traditional parties.

In this context, the parties espousing a radical right populist ideology promote a particular type of equalitarianism, which appeals to the common people (Albertazzi & McDonnell, 2008: 3–7). Such an understanding of equalitarianism is founded, according to Carlo Ruzza and Stefano Fella, on ‘a mythology of “the people” as an undifferentiated unity’ (Ruzza & Fella, 2011: 171). This process nevertheless occurs by stigmatising those not conforming to the values of the majority culture; thus, this ‘inverted egalitarianism intersects with experiences of status and economic insecurity to fuel hostility towards non-majority group immigration, [and] towards programs that support multiculturalism’ (Laycock, 2005: 134). This comes as a reaction to ‘nativist nationalist’ appeals which hold that ‘*states should be inhabited by members of the native group (“the nation”) and that non-native elements (persons and ideas) are fundamentally threatening to the homogeneous nation-state*’ (Mudde, 2007: 19) (*Italics in original*). In a similar vein, Herbert Kitschelt has noted that the parties embracing the radical right populist ideology ‘make xenophobic mobilisation against immigrants and insistence on a dominant national cultural paradigm obligatory for all residents the central planks of their policies’ (Kitschelt, 2007: 1178). Indeed, Elisabeth Ivarsflaten has aptly pointed out that anti-immigration mobilisation is the main common denominator for such parties, while the anti-establishment rhetoric and critique of the globalising economy contribute to enforcing the overall populist mobilisation in some countries (Ivarsflaten, 2008: 17; see also, Lachat & Kriesi, 2008). This line of reasoning has been developed further by Michelle Williams, who maintains that the vociferous anti-immigration appeals allow the radical right populist parties ‘to voice more than protest and opposition’

and ‘find favour among people who feel threatened by changing conditions in their societies’ (Williams, 2006: 18).

The anti–immigration stance embraced by radical right populist parties appears to rest on the imperative to preserve the national culture, understood as a reference point. On this matter, Hans–Georg Betz and Susi Meret have shown in their research that such ‘nativist’ claims entail the unconditional assimilation of the minority group into the majority that presupposes ‘not only willingness, but also the ability, on the part of the immigrant [or the non–majority individual] to absorb the host culture. Assimilability, in turn, presupposes cultural commensurability with respect to the foundational values that define [...] Europe’s cultural heritage.’ (Betz & Meret, 2009: 318) The reference to assimilatory demands and anti–immigration mobilisation has nonetheless proven to be rather problematic in the Central and Eastern European context. Indeed, the region offers a much more complex picture. Anti–immigration and particularly anti–Muslim attitudes are sharply on the rise, especially in the aftermath of the September 11 2001 attacks in the United States. These seem to be a more recent addition to older and apparently deeply entrenched prejudices against ethnic minorities (such as those directed against Hungarians in Romania and Slovakia; Turks in Bulgaria, and so on) – among which the Romani are the most disliked across the region. Additionally, anti–Semitism and Holocaust denial are arguably a common political currency in the region, to a larger extent than elsewhere in Europe (Mudde, 2005: 280; Rensmann, 2011: 141–143). This has led some scholars to maintain that the on–going processes in the region are more complex and far–reaching than the current post–industrial modernisation experienced in Western Europe, since Central and Eastern Europe underwent a complete regime change in the aftermath of the collapse of authoritarian regimes and dismantlement of planned economies. Michael Minkenberg and Pascal Perrineau have compellingly argued that radical right populist parties in the region have taken advantage of these profound changes and ensured their success by combining communist and nationalist ideas amid high levels of social disorientation and ambivalence resulting from the fundamental changes in the social and political system (Minkenberg & Perrineau, 2007: 32). Under these circumstances, goes the argument, radical right populist political entrepreneurs have resorted to oversimplified solutions and appeals to the *people* – seen as a homogeneous national community instead of any references to a particular class or to a unifying modernisation project. As a result, the Central and Eastern European radical right populism combines post–industrial aspects – the decreasing importance of mass party organisation, the wide use of media outlets – with an ideological mix that juxtaposes nationalism with the legacy of an authoritarian planned economy.

The link between populism and nationalism is rather easily distinguishable in Central and Eastern Europe. On this matter, Paul Blokker among others, has

argued that radical right populist parties in this region are employing a kind of emancipatory discourse, which claims to defend and liberate the ‘true’ *people* of the national body from the domestic subjugation of local elites and the foreign domination of Western institutions – be they the EU, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO/OTAN), the Council of Europe, and others (cf. Blokker, 2005; Egedy, 2009; Ghodsee, 2008; Jasiewicz, 2008). Nonetheless, Blokker observed that Central and Eastern European radical right populism is quite similar to that manifest elsewhere in Europe in its at least declarative respect for democratic principles and underlined that in their discourses: ‘an argument is often made for increased popular sovereignty through the granting of absolute priority to the nation, in other words, to the people as an undivided and organic unity, and the expression of its will’ (Blokker, 2005: 377). Other scholars have noted as well this conceptual proximity between the idea of popular sovereignty and nationalism, which appears to be a fertile ground for the development of radical right populism, and further underlined the validity of such findings across Europe (cf. Laycock, 2005; Mudde, 2007; Učeň, 2007; Zaslove, 2009). As such, the recent radical right populist manifestations in Europe seem to be often fused with older nationalist feelings, which have led some researchers to even talk about ‘national–populism’ (cf. Hermet, 1997; Kriesi *et al*, 2008) conversely ‘populist nationalism’ (Blokker, 2005) and thereby to dissolve the conceptual clarity of the terms involved in theorising the field. This has lead such researchers as Mudde to maintain that the *people* of populism is to the same extent an imagined construct as it is the *nation* to nationalism (cf. Anderson, 1991):

Today, populism is again mainly associated with the (radical) right. [...] Increasingly, non–radical right parties are also included in the category of ‘right–wing populism’ [...]. This is not entirely illogical, because of the right’s focus on nation and the radical right’s nationalism. The step from ‘the nation’ to ‘the people’ is easily taken, and the distinction between the two is often far from clear.

(Mudde, 2004: 549)

Too strong an emphasis on the nation as a potent synonym for the *people* may nonetheless obscure the insistence on the alleged ‘purity’ of the collectivity that the radical right populist parties endeavour to protect. According to Sabrina Ramet, for example, nationalism is one possible means of expressing the radical right populist concern with ‘purity’ (whether defined along national, ‘racial’, or religious lines), but bigotry as well as moralising self–righteousness may also be viable avenues for conveying such a preoccupation. The need to maintain the aforesaid ‘purity’ of the *people* is often expressed in ‘a compulsive need to safeguard group boundaries (as by regulating sexual mores, prescribing religiously derived values and behaviours, and expelling or exterminating those viewed as ‘outsiders’)’ (Ramet, 1999: 19). Nonetheless, she argues further, what

distinguishes the moderate right from the radical right populists is the latter's willingness to impose these values on others, and appeals to 'patriotism', 'family values', or the 'Christian way of life', which may be employed to justify murder, arson, and even the corruption of the whole democratic process (Ramet, 1999: 19).

To sum up, there is a great deal of variation in regard to which features are the most important for the classification of radical right populist parties. This is reflected in the significant diversity among the constitutive parties of the radical right populist 'party family'. Attempting to be more concrete, the radical right populist 'party family' accommodates a great variety of political actors. These include in Northern Europe: the Danish People's Party (*Dansk Folkeparti*, DF) in Denmark, the PS/SF in Finland and the SD in Sweden. In Central and Eastern Europe it includes the National Union Attack (*Национален съюз Атака*, Ataka) in Bulgaria, Jobbik – the Movement for a Better Hungary (*Jobbik Magyarországért Mozgalom*, Jobbik) in Hungary, and the PRM in Romania. In Western Europe it would include the FN in France, the Party for Freedom (*Partij voor de Vrijheid*, PVV) in the Netherlands, and the Swiss People's Party (*Schweizerische Volkspartei*, SVP/*Union démocratique du centre*, UDC) in Switzerland. This is to name just a few of the parties that have generally been classified as radical right populist by various researchers in the field.

There seems nonetheless to be a certain degree of agreement that the radical right populist parties make constant references to protecting a specific group, regarded as the embodiment of the *people*, tinged with nativist and anti-immigration appeals, in short a welfare chauvinist rhetoric. More precisely, the welfare system is no longer universalistic in nature and extended to include all inhabitants in the respective country; rather, it is reserved only to a selected few, to those who can 'rightfully' claim (a bloodline) membership in the *people* collectivity. This is, I argue, the major difference between the populist manifestations in Europe in general, and those from Latin America, which researchers often consider to be expressions of a left-leaning populism; most notably late Hugo Chávez's presidency in Venezuela, or of Evo Morales in Bolivia (cf. Ellner & Hellinger, 2003; Hawkins, 2010; March, 2007). Furthermore, the radical right populist parties in Europe claim to represent the common *people's* interests against the misgovernment of the self-absorbed elites. They demand a restoration of popular sovereignty, stricter laws and tougher punishment, and concurrently advocate for a return to traditional values, thus calling for conservative policies. With these in mind, in the following the conceptual unity of the people is first scrutinised; the dichotomous position of the *people* and elites is subsequently detailed, and then the concept of popular sovereignty is coupled to that of charismatic leadership.

### 2.1.2 THE CONSTRUCTED UNITY OF THE PEOPLE

At the core of radical right populist ideology appears to be the construction of a homogenous *people*, portrayed in a rather monolithic manner. On this matter, several researchers have observed that the *people* seem to be crafted as an indivisible, self-conscious, and easily identifiable majority (cf. Abts & Rummens, 2007; Albertazzi & McDonnell, 2008; Jungar, 2010; Ramet, 1999; Ruzza & Fella, 2011). Nevertheless, as Franco Panizza has observed, the fullness of the *people* is in fact a continuous process of reiteration, since the indivisibility of the *people* is achieved through the exclusion of an 'Other' that can never be fully vanquished (Panizza, 2005: 16). In addition, the idea of sovereign independence, noted by some scholars (cf. Canovan, 2002; Jungar, 2010; Laycock, 2005), invests the *people* with a certain territoriality, enclosed within the boundaries of a particular polity, such as the one illustrated by the appellation *das Volk* (Mény & Surel, 2002: 6). Indeed, some researchers have underlined the intimate connection between the constructed *people* and the territory they inhabit or they lay claim over as their home(land):

[P]opulists tend to identify themselves with a 'heartland' that represents an idealised conception of the community they serve. It is from this territory of the imagination, that populists construct the 'people' as the object of their politics. [...] The commitment to the 'people' is in fact a derivative consequence of the implicit or explicit commitment to a 'heartland'.

(Taggart, 2004: 274)

The radical right populist politicians generally maintain the *people's* exclusive ownership over the discussed territory, and the link between people and land is depicted as ancestral and substantial. On this issue, Patricia Chiantera–Stutte and Andrea Petö, while analysing right wing populism in Central Europe, have further argued that the bond between the *Volk* and its territory is often envisioned as founded on old traditions and histories. More clearly, the *people's* 'territory, its culture, and its collective identity constitute a whole, in which every element is related and determined by every other' (Chiantera–Stutte & Petö, 2003: 3). Such a finding falls in line with research on the matter by Blokker who has shown the ambivalent dimension to the *people* (conterminous here to the ethnic community, as the German cognate indicates), which works as an exclusionary logic in the service of a homogenising (national) project, on the one hand, and as an integrative principle in the name of a popular and collectivistic self-rule on the other. The former relies on a rejection of pluralism, diversity, and even individual autonomy through its emphasis on the organic unity between *people*, territory, and history, while the latter emphasises the *people's* common destiny and praises popular sovereignty as its core value – thus coming very close to liberal understandings of democracy (Blokker, 2005: 383). The unity of the *people* is as

such expressed through an exclusive identity and consequently the *people* category becomes tantamount to the (ethnic) *nation* (Canovan, 2002: 34; Mudde, 2004: 546).

Nonetheless, an overemphasis on the sovereignty of the *Volk* is equally problematic as it may lead to the installation of ‘ethnocracy’ (Betz, 2005: 32–33; Minkenberg & Perrineau, 2007: 30; Mostov, 1999: 49) or even a ‘new ethnarchy’ (Ramet, 1999: 25). More clearly, it implies a monopolisation of the political scene by those considered to be the ‘true’ representatives of the *people*. Such a definition on ethnic national grounds calls for the preservation of the imagined homogeneity and cultivates antagonistic relations with those not satisfying the criteria of belonging; be they ruling elites and/or immigrants (cf. Abts & Rummens, 2007; Albertazzi & McDonnell, 2008; Bornschier, 2008; Caiani & della Porta, 2011; Canovan, 1999; Kitschelt, 2007; Ramet, 1999; Ruzza & Fella, 2011). From this point of view, Betz has argued that the radical right populist ‘discourse on immigration, citizenship and multiculturalism [...] represents a fundamental challenge to liberal democracy, to a certain extent obscured by the fact that the radical populist right has managed to make an assault on liberal democracy’ in the name of defending the constitutive values and norms of western liberal democracy (Betz, 2005: 36).

Concerning the exclusionary nature of ethnic–populism, it appears that marginality is the permanent condition of those not belonging to the community of the *people*. Pushed to the extreme, noted Ernesto Laclau, forced marginality can lead to ethnic cleansing, which is ‘a latent possibility once the discursive construction of the community proceeds along purely ethnic lines’ (Laclau, 2005: 197). Such a stance is founded on, according to some researchers, the attempt to deny horizontal divisions within the homogenous body of the *people* (such as the left versus right cleavage), and enforced by the introduction of a new vertical dimension, which portrays both elites at the top and non–natives at the bottom as inherently foreign and thus threatening to the *people’s* indivisible body (Mény & Surel, 2002: 12).

### 2.1.3 A MANICHEAN OPPOSITION: THE PEOPLE AND THE ELITE

Addressing the issue of what radical right populism opposes requires discussing another imagined community, which is constructed as a counterpart of the *people* in radical right populist ideology. Some researchers have posited that the frustration of unfulfilled social demands in front of an unresponsive establishment determines the amorphous and indistinguishable crowd to identify itself with the *populus* as a whole (Laclau, 2005: 86). The *people* is thus perceived not as a constitutive part of the community, but as a self–standing entity, since the elite responsible for aggravating the *people’s* social and economic situation cannot claim to be a legitimate part of the community, or as Margaret Canovan put it:

The perennial cry of populists is that power has been stolen from the people by politicians and special interests. Calls to 'give politics back to the people' exploit the ambiguity according to which 'the people' is first understood by contrast with the power-holders (and therefore as something less than the population at large) and then expanded to wield the authority of a sovereign people as a whole.

(*Canovan, 2005: 5*)

Under these circumstances, the establishment is denounced not only for its presumptive corruption and privileges (Abts & Rummens, 2007: 408), but also for its lack of accountability to- and remoteness from- the real interests and values of the *people* that populists claim to represent (Albertazzi & McDonnell, 2008: 3; Barr, 2009: 38; Betz, 2005: 30-31; Jungar, 2010: 212; Mudde, 2004: 558). What the radical right populist criticise the elites for is 'their misbehaviour in relation to politics as well as with moral norms and values. Political elites (both from the left and the moderate right) are pictured as corrupt and only focused on own personal interests and not really caring about the country.' (Caiani & della Porta, 2011: 193) In this regard, René Cuperus has noted that the radical right populism is particularly critical to the continuous convergence towards the centre of all major political forces – be they social-democrats, christian-democrats, or liberals – in their search to maximise their support base. In other words, the radical right populist parties 'rejected this post-war consensus, viewing it as counter to the real interests of "the people", if not a form of self-enrichment for special interests and corrupt party elites' (Cuperus, 2003: 97-98). Indeed, radical right populism appears to take issue with what scholars have called 'the cartel-like power of entrenched political elites' (Jones, 2007: 38), 'the inherently oligarchic dimension of representative democracy' (Papadopoulos, 2002: 48), or the 'inward looking political establishment divorced from the electorate' (Cuperus, 2003: 87), and emphasises the need to curtail the powers of representative institutions and to return to more direct forms of democracy (Laycock, 2005: 129).

Furthermore, radical right populism is directing its critique against the national elites for their alleged cultural internationalism, as Canovan has observed. Embracing cultural internationalism is portrayed as a betrayal of the traditional habits of the majority – understood as shorthand for the *people* – and thereby as a forceful imposition upon the 'common people' of the discourse of political correctness. Even more so, the discourse of political correctness compels the introduction of a series of progressive policies that mostly benefit the disadvantaged – asylum-seekers, immigrants, and ethnic/'racial', religious, or sexual minorities – at the expense of the 'ordinary', 'hard-working people'. Among the enemies that threaten the way of life and economic security of the 'ordinary people' there are also the international capitalists and the bureaucratic apparatus in Brussels (cf. Bornschieer, 2008: 86-87; Canovan, 2002: 32; Panizza,

2005: 17). It is noteworthy that populism makes a normative distinction between elites and the *people*. As such, it is asserted that the *people* have a deeper quality than being simply the opposite of power, and identifies it with the *people* being 'real'; the quality of being real is in itself positively charged (Laclau, 2005: 152). One step further is that populism is thought to present a 'Manichean outlook, in which there are only friends and foes. Opponents are not just people with different priorities and values, they are *evil!* Consequently, compromise is impossible, as it "corrupts" the purity.' (Mudde, 2004: 544) (*Italics in original*)

#### 2.1.4 THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE PEOPLE AND CHARISMATIC LEADERSHIP

Having established the people as a homogeneous entity at odds with the ruling elites, radical right populism calls for the restoration of popular sovereignty, and demands that politics should express the immediate will of the *people* (Arditi, 2005: 76; Canovan, 1999: 4–5). In relation to this, Canovan has additionally noted that the question of popular sovereignty triggers the crystallisation of boundaries, both between the *people* whose sovereignty radical right populists claim to restore and the elites, and between the rest of the world and the polity over which radical right populists attempt to assume power:

Popular sovereignty implies boundaries of two kinds. As legitimate sovereign, 'the people' is distinguished from, and counterposed to, the power elite, from whom power is to be retrieved. But its sovereign independence of external powers also gives its territorial definition, linking its borders to the boundaries of the polity, while its essential unity narrows down its identity, making it equivalent to the nation.

*(Canovan, 2002: 34)*

Oftentimes the *people's* will appears to attain the ultimate level of political intelligibility once embodied in the person of radical right populist leader. This is founded on the populist proclamation of unmediated relationship between the *people* and the radical right populist leader, which is built on plebiscitary processes and mutual trust (Barr, 2009: 40; Betz, 2002: 199). In this context, radical right populism plays the emancipatory card, claiming to be in favour of improving the *people's* status in the political system (Mudde, 2004: 546). However, people's emancipation does not imply a change of their values or their 'way of life'; rather, the daily problems are to be dealt with, and solutions of 'common sense' are to be identified by the person to whom they have willingly entrusted their future. Even more so, Manuela Caiani and Donatella della Porta have argued that radical right populism entails an exclusionary hierarchy and a

high degree of elitism on behalf of its leaders that results in envisioning the *people* merely as a passive mass of disciples:

[T]here is a rather exclusive vision of the people, which refers to a strongly hierarchical and elitist conception of the society. Indeed, not only corrupt political elites but also other political and ethnic adversaries are excluded from this conception of the people, which is, furthermore, relegated to a passive role in politics.

*(Caiani & della Porta, 2011: 185)*

Because of the establishment's incapacity to reconnect with the mundane needs of the people, salvation often resides in the person of charismatic leader, who can speak and act on behalf of the *people* (Abts & Rummens, 2007: 408; Bornschier, 2008: 88–89; Mudde, 2004: 560). The term 'charismatic leadership' was first coined by Max Weber at the beginning of the twentieth century in his tripartite classification of authority. It was intimately related to a certain style of leadership that challenged what Weber considered to be the more established forms of political legitimacy – the traditional (patrimonialism and feudalism) and the legal–rational (bureaucratic rule and legalism) (Weber, 1991). The concept has been later employed by such historians as Emilio Gentile to explain the rise, and assess the nature of fascist dictatorship in interwar Italy (Gentile, 1998). Herbert Kitschelt has applied it in his analysis of the emerging cleavages in the post–1989 Central and Eastern Europe, and Hans–Georg Betz and Stefan Immerfall have argued that charismatic leadership plays an important part in the rise of radical right populist parties in Western Europe (cf. Kitschelt, 1995; Betz & Immerfall, 1998). Such a stance has been further discussed by Paul Taggart, who noted somewhat ironically that populism 'requires the most extraordinary individuals to lead the most ordinary of people' (Taggart, 2000: 1). In other words, 'followers of populist movements are said to surrender easily to the "charms" of a charismatic figure who they believe can represent their grievances and immediately give voice to their needs' (Albertazzi, 2006: 136).

Even more so, this salient preference for a direct leadership, which goes past the intricate network of representative institutions, has been noted by scholars to open up the possibility for a concentration of personal power that is often hard to reconcile with democratic processes (Canovan, 1999: 14). Going one step further, Vladimir Tismaneanu has argued that 'despite its anti–elitist pretence, radical populism treats the masses as a mob and endows the leader with quasi–mystical, demiurgic attributes' (Tismaneanu, 2000: 17). The prophetic, warrior–like, or demagogic nature of the charismatic leader enacts a relationship between followers and leaders inspired by faith (Van der Brug & Mughan, 2007: 31). Consequently, the figure of the leader is seen as highly symbolic in radical right populism, even though calls for more detailed analyses of the 'charismatic' nature of the radical right populist leadership have been voiced by several researchers in

the field (Art, 2011: 8; Barr, 2009: 41; Eatwell, 2002: 17–21; Norris, 2005: 205). Among others, Roger Eatwell has analysed the issue of charisma and the rise of European radical right populism (Eatwell, 2002; 2005). It is noteworthy that he depicted in his analyses the two genders in a schematic and antagonistic manner. Eatwell plainly noted that while charisma ‘has usually been a male form of narrative/symbolism, associated with *action* and heroics, the modern tendency to view politics in terms of business (with its “mission statements”) and economics offers opportunities for females’ (Eatwell, 2005: 107) (*Italics* in original). In my view, Eatwell applied a reductionist conceptual apparatus that disregarded the complexity of the gendered aspect of power relations and how identities are construed and conditioned by these relations. Although he acknowledged that some radical right parties are led by women, he simply maintained that these women leaders have ‘courted the image of ordinary housewives’ and concluded that such an image ‘clearly can appeal to men as well as women’ (Eatwell, 2005: 107). Under these circumstances, I maintain that he uncritically associated men with ‘heroics’ and ‘action’ and assigned women the role of ‘housewives’ since these ‘clearly’ could appeal to both men and women who managed to read the ascribed gendered hierarchies in aforesaid descriptions.

Identification with, and abandonment to the radical right populist leader’s volition, are envisioned to ‘produce an effect of virtual immediacy, that is, an imaginary identification that suspends the distance between masses and authorities’ (Arditi, 2003: 23). Such process, according to Cuperus, takes place in the name of ‘plebiscitary democracy’ but in fact enforces the replacement of the now established democratic culture of debate between equal peers with the highly personalised leadership ‘with a democratic mandate’. This tendency becomes even more pronounced in the modern communication age that is marked by the media’s dominance of democratic processes and media’s increased demands for a politics of ‘personification without consultation’ (Cuperus, 2003: 93–94). A similar argument has been developed by Panizza. He noted that the populist leaders pursue a politics based on personal allegiances and clearly defined top–down representations that go past institutional debate and party support. Panizza maintained further that ‘in contrast with the political forms of political democracy based on strong institutions and checks and balances, populist leaders are a disturbing intrusion into the uneasy articulation of liberalism and democracy, and raise the spectre of tyranny with popular support.’ (Panizza, 2005: 18) In a similar vein, Mudde has approached the issue of leadership and discussed the role of authority and authoritarianism. According to him, ‘authoritarianism is [...] the belief in a strictly ordered society, in which infringements of authority are to be punished severely. [...] It does not necessarily mean an antidemocratic attitude, but neither does it preclude one’ (Mudde, 2007: 23). Authoritarianism thereby makes reference to a punitive interpretation of conventional ethics and appeals to a strict law and order enforcement.

## 2.2 THE PROBLEM OF GENDER-BLIND RADICAL RIGHT POPULIST THEORISING

Having presented the major avenues of research and the most recent developments in the field, I nonetheless argue that it is highly problematic that the theorising of radical right populism practically overlooks the importance of gender in the construction of the ideological apparatus that underpins radical right populist manifestations. First, the grouping of various political parties across Europe into a radical right populist ‘party family’ begs the question what sort of family are these parties presumed to constitute? Even more so, is there a certain genealogical connection between these parties, and what sort of family relations are supposed to develop between these various ‘family members’? Furthermore, it is troublesome to discuss about family and family relations in a manner devoid of any awareness of gender, without acknowledging that the archetypal family is generally regarded by radical right populist parties as the privileged site for women’s power and self-realisation through maternity (Bacchetta & Power, 2002: 8; Petö, 2006; 2010). In addition to that, not being aware of men’s own gendered identity and not researching the power hierarchies at work between men and women, in fact, projects men in a normative position, which renders white ethnic majority middle-class heterosexual masculinity invisible, and places the burden of intelligibility on all those falling off the normative spectrum, in other words all those individuals that are different from the aforesaid norm in terms of gender, ethnicity/‘race’, social class, and sexual orientation.

Second, going one step further into the theorising of radical right populist ideology and approaching the issue of *people’s* unity, the theoretical cannon has generally acknowledged the radical right populist preoccupation with the *people’s* purity as a means to preserve its monolithic homogeneity. Nonetheless, what remains rather unquestioned is the exclusionary process at work in the construction of such homogenous collectivity. Even more so, it is precisely the women’s bodies that become battlefields for the preservation of national purity (cf. Charles & Hintjes, 1998; Cusak, 2000; Nagel, 2000; Stevens, 1999). Disavowing pluralism and difference does not occur only in terms of class, ethnicity/‘race’, religion, but at the intersection of these analytical concepts with those of gender and sexuality (Bacchetta & Power, 2002: 4).

Third, there is a sole instance when the existence of gender is acknowledged in the theorising of populism. Referring to the populist supporter’s profile, it is by and large agreed that radical right populism attracts more men than women (cf. Betz, 1998; Givens, 2004; Mudde, 2007; Rydgren, 2006). It has been generally maintained that men in low-skilled positions are the most likely victims of globalisation processes. They are those who ‘having faced not only declining real wages, but also a loss of authority in their families at home vis-à-vis wives who are also wage earners’ (Kitschelt, 2007: 1200) support radical right populist parties. It was further argued that right wing populists are offering an

overwhelming reassurance ‘and a masculine reassurance at that: a firm hand that will control things such as rampant immigration, meddling by EU bureaucrats and so forth; in brief, a return to order.’ (Banks & Gingrich, 2006: 16). In this light, it seems, that the representative of the sovereign *people* is embodied as overwhelmingly male, whose pride needs to be restored and whose insecurities in the rapidly changing environment of the new millennium need to be dispelled; this image then morphs into that of the strong male leader. This proves highly problematic if taking a global perspective. Notwithstanding that men in the global ‘West’ and ‘North’ may be the apparent losers in the globalisation processes, it is women who are most commonly in low-paid positions and reduced to a condition of precariousness particularly in the global ‘South’, but in other places around the world as well (cf. Enloe, 1989; 2004).

A further point of contention is represented by the assumed strong male leadership in the radical right populist parties. More clearly, Pia Kjaersgaard, a woman, has been the uncontested leader of the radical right populist DF in Denmark between 1996 and 2011; also a woman, Siv Jensen, was elected in 2006 to the helm of the Norwegian Progress Party (*Fremskrittspartiet* / *Framstegspartiet*, FrP). Jensen appears to have preserved the FrP’s electoral support in the aftermath of 22 July 2011 Oslo bombing and Utøya massacre, although the perpetrator, Anders Behring Breivik, was a former disgruntled party member. As of 16 October 2013, the FrP has become the junior partner in the governing coalition, with Jensen as Minister of Finance. It is noteworthy that this is not an isolated phenomenon contained to the Northern Europe. On the contrary, Marine Le Pen was elected in 2011 as the FN chair, and has proven to be a serious contestant in the 2012 French presidential race, coming third in the first round of elections. In Central and Eastern Europe, it is worth mentioning the role played by Krisztina Morvai – although not from a leadership position – in the success recorded by the Jobbik in the 2009 European parliamentary elections in Hungary. In this context, I maintain that the *people* of radical right populism may be envisioned as a family construction that contours a heteronormative worldview, which orders the society according to a paternalist logic that contains women to an inferior and dependent position, even when temporarily and conditionally allowing them in politics. This criticism to the existing scholarship in the theorising of radical right populism is developed in the following chapter with the help of the feminist research in the study of nations and nationalism, and those works that have addressed radical right populism from a gender perspective.

### **3 THEORETICAL AND ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK (II): BRINGING GENDER IN THE STUDY OF RADICAL RIGHT POPULISM**

Aiming to address the problematic approach to gender in what is currently regarded as mainstream research on radical right populism, the present chapter combines existing feminist scholarship that analyses the radical right populist phenomenon with the feminist contributions in the field of nationalism studies. In this light, I suggest a novel avenue for the research of radical right populism, one that accounts for the importance of gender and the interrelated axes of social structuring – ethnicity/‘race’, social class, sexuality – in the ideological constructions of identity. Despite criticism voiced by some of the researchers whose works are part of the aforesaid mainstream (cf. Klandermans & Mayer, 2005; Mudde, 2005) there are several studies authored by feminist scholars that have problematised the issue of gender in their analyses of radical right populism (cf. Allwood & Wadia, 2000; Bacchetta & Power, 2002; Charles & Hintjes, 1998; Chiantera–Stutte & Petö, 2003; Meret & Siim, 2013). These studies are buttressed in the following with the feminist analyses that discuss the situation of women and men in the construction of nationhood, and underline the importance of gender in the articulation of nationalist discourses (cf. Enloe, 1989; Hasso, 1998; Jayawardena, 1986; Kandiyoti, 1991; McClintock, 1991; Nagel, 1998; 2000; Stevens, 1999; Yuval–Davis, 1997; Waetjen, 2001; Walby, 2000). The chapter thereby strengthens the general feminist critique addressed to the canonical scholarship researching radical right populism for its masculinist representations, and the danger of reification such approaches entail. The chapter aims to concurrently widen the field and suggest new ways for the investigation of radical right populist ideology.

I consider it of crucial importance to introduce in the present chapter the feminist conceptual vocabulary that contributes to formulating answers to the battery of research questions I have presented in the first chapter. For this purpose, in reviewing feminist scholarship in the present chapter, I show those conceptual building blocks that have a crucial role in articulating the present study. First, I subscribe to the feminist observation that women occupy a plurality of positions in various hierarchies of power relations in any given society (cf. Collins, 2000; 2004; hooks, 1981; McClintock, 1995; Mohanty, 2003; Wittig, 1980; 1982; 1989). Second, I acknowledge the importance of gender as a principal means to organise difference and reify hierarchies, in which the biology of sexes serves as an instrument to justify and naturalise the superiority of men in relation to women (cf. Cranny–Francis *et al*, 2003; Rubin, 1998). Third, I focus on the problematisation of heterosexuality as a normative standpoint, which rests on the traditional hierarchical gender binary arrangement within the (legally sanctioned) monogamous union between a man and a woman (cf. Butler, 2004; Jackson,

2006; Tuori, 2009). Fourth, I explicate gender as a performative, understood as a continuous and contingent set of practices of iteration of one's gender in the aforementioned context of heteronormativity (cf. Butler, 1990; 1993; 1995; 2004). These enable me to articulate the theoretical standpoint of intersectionality. Intersectionality aims to account for the complexity of gendered hierarchies, detailing the social location of various gender performatives at the junction of several systems of oppression (cf. Collins, 2000; 2004; McClintock, 1995; Mohanty, 2003; Mulinari, 2003). It is this theoretical framework that I subsequently employ to approach the feminist studies of men and masculinities. In a circular move, then, I integrate the study of men and various masculinity performatives in the context of hierarchical gender binary represented by the traditional family (cf. Brown, 1988; Carver, 2004; Connell, 1987; 1992; 1995; Halberstam, 1998; Hearn, 1996; 2004; Hooper, 2001; Kimmel, 2000; Mac an Ghaill & Haywood, 2007). When discussing the family construct I underline its inherent connection to other means of legitimating exclusion and hierarchy along biological and hierarchical principles – such as depicting national communities as extended families (cf. McClintock, 1995; Stevens, 1999; Toltz & Booth, 2005; Yuval–Davis, 1997).

In so doing, I acknowledge the feminist pronouncements on the role of gender as a crucial factor for making nationalist ideology more comprehensible, despite its inherent inconsistencies. Already some two decades ago this has been demonstrated by Anne McClintock who criticised the mainstream theorists of nationalism for not exploring in what manner nationalisms are concerned with gendered power. She noted that in fact 'no nationalism in the world has granted women and men the same privileged access to the resources of the nation state. So far, all nationalisms are dependent on powerful constructions of gender differences.' (McClintock 1991: 105) Even more so, Thembisa Waetjen has emphasised the ideological interconnections between nationalism and gender, and argued that the hierarchical gender binary – which postulates women's submission to men – is in a symbiotic relation with the nation – which sanctifies women's motherhood and celebrates men's power as leaders and defenders of the national construct. In other words, 'the nation upholds patriarchy while patriarchal gender order systems provide a narrative lubricant for smoothing out nationalism's well known internal contradictions of time, space, and identity' (Waetjen, 2001: 121–122). With this in mind, one may rightly argue that the feminist engagement with the study of nation and nationalism has exposed the illusory naturalness of the hierarchical gender binary and the apolitical quality of the private sphere to which women have been relegated to in nationalist ideology (Sluga, 2000: 517; Yuval–Davis, 1997: 1–2; Zalewski, 1995: 355).

### 3.1. FROM THE UNIVERSAL WOMAN TO THE PERFORMATIVE OF GENDER: INTERSECTIONAL ANALYSES OF FEMININITIES AND MASCULINITIES

Before going any further it is nonetheless necessary to elaborate the terminology at work in the present study and anchor it firmly in the field of feminist scholarship. If in its initial phases feminist studies concentrated attention on the voting rights and property rights for women, they have later on enlarged their scope and addressed a series of other issues, such as the critique of treating women as an aberration from the male norm, persisting inequalities, the family, women's reproductive rights and the workplace (cf. de Beauvoir, 2010; Friedan, 2001). Gradually, the monolithic stance on what women are and how to describe, assess, and defend their interests has been critiqued. In the last decades of the twentieth century some feminist scholars have argued for a more nuanced approach to the subject of feminist research. A first critique concerned the need to discuss *women* and their lives, and not about the Woman (with capital letter, as the universal ideal and sole intelligible entity, embodying ideals of white middle-class heterosexual Western womanhood), thus acknowledging the diversity of the feminist subject(s) of study: working class women; women of colour (cf. Collins, 2000; 2004; hooks, 1981; McClintock, 1995); women loving other women (cf. Rich, 1980; Wittig, 1980; 1982; 1989); women from the global South (cf. Jayawardena, 1986; Mohanty, 2003); women of different ages; women with disabilities and so on.

A second point of contention concerned the sex/gender debate. Discussing sex and biological differences between women and men has been critiqued for reifying women's role in life on the assumption of their biology and their psychological make-up. In turn, the concept of gender was suggested as a means to denounce the idea of biological determinism (the much criticised 'anatomy is destiny' adage), and thereby contest the naturalisation of sexual difference in various social contexts (Haraway, 1991: 127–148; Oakley, 1972; Rubin, 1998). An influential representative of such feminist efforts has been Ann Oakley. In her view, "sex" is a word that refers to the biological differences between male and female', while gender 'is a matter of culture: it refers to the social classification into "masculine" and "feminine"' (Oakley, 1972: 16). Even more so, she continued, the organisation of modern Western societies has been structured around the differences rather than the similarities between sexes, in a way confirming the assumption of a biological causality for the existing inequalities in these societies; she nonetheless warned that such a biological reasoning rested in fact on prejudice (Oakley, 1972: 210). While sex was assumed to be a 'natural', unchanging biological fact, *gender* has been conceptualised to account for the differences between men and women that are socially conditioned, and thus vary across time, and from one culture and national setting to another. Focusing their analytical attention on gender as a means of organising difference, feminist

researchers subsequently discussed gender as a form of constructing hierarchies, in which the biology of the sexes has been employed to proclaim the superiority of men and respectively the subordination of women. More clearly, women's oppression represents a direct consequence of such asymmetrical structuring, and 'patriarchy' denotes the systematic privileging of the masculine over the feminine (Cranny-Francis *et al*, 2003: 1–2; Lazar, 2005: 7–9; Mohanty, 2003: 61; Rubin, 1998: 534–538).

Another turning point has been the interrogation of women's and men's assumed heterosexual 'nature'. This has led scholars to call for a comprehensive analysis of heterosexuality – which, it was argued, needed to be recognised and studied as a political institution (Rich, 1980: 637). Investigating the alleged 'naturalness' of heterosexuality, several researchers pointed out that, by contrast, any other forms of manifesting one's sexuality that did not fulfil the ascribed attraction between sexes with the scope of reproduction have been deemed to be abnormal and even pathological (cf. Butler, 1990; Jackson, 2006; Seidman, 2005). The process of naturalising heterosexuality has a strong normative aspect that enforces a specific grid of intelligibility for bodies, genders, and desire, which Judith Butler coined as the 'heterosexual matrix' (Butler, 1990: 151). Crucially, normative heterosexuality rests on gender asymmetry, which naturalises the identification and evaluation of women in terms of their sexual availability and attractiveness to men, and their confinement within heterosexual relationships as wives and mothers (Jackson, 2006: 114; Tuori, 2009: 157–158). Such *heteronormativity* not only posits heterosexuality as intrinsically more valuable than homosexuality, but it also creates a set of hierarchic relations among the various sorts of heterosexuality, leading to the establishment of 'hegemonic and subordinate forms of heterosexuality' (Seidman, 2005: 40). But because of heterosexuality being so fragmented, this leaves room for the establishment of different degrees of respectability and various means to portray what is deemed to be good citizenship among heterosexuals. What is generally heralded as the norm is underpinned by traditional gender arrangement – sanctioned within the lifelong and legally sanctioned monogamous union between a man and a woman (Butler, 2004: 5; Seidman, 2005: 59–60).

Investigating the connection between gender and sex, Judith Butler has reversed the logic that generally posited sex as the origin of gender and argued instead that gender produces sex (cf. Butler, 1990; 1993; 1995; 2004), and both are produced within the aforementioned heterosexual matrix (Butler, 1990; 2004). In this respect, Butler regarded gender not as a noun, but as a verb, as a series of acts. From this perspective, the *gendered* identity becomes manifest only at the moment of its enactment, when gender is 'performed'. The consequence is that there is no natural gendered body; the body is instead constructed through the acts that generate its reality (Butler, 1990: 173). In her later writings Butler argued further that gender, far from being a simple model that people attempt to

appropriate, is in fact a means of social power that establishes the *hierarchical gender binary* – femininity and masculinity – and concomitantly defines the boundaries within which a subject becomes intelligible as gendered (Butler, 2004). This however underlines the fact that gendered identity is contingent upon the practices that constitute it. In other words, the *gender performative* bears in itself the potential for being produced, reproduced, but also ‘deproduced’:

If gender is a norm, it is not the same as a model that individuals seek to approximate. On the contrary, it is a form of social power that produces the intelligible field of subjects, and an apparatus by which the gender binary is instituted. As a norm that appears independent of the practices that it governs, its ideality is the reinstated effect of those very practices. This suggests not only that the relation between practices and the idealisations under which they work is contingent, but that the very idealisation can be brought into question and crisis, potentially undergoing deidealisation and divestiture.

(Butler, 2004: 48)

In relation to this, Butler employed the example of drag performances as a means to underscore the artificiality of gender as ‘performed’, and its inherent position as an effect of the heterosexual matrix, or to use the appellation employed in the present text, of *heteronormativity*. In her own words, ‘in imitating gender, drag implicitly reveals the imitative structure of gender itself – as well as its contingency’ (Butler, 1990: 175). Even more so, she maintained further that both drag and heterosexuality are dependent on the repetition of those acts; when understood according to the heteronormative principles of intelligibility, these acts signify a particular gender (Butler, 2004: 209). Nevertheless, while all forms of performing a gendered identity are constructed, only some of them – heterosexuality – are privileged as authentic and invested with normative power. More clearly, the gendered identity is crafted through the ‘ritualised production, a ritual reiterated under and through constraint, under and through the force of prohibition and taboo’ (Butler, 1993: 95) of certain acts and gestures that are intelligible within *heteronormativity*.

It is worth noting that in the present study I make use of the term *performative* of gender – employed interchangeably with *gender performative* – rather than that of performativity. I do so in order to underline the contingent, unstable, and negotiated nature of gender, and concurrently to emphasise that I conceptualise gender more than mere performance – in the theatrical sense of the term – a distinction made in her earlier works by Butler herself (Butler, 1993: 95). Key here is that gender is dependent on perpetual repetition whereby rendered unstable. Butler has nonetheless revised and refined her theoretical concepts, addressing the criticism formulated against the performativity of gender and anchored it further into language. She therefore defined what it means to be

performatively constituted as ‘to be produced in a given network of power/discourse’ (Butler, 1995: 135), in a sense echoing the Foucauldian discussion on the power/knowledge mentioned in the previous chapter (Foucault, 1995). Under these circumstances, then, heteronormativity, whose effect is the gender performative, represents in fact such a power/discourse network that articulates objects and subjects in their intelligibility (Butler, 1995: 138).

If heteronormativity has been unveiled to be the system of gendered oppression and gender an inherent effect of it, the concept of *intersectionality* has been suggested to the academic community to account for the social location at the junction of several such systems of oppression. More specifically, an intersectional study entails an analysis based on the claim that ‘systems of race, social class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, nation, and age form mutually constructing features of social organisation’ (Collins, 2000: 299). These systems have a major impact onto the experiences of, and at the same time are shaped by the very women or/and men that populate these locations (cf. Collins, 2000; McClintock, 1995; Mulinari, 2003). Nevertheless, McClintock has warned that these systems of oppression need not be understood as ‘distinct realms of experience, existing in splendid isolation from one another; nor can they be simply yoked together retrospectively like armatures of Lego. Rather, they come into existence *in and through* relation to each other – if in contradictory and conflictual ways.’ (McClintock, 1995: 5) (*Italics* in original) Chandra Talpade Mohanty, in turn, has warned researchers that the interwoven processes of sexism, racism, misogyny, and heterosexism ‘in conjunction with the regressive politics of ethnic nationalism and capitalist consumerism, are differentially constitutive of our lives in the early twenty-first century’ (Mohanty, 2003: 3). Consequently, feminist studies have systematically broadened their spectrum of analysis to incorporate more than just scholarship that contested the mainstream definition of women and womanhood circulating in culture and society. They have also explored analytically the complexity of hierarchical gender binary and the way this impacted on the lives of various women and men. For example, Patricia Hill Collins has emphasised that when talking about gender, it does not mean focusing exclusively on women’s issues, since men’s experiences are deeply gendered as well. Conceptions of gender shape both ideals of femininity and masculinity. Indeed, she added, ‘regardless of race, ethnicity, social class, citizenship status, and sexual orientation, all men and women encounter social norms about gender. These norms influence people’s sense of themselves as men and women as well as perceptions of masculinity and femininity.’ (Collins, 2004: 6)

Another concern for feminist research I show here has been to develop means to theorise *men and masculinities* that are situated within the hierarchical gender binary discussed above, and investigate the particular social practices which are used to reproduce social divisions and inequality in connection to the construction

of masculinities. This was a counteraction to the hegemonic discourse that presented solely women as gendered beings. It was thereby necessary to unveil men as a gendered political category, and a constitutive part of the intricate relationships that underpin patriarchal gender structuring. It was also motivated by the fact that politics have long been the social practice most explicitly connected with the crafting of masculine identity, one that witnessed the dominance of middle-class heterosexual masculinities (cf. Brown, 1988; Carver, 2004; Halberstam, 1998; Kimmel, 2000; Mosse, 1996; Phillips, 1998). Consequently, 'analysing men as a politically gendered category removes it from its normative location as transparent, neutral and disembodied' (Mac an Ghaill & Haywood, 2007: 29). Put differently, masculinity often operates as an implicit shorthand for the 'normal' individual, which is itself a maker of exclusion and subordination of subjects that do not coincide in terms of gender, sexuality, class, 'race', religion and other alleged 'signs of "difference" and "less than human" status' (Carver, 2008: 70). In other words, the white man remains 'true', without being sexualised. At the same time, he embodies the alive and able-bodied being. In that, he silently represents the standard against which everyone else is measured, be they native women, or minority and/or migrant women and men (Eduards, 2007: 69; Halberstam, 1998: 2–3; Lorentzen, 2011: 111; McClintock, 1995: 5–6; Mulinari, 2003: 116).

With this in mind, it is worth noting the concept of 'hegemonic masculinity', which was submitted to scholarly attention and subsequently developed in the works of RW/Raewyn Connell (1987; 1992; 1995). Hegemonic masculinity, in this context, was not statistically normal but had nonetheless a normative power, in the sense that it 'embodied the currently most honoured way of being a man, it required all other men to position themselves in relation to it, and ideologically legitimated the global subordination of women to men' (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005: 832). Besides being indebted to the Gramscian concept of 'hegemony' (Gramsci, 1971), hegemonic masculinity was also inspired by the criticism of black feminism mentioned above against the 'race' bias taking place when conceptualising power solely in terms of sexual differences. In so doing, it set the base for an understanding of masculinity as a non-monolithic, multifaceted construct. The construction of a hegemonic masculinity thus involves the marginalisation and subordination of other, less normative masculinities – such as masculinities of the non-majority ethnic/'racial'/religious group, non-heteronormative masculinities, and so on. From this point of view, Carver has warned scholars of men and masculinities that the 'gender lens works differently for men and things masculine than it does for women and things feminine' (Carver, 2004: 252).

While gender inequality contains women to a subordinate position as such, the idea of a dominant typology of masculinity rests on a fluid hierarchy among men that is constantly defined, described, naturalised, and defended. A special position of privilege in the hierarchy of masculinities is that of paternal masculinity, which

presupposes a legally sanctioned monogamous heterosexual union, and the production of offspring (cf. Carver, 2004: 252–254; Hooper, 2001: 55; Mac an Ghail & Haywood, 2007: 62–71). Furthermore, one needs to bear in mind that the formulation of ‘a hierarchy of masculinities grew directly out of homosexual men’s experience with violence and prejudice from straight men’ (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005: 831). This was in fact an acknowledgement of the subversive ability of homosexuality in a heteronormative male–dominated gender hierarchy, since this ‘subversion is a structural feature of homosexuality in a patriarchal society in which hegemonic masculinity is defined exclusively as heterosexual’ (Connell, 1992: 748).

Despite its merits, the concept of hegemonic masculinity has nevertheless come under criticism – for removing focus from questions of power and domination, for relying heavily on heteronormative understandings of gender whereby overemphasising sexual differences between men and women, and disregarding the relational aspect of the gender binary (cf. Brittan, 1989; Halberstam, 1998; Hearn, 1996; 2004; Hooper, 2001; Nixon, 1996). The field of study of men and masculinities has since developed ‘an expanding vocabulary of emerging paternal masculinities, “deadbeat” dads, male fetishised and narcissistic displays, masculinised feminine performances, disembodied male subjects and the new man’s non–phallic masculinity’ (Mac an Ghail & Haywood, 2007: 33). Researching the different instances of performing masculinity, Judith/Jack Halberstam, as well as Jean Bobby Noble, has suggested a counterexample of analysing masculinity (cf. Halberstam, 1996; Noble, 2004) – investigating the details of ‘masculine difference by comparing not men and women but butch lesbians and female–to–male transsexuals’ (Halberstam, 1998: 3). Hence, they argued for a ‘degree of indifference to the whiteness of the male and the masculinity of the white male and the project of naming his power’ (Halberstam, 1998: 3), and suggested instead examining the performative of masculinities in which men are not present; put differently, a study of ‘masculinities without men’ (Noble, 2004). In her analysis, however, Halberstam has acknowledged that ‘masculinity in this society inevitably conjures up notions of power and legitimacy and privilege; it often symbolically refers to the power of the state and to uneven distribution of wealth. Masculinity seems to extend outward into patriarchy and inward into family’ (Halberstam, 1998: 2).

Discussing the opportunity to revitalise the examination of gender and the study of masculinities, RW/Raewyn Connell and James Messerschmidt observed that the constitutive tandem of gender hierarchies initially suggested by Connell – that of ‘hegemonic masculinity’ and ‘emphasized femininity’ (Connell, 1987) – have received little scholarly attention thereafter. They argued further that since gender is always constructed in a relational manner, ‘the patterns of masculinity are socially defined in contradistinction from some model (whether real or imaginary) of femininity’ (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005: 848). Understood in

relation to this, Halberstam's comment – on the extension of masculinity outward into *patriarchy* and inward into *family* – demonstrates the family as a constitutive part of the heteronormative rule, and the main arena for the interdependent performative of masculinities and femininities. This has deep implications for gender studies, since the issues of women's oppression in patriarchy, that of normative heterosexuality, of 'hegemonic masculinities' and their contestation by either subordinated, non-normative masculinities, or by those performatives of 'masculinities without men' find their nexus in the traditional family conceptualisation.

The 'traditional family' ideal not only confirms heterosexuality as 'normal', but also naturalises an authority structure consisting of a father-head earning a satisfactory family wage, a stay-at-home wife, and their offspring (Rich, 1980: 657). Returning briefly to the painting described in the first chapter, I argue that the 'Family' of Wolfgang Willrich portrays precisely such a traditional family ideal centred on the paternal authority of the man, and underpinned by the subordinated motherhood of the woman. On this matter, among other feminist researchers, Collins has aptly observed that the traditional family is both an ideological construction and a fundamental principle for social organisation. As such, she continued, it rests on a conception of the family as a private enclosure separated from the public world, underpinned by a rather rigid sexual division of labour that requires a separation of work and family, within which the 'correct' type of reproduction is sanctioned by legitimising the offspring of the man involved in said family construct, and the paternal masculinity he thus embodies:

Assuming a relatively fixed sexual division of labour, wherein women's roles are defined as primarily in the home and men's in the public world of work, the traditional family ideal also assumes the separation of work and family. Defined as a natural or biological arrangement based on heterosexual attraction, this monolithic family type articulates with governmental structures. It is organised not around a biological core, but a state-sanctioned, heterosexual marriage that confers legitimacy not only on the family structure itself but on children born into it.

*(Collins, 1998: 62–63)*

The appeals to the family as a category of belonging, feminist scholars have unveiled, are oftentimes employed to justify differentiation along ethnic and/or 'racial', religious, and class-defined lines (cf. McClintock, 1995; Stevens, 1999; Toltz & Booth, 2005; Yuval-Davis, 1997). On this matter, McClintock has argued that the family construct is 'indispensable for legitimating exclusion and hierarchy within nonfamilial social forms such as nationalism, liberal individualism and imperialism' (McClintock, 1995: 45). In the same vein, Erik Ringmar has evidenced in his research the impact of political language in which the family is an often used metaphor to refer to a certain principle of understanding social

structuring – one that combines both biological and hierarchical principles. More exactly, political leaders ‘have often found it expedient to define themselves as “fathers” of the countries they rule and their subjects as “children” of varying ages and states of maturity’ (Ringmar, 2008: 60). Imitating the traditional model of family, the ‘father of the state’ has claimed monopoly over the decision-making process, while the other family members have been expected to obey his will and not question his judgment.

Returning to the matter at stake, the depiction of the nation that circumscribes the idea of the state – or the *people* of the radical right populists, for that matter – as an organic community proves a means most productive for claims of white masculine superiority. In its radical right populist interpretation, the national family is portrayed as a hierarchical structuring that naturalises the dominance of men, presented as heads of the family and fathers of offspring, and the submission of women, contained in the positions of wives and mothers (Honohan, 2008: 73; Mulinari & Neergaard, 2010: 56–57; Stevens, 1999: 143–148). With this in mind, the chapter details in the following the feminist scholarship that has addressed the issues of nations and nationalism, and that of radical right populism, and concentrates on the national family construct as the epitome of patriarchal heteronormativity. It subsequently examines the relationships between masculinities and the aforesaid national construct, and demonstrates the position of power at the helm of the family and *people* that heteronormative masculinities are ascribed. The chapter then concludes with a presentation of the main findings of mapping out the field.

### 3.1.1 GENDERED NATION – NATIONED GENDER<sup>17</sup>

Feminist researchers have argued that issues pertaining to gender and nation need to be understood in a dynamic relationship, through which they inform and shape one another (cf. Cusak, 2000; Hasso, 1998; Kandiyoti, 1991; Kulpa, 2011; McClintock, 1995; Mulinari, 2010; Nagel, 1998; 2000; Parker *et al*, 1992; Petö, 2006; 2010; Rankin, 2000; Taylor, 1997; Yuval–Davis, 1993; 1997). As previously discussed, gendered identities are contingent and subject to a continuous process of definition, contestation, and redefinition. The national construct is similarly situated, bound to specific historical moments and developments in a particular part of the world; furthermore, the aforesaid construct is shaped by shifting nationalist discourses and, in turn, inherently determines the very language that is employed to articulate them (Brubaker, 2004: 116; Pryke, 1998: 532). These nationalist discourses and the nationalist ideology they underpin are developed,

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<sup>17</sup> The title of this chapter pays tribute to the work of Nira Yuval–Davis in the field of nations and nationalism studies. It makes direct reference to the concepts of ‘gendered nations’, and respectively ‘nationed gender’, her way of emphasising the strong relation of interdependency between the concepts of gender and nation (Yuval–Davis, 1997: 21).

maintained, and contested by different groups in their quest for a hegemonic position within the polity under scrutiny. This imagined national collectivity naturalises the dominant position of a specific group – generally defined in ethnic/‘racial’, religious, and/or linguistic terms. It thereby establishes the group’s monopoly over the polity’s ideological apparatuses. In so doing, it posits the subordinated minority groups as deviant from the normative majority. This is often used as a justification to prevent minorities from claiming, or even gaining access to resources, and in extreme cases to ‘ethnic cleansing’ (cf. Anderson, 1991; Brubaker, 2004; Saukkonen, 2003).

A pioneer of feminist scholarship of nations and nationalisms, Nira Yuval–Davis has maintained that the conceptions of femininity and masculinity play a central role in the ideological construction of nationalism and its interpretation of the nation (cf. Yuval–Davis, 1980; 1989; 1993; 1997). Although agreeing with Benedict Anderson in his conceptualisation of the nation as ‘an imagined community’ (Anderson, 1991), she nevertheless developed her own classification of the structuring dimensions of the national project. In her view, the first component is the ‘genealogical dimension’, based on the myth of a common origin and a shared pool of genes/blood, which enables ‘to construct the most exclusionary/homogeneous vision of “nation”’ (Yuval–Davis, 1997: 21). What comes second is the cultural dimension, understood in terms of ‘the symbolic heritage provided by language and/or religion and/or other customs and traditions’ which constitute the national ‘essence’. In addition to this, she detailed on the role of gender in the biological and cultural production of the nation. A third interpretation is what she called ‘the civic dimension’ of nationalist projects, which is inherently connected to the idea of state sovereignty and specific territoriality (Yuval–Davis, 1997: 21).

Attempting a rough classification of women’s roles within the national collectivity, and their place in the nationalist ideology, a first position evidenced by research in the field is that of women as bearers of the national community, at both biological and symbolical level (cf. Charles & Hintjes, 1998; Cusak, 2000; Stevens, 1999; Yuval–Davis, 1980; 1993; 1997). Such a standing underlines nonetheless the inherent inconsistencies that lie at the heart of the national construct underpinned by ideals of ethnic essentialism. There are differences in terms of class solidarities, differences between men and women, and differences in the valorisation of sexual orientation, with some being considered worthwhile members of the nation, thereby encouraged and protected, whilst some others are, at best, frowned upon if not forbidden outright and persecuted. As such, nationhood appears oftentimes conflated with gender, parentage, and ‘racial’ belonging, in a manner that ties it to a sense of inevitability, which brings forth demands for the individual’s abandonment to a common good and readiness for personal sacrifice. More clearly, nationalist ideology depicts women and men primarily in essentialist terms. This is in turn reflected in the special place women are ascribed in the national community and on the prescribed behaviour they are

expected to display for their acknowledgement as members of said collectivity, which is envisioned as a tightly knit community. In so doing, their membership in the national construct is confirmed as merely being at the side of their men. Women are consigned to the burden of national parenthood, whilst men are entrusted with the task of leading and defending the nation (Charles & Hintjes, 1998: 6; Cusak, 2000: 543). As a result, the nation's women are marked off from the Other's women:

The very language of nationalism singles women out as the symbolic repository of group identity. [Thus,] nationalism describes its object using either a vocabulary of kinship (motherland, *patria*) or home (*heimat*), in order to denote something to which one is 'naturally' tied. Nationness is thus equated with gender, parentage, skin-colour – all those things that are not chosen and which, by virtue of their inevitability, elicit selfless attachment and sacrifice. The association of women with the private domain reinforces the merging of the nation/community with the selfless mother/devout wife; the obvious response of coming to her defence or even dying for her is automatically triggered.

*(Kandiyoti, 1991: 434)*

A second capacity identified in feminist research has been that of women as signifiers of national differences, in other words as embodiments of and symbols in the ideological discourses that have been employed for the construction, reproduction, and transformation of national categories. It is worth noting that in the context of drawing clear lines of demarcation between one's national community and its immediate Other, the discussion over the veil worn by women of Islamic faith as a marker of belonging/exclusion has been addressed at length from various viewpoints. At first, feminist researchers have been writing about the importance of gender in the national struggles against imperialism in the former colonies and used as evidence the use of the veil as a political tool for crafting national solidarity underpinned by Islamic precepts of piety and modesty (cf. Ahmed, 1992; Kandiyoti, 1991;). More recently and echoing the wide socio-political impact of the September 11 terrorist attacks, feminist scholars have focused on the politicisation of the veil as a sign of radical Otherness and as such a fetishisation of cultural attributes and claims, often connected to alleged Islamic practices such as female genital mutilation, forced marriages, honour killings, and imposition of Shar'ia law (cf. Khiabany & Williamson, 2008; Meer, Dwyer & Modood, 2010; Mulinari, 2010).

Another perspective on the matter of symbolic difference has explored the distinction operated between the women identified as belonging to a native majority and those of an immigrant non-majority background. For example, Tobias Hübinette and Catrin Lundström have researched the place of radical right populism in the overall political culture in Sweden, which has generally been

considered as a progressive country and a schoolbook example of gender equality. On this matter, they have shown that radical right populism exploits a racist undercurrent present in Swedish society. In the process, a distinction is made between the native women, who are assimilated into the domain of white men, thereby superior, and the immigrant women, who are suspected of benefitting unrightfully from the European welfare system. The different valorisation of women shows the crucial role that the family plays in the national construct; family politics being national politics:

Here lies a deep difference between the construction of white women standing outside the labour market on the one hand and the non-white women on the other. While the white woman is expected to reproduce the nation through her household and reproductive labour, the non-white woman is subject to discourses of being welfare abusers. Such a racialised juxtaposition reflects the ideological function that the family plays in the construction of the nation as naturalising gendered and national boundaries, and indeed how the politics of family values nurtures nationalistic ideals [...].

*(Hübinette & Lundström, 2011: 49)*

In conclusion, I maintain that the findings of feminist scholarship of nationalism – especially those which pertain to the gendered nature of the imagined national communities, the women’s burden of national parenthood, and the women’s various positions within/outside the national community based on their family ties – constitute valuable theoretical vantage points for the investigation of the hierarchical gender binary at work in radical right populism.

### 3.1.2 NORMATIVE MOTHERHOOD AND THE NATION

Several feminist researchers have been documenting the radical shifts that accompany the transformation of motherhood – from a discourse and practice usually positioned within the private sphere – into a matter of national concern – and implicitly prominent in the public sphere (cf. Kramer, 2005; Mulinari, 2010; Stevens, 1999; Yuval–Davis, 1997). Consequently, women play a crucial role in the discursive (re)production of the nation ‘given the central role that the myth (or reality) of “common origin” plays on the construction of most ethnic and national collectivities’, and their bodies become battlefields for maintaining the ‘purity’ of the national construct (Yuval–Davis, 1997: 26). Analysing further the ‘demographic race’ discourse – aimed at preserving a certain ethnic or ‘racial’ make-up in a country –, that of ‘eugenics’, or the Malthusian discourse, which share their preoccupation with issues of pronatalist and anti-abortion policies, forced sterilisations and even gendercide, Yuval–Davis uncovered their gendered

nature, and the high price that women have to pay for maintaining the alleged national purity (Yuval-Davis, 1997: 26–37).

The ideal of women's national parenthood has developed in a direction that assimilated motherhood to a normative position that entailed raising the right type of offspring – impinging directly upon women's rights to terminate undesired pregnancies, to determine the terms of their motherhood, or to freely choose their partners (cf. Gaitskell & Unterhalter, 1989; Kramer, 2005; Petö, 2006; 2010; Taylor, 1997). This has taken different forms across the world. In the post-1989 context in Central and Eastern Europe, the abortion debate has been particularly important in gathering nationalist forces and conservative actors – such as religious institutions. In Poland, for example, the anti-abortion nationalist discourse has been centred on the promotion of an iconic image of the Polish mother (*Matka Polka*) that rose to prominence in the nineteenth century Polish national struggle: a self-sacrificing woman who served her country by giving birth to the next generation of Poles and bringing up children with 'Polish values'. The nationalist stance has benefited from the strong support of the Roman Catholic Church. In contrast, those women that did not fulfil the Polish mother paradigm were excluded as non-feminine, enemies of the nation, and even threats to national unity (Kramer, 2005: 142).

The ideal of women-as-mothers becomes even more complex, researchers have argued, in highly polarised societies where class cleavages juxtapose racial segregation, such as in South Africa during the apartheid regime (cf. Gaitskell & Unterhalter, 1989). In this case, the position of women as mothers played an important role in nationalist discourses, but was at all times permeated by conceptions of racial differentiation. More clearly, the racial aspect determined the selective recognition of motherhood, according to the women's own racial belonging and identification with the national community and its cause. Indeed, appeals 'to motherhood have been couched in ethnically very exclusive terms as well as in racially inclusive ways. The different circumstances of black and white mothers have shaped the relation between the ideas of nation, state and motherhood.' (Gaitskell & Unterhalter, 1989: 76)

In relation to this, some feminist researchers have developed the concept of 'normative motherhood', which enabled them to investigate the masculinist attempts to construe and impose a certain ideal of femininity, one intimately connected to ideas of feminine submission, reproduction, and domesticity (cf. Petö, 2006; 2010; Taylor, 1997). Such attempts to compel women into a masculinist interpretation of maternity have been denounced for being merely 'patriarchy in drag' (Taylor, 1997: 184). Women's resistance to these coercive portrayals of femininity has been used by the state power, researchers have claimed, as a means to distinguish between the 'good' and 'pure' femininity that entailed non-political motherhood – isolated from the public sphere within the walls of their homes – and the 'bad' femininity – women actively and physically

taking part in the public sphere. It was politically active women that were targeted by authoritarian regimes, such as the Argentinean junta (Taylor, 1997). It was these women that the notion of 'patria' itself had singled out as unworthy examples of femininity and potential enemies of the state:

[It] is interesting to note that Patria, which comes from padre or father, does not mean 'fatherland' in Spanish. Rather, the word Patria signals the image of motherland as envisioned by patriarchy. [...] The very notion of the feminine was split in two – into the 'good' woman and the 'bad' woman. On the one hand, the junta honoured the symbolic image of pure motherhood associated with the Patria, the 'good' woman, and made clear to women that their role was also to be 'pure', that is, non-political, mothers confined to the private sphere. On the other hand, active women were 'bad' women, associated with deviance and subversion. Women who were not content to stay at home were often targeted as enemies of the State.

*(Taylor, 1997: 184)*

Normative motherhood has been also employed to research the conservative and extreme right presence in Hungary (Petö, 2006; 2010). One of Andrea Petö's key findings has been the conceptual importance of the family – and the place women occupy within that family context – in articulating both the extreme right ideology and motivating women to become active in various conservative and extreme right social movements, and, consequently, to engage in parliamentary politics as representatives of such parties. The Hungarian women active in these environments appear relegated to a role of normative motherhood and embody the so-called 'feminine virtues' in the family context in a modern interpretation of the cult of Virgin Mary, in a manner very much similar to the Polish case described earlier (cf. Kramer, 2005; Petö, 2006; 2010).

Normative motherhood appears to serve several purposes and is legitimised by certain public discourses. First, the cult of motherhood is intended to strengthen the national family, identifying the body of women with the body of the nation. This justifies the extreme right appeals to the nation's men to defend the national family. It concomitantly regulates the acceptable behaviour between women and men – potentially containing and domesticating more extreme manifestations of masculinity, such as violence directed against women. Second, the reference to the Virgin Mary contains women to a specific role – that of mothers – and restrains their ability to be active in the public sphere. Third, it also consolidates a quasi-scientific discourse that maintains women as the weaker sex and the only ones able to bear children (Petö, 2010: 195). Corroborated with the internalisation of normative motherhood, a possible explanation for the women's involvement in extreme right politics lies, according to Petö, in the way these women have appropriated the authoritarian model of understanding and doing politics, in the sense of regarding the state as another manifestation of the family household and

using the emotional and thinking patterns they have learned at home to make sense of political life (Petö, 2006: 329). It is precisely the conception of normative motherhood and the conceptual overlap between the state and family household – relegating women to such a subordinated position within the national community – that represent a valuable theoretical construct for the present analysis.

### 3.1.3 WOMEN, FEMININITIES, AND THE NATION – THE BURDEN OF HETERONORMATIVITY

The centrality of the normative motherhood conception to the nationalist discourse rests on the assumption of universal heterosexuality shared by all members of the national community (cf. Kulpa, 2011; Mosse, 1996; 1997; Nagel, 2000; Parker *et al.*, 1992; Pryke, 1998; Rankin, 2000). On this matter, it appears that '[n]ormative heterosexuality is a central component of racial, ethnic, and nationalist ideologies; both adherence to and deviation from approved sexual identities and behaviours define and reinforce racial, ethnic, and nationalist regimes' (Nagel, 2000: 107). As a result, the appropriate gender performatives for both heterosexual women and men are highly regulated, and are often assimilated with that of ethnic belonging and national identification, thereby intimately related to such concepts as the community's honour and its respectability (cf. Mosse, 1996; 1997). More precisely, men are expected to embody courageous, honourable, and active citizenship in the public sphere, thereby portraying 'the foundation of the nation and society', while women are required to fulfil their obligations as 'guardians of the traditional order' and morality in the private sphere (Mosse, 1997: 17). From this point of view, these heteronormative discourses enable the crystallisation of specific hierarchies of worthiness, at work both inside and across the ethnic or national boundaries:

Across a wide variety of ethnic groups appropriate enactments of heterosexuality are perhaps the most regulated and enforced norms. In particular, correct heterosexual masculine and feminine behaviour constitutes gender regimes that often lie at the core of ethnic cultures. Our women (often depicted as virgins, mothers, pure) v. their women (sluts, whores, soiled). Our men (virile, strong, brave) v. their men (degenerate, weak, cowardly). [...] Because of the common importance of proper gender role and sexual behaviour to ethnic community honour and respectability, a great deal of attention is paid to the sexual demeanour of group members (by outsiders and insiders) in inspection and enforcement of both formal and informal rules of sexual conduct.

*(Nagel, 2000: 113)*

On a closer inspection of the interplay between gender, sexuality, and nationalism in the Northern hemisphere, women loving other women – particularly those that chose to build a family and bear children – appear to occupy a specific position in the nationalist discourses. In her research on Canadian queer nationalism, Pauline Rankin has argued that most nationalist manifestations are intrinsically homophobic – a consequence of the hegemonic position occupied by heteronormativity within the national constructs (cf. Kulpa, 2011). In this she concurs with previous explorations of nationalism and sexuality that underlined the marginality of female non-reproductive sexuality, and of women loving women in a context in which motherhood – the epitome of heterosexual reproductive sexuality – has been portrayed as a feminised version of ‘national service’ (Parker *et al*, 1992: 7). Rankin then maintained that the contemporary neoliberal agenda has had a profound impact on the Canadian society. In its neoliberal interpretation, preoccupied with procreation but effectively silencing the possibility for non-heteronormative reproduction techniques, Canadian nationalism has once more cemented the link between the ‘traditional family’ and the nation. As such those who have not been accepted as part of the traditional heteronormative family constellation have been yet again excluded from the national body. The envisioned image of the new Canada was thereby inherently heterosexist, without being explicitly homophobic (Rankin, 2000:185). Nonetheless, the new Canadian nationalism has developed a conflicting relationship with the Canadian lesbians. It morphed from openly challenging their ability to function as ‘good citizens’ – the ideal engendered by their heterosexual counterparts – to accommodating the so called ‘lesbian baby-boom’ of the past decade – with the further implications of child rearing and ‘national cultural reproduction’ – and finally to curtailing their access to new reproductive technologies provided by the state. In so doing, it confirmed the ‘superiority’ of the traditional family to other family constellations within new Canadian nationalism (Rankin, 2000: 192).

It is worth noting that in the name of securing the nation’s future – through the acceptance of the (legally sanctioned) monogamous union as the solely acceptable family model in which to bear and raise offspring – a distinction is made between ‘good’ versus ‘bad’ among the members of the LGBTQI community. This echoes strongly the conceptual separation between ‘good’ versus ‘bad’ women and their femininity performatives that the various manifestations of nationalist ideology have actively enabled (cf. Butler, 2009; Duggan, 2002; Gaitskell & Unterhalter, 1989; Petö, 2006; 2010; Rankin, 2000; Taylor, 1997). Indeed, more recent analyses at the intersection of nation, ethnicity, and gender and sexuality have discussed the relationship between nationalism and ‘homonormativity’ – understood as the acceptance of the hegemonic heteronormative ideology and its adaptation to a depoliticised queer constituency in the neoliberal context of contemporary late modernity (cf. Butler, 2009; Duggan, 2002; Kulpa, 2011; Puar, 2007). Unlike Jasbir Puar, who has theorised the fusion between nationalism and

homonormativity as a new discourse that she labelled ‘homonationalism’ (Puar, 2007), Robert Kulpa has criticised the conceptual grounds on which the term ‘homonormativity’ is built upon. Taking up the issue of class in his criticism, Kulpa uncovered the universalistic claims of the narrative about nations, gender, and sexuality located in the ‘West’, and argued for geographical awareness and an acknowledgement of the different manifestations of capitalism and different articulations between nationalist projects and homosexuality:

This link between respected sexuality, aberrant homosexuality, class and capitalism is tightly connected to Western European history, privileging again ‘Europe’ (i.e. the West) as the Grand Narrative, presumably semi (if not fully) transparent universalisation. However, for somebody interested in non-Western European logics of nationhood and homo/sexuality, the link might seem less pervasive, if only for reasons of lacking a ‘capitalist, class-based society’ (which is not to say that it is not stratified).

*(Kulpa, 2011: 57)*

On this matter, the traditional scholarship on nationalism has been criticised by feminist and queer scholars alike for being short-sighted in its positivist binaries at work in the analysis of nationalism and its ready-made formulas, which most of the times are reduced to simple mono-disciplinary investigations. Such approaches, commented Spike Peterson, deny any analytical importance to questions of ‘emotion, desire, sexuality, culture and – hence – identity and identification processes’ (Peterson, 1999: 36). Peterson employed the sexuality construct to illustrate the institutionalisation and normalisation of heterosexuality. She maintained that ‘the conjuncture of heterosexist ideology and practice is inextricable from the centralisation of political authority/coercive power that we refer to as state-making’ (Peterson, 1999: 39). More clearly, the heterosexual ideology imposes the exclusive normalisation of heterosexual, reproductive desire, intimacy, and family life. In addition, this process of normalisation entails the hegemony of the heterosexual male over women and the justifiability of rape as an expression of male power over women (Peterson, 1999: 40), or as a means of warfare among competing national/ethnic communities (Munn, 2008: 153–155; Nagel, 2000: 125; Pryke, 1989: 538; Yuval-Davis, 1997: 109–110). It is worth noting that within the context of gender relations that naturalise and normalise masculine heterosexual superiority, fatherhood has been evidenced by several researchers to play a crucial role (cf. Cusak, 2000; Miller, 2003; Stein, 2006). Indeed, the position of fatherhood solidifies the system to which it is a part, and it embodies concurrently the origin of the family, the leader of the family and the nation, and the head of the church:

One among others in a system of reciprocal relations, fatherhood is also supposed to anchor the system in which it belongs. Symbolically, it is at

once the origin, foundation, and summit of the family, the tribe, the nation, and the church. No member of a class can stand outside the class to which it belongs; no human person can be the Father. Figures of patriarchal authority, however, are presumed by definition to speak from the place and in the name of this absolute fatherhood.

*(Miller, 2003: 16)*

To sum up, I consider it of cardinal importance for this study that these conceptual clarifications with regard to the heteronormative nature of the national community project in the neoliberal context of contemporary–late modernity – built on the successive differentiation between ‘good’ versus ‘bad’ ways of performing one’s own gender, with the emphasis on women’s responsibility to be mothers, and men’s implicit fatherhood, and ‘good’ versus ‘bad’ LGBTQI members, with emphasis on reproducing the national construct in the framework of monogamous unions. This underlines the flexibility of nationalist ideology in crafting a national community and its reliance upon the institution of family.

### **3.1.4 MEN, MASCULINITIES, AND THE NATION – HEADING THE FAMILY AND THE PEOPLE**

The conceptual apparatus developed for the theorising and investigation of men and masculinities in various social interactions – concisely presented in the previous section – has also been employed in analyses of the nation and nationalist manifestations (cf. Anand, 2007; Bracewell, 2000; Ferber, 2000; Huyseune, 2000; Nagel, 1998; Norocel, 2010c; Waetjen, 2001; Zivkovic, 2006), and more recently even in the study of radical right populist movements (Geden, 2005). Focusing on the relationship between nations, nationalist ideology, and the construction and performative of masculinities, the research community appears to have acknowledged the usefulness of such a perspective in uncovering the gendered nature of national constructs. Indeed, within the nationalist ideology the two hegemonic forms, that of nationalism and normative masculinity, articulate a symbiotic relationship. More clearly, the cult of the nation emphasises and resonates with cultural themes that praise normative masculinity, and concepts such as ‘honour, patriotism, cowardice, bravery and duty are hard to distinguish as either nationalist or masculinist, since they seem so thoroughly tied to both the nation and manliness’ (Nagel, 1998: 252).

Nevertheless, several feminist researchers have argued for a more nuanced perspective on the place of masculinities within nationalist ideology (cf. Anand, 2008; Bracewell, 2000; Munn, 2008; Norocel, 2010c; Waetjen, 2001). Most importantly, some researchers have appealed for a more complex understanding of the two hegemonic discourses and demonstrated the need to conceptualise them as historically situated, hence dependent upon specific modes of production,

reproduction, and political control. In so doing, they have reiterated and concomitantly refined the criticism voiced by earlier feminist research on masculinities and nationalism, which warned that the theorising of nations and nationalism from a gender perspective runs the risk of treating men and masculinities as stable, undifferentiated categories, and equating male interests with masculinity and nationalism (cf. Bracewell, 2000; Waetjen, 2001). The concept of gender power is one alternative theoretical construct that enables researchers to account for the inherent stratification among men in the allegedly unitary national body, since social cleavages along class lines are an indistinguishable part of the nationalist construct across time (Waetjen, 2001: 124). Consequently, being aware of the internal divisions present among men represents a first step in deconstructing the central position of masculinity in nationalist mythologies.

A similar position is shared by other researchers in the field that have concentrated their scholarly attention either on the post-conflict environments – such as in Kosovo, and interrogated ‘the latent insurrectionary power of nationalist myths and practices as narrative performances of hegemonic masculinity’ (Munn, 2008: 143–144) – or who researched manifestations of ‘porno-nationalism’ – a term which accounts for the centrality of sexualised imagination in Hindu ‘nationalism as an ideology and a lived collective political movement’ (Anand, 2008: 163) – or even on the ambiguous relationship between political power, ‘deviance’, and nativist masculinity performatives – the conflict between effeminate men, masculine women, corrupted aristocracy and foreigners, and the eventually triumphant nativist masculinity engendered by Romanian peasantry (Norocel, 2010c: 9–10). However, it is imperative that the scholars with a gender-sensitive research agenda are aware of the multi-faceted nature of masculinity because it ‘may have for gender theory the same metaphoric value it has for nationalism – an overstated cohesion of interests, forces, and ideologies.’ (Waetjen, 2001: 123)

Importantly, the studies mentioned above have shown that the dominant, steadfast, and heterosexual typology of masculinity represents the epitome of the national community understood in ethnic/‘racial’/religious terms. In nationalist reasoning, the Others are deemed inferior, being assigned a feminised position. Feminisation, it is worth noting further, can be manifested at a symbolic level – domination exercised by a competing masculinity that acquires a hegemonic position – or at a more physical level – the most radical being the act of rape of either the group’s women or even of the subordinated men themselves. Such feminisation of the Other, or the threat of feminisation by a competing community, is of global recurrence in nationalist thinking (cf. Anand, 2007; 2008; Bracewell, 2000; Huyseune, 2000; Munn, 2008; Zivkovic, 2006). For example, in the separatist debates of the Northern League (*Lega Nord*, LN) – a regionalist and radical right populist party in Italy – a recurring exclusionary practise is

feminising the geographic and political Other (Huysseune, 2000). More clearly, the LN portrayed 'Padania' (a region in northern Italy, roughly overlapping the contours of the river Po basin) in opposition to both a corrupt and 'politicianist' centre (Rome), and a backward and dormant south. As such, 'southern Italian effeminacy' was presented as a threat to the masculine straightforwardness and righteousness of 'Padanians', as the southerners' 'feminine nature' enabled them to be skilful manipulators (Huysseune, 2000: 603). Making use of a traditionalist interpretation of the hierarchical gender binary, the LN claimed not only a higher moral standing, but also the subsequent subordination of the south to the superiority of the north (Huysseune, 2000: 604–605). The party has in other words construed a normative hierarchy inasmuch as it separated along geographical lines between northern masculine superiority and domination, and southern submissiveness. In so doing, the LN discourse espoused its ideological affinity with the 'colonialist vision of the North–South relation of earlier discourse of nation–building' (Huysseune, 2000: 607).

Other feminist scholars have in turn uncovered the close interaction between purist conceptions of heteronormative masculinity and racist ideology (cf. Ferber, 2000; McClintock, 1995). A closer investigation of two seemingly unconnected social movements, in the US, the white supremacy and the mythopoetic men's movements, shows that both gather disenfranchised white males and 'blame the losses of white men on women and minorities' (Ferber, 2000: 32). Even more so, these movements appear to share a common sense of insecurity and the need to uphold their hegemonic position within the society. Because 'both racial and gender identities are increasingly revealed to be unstable, that those who have the most invested in these categories and their hierarchical construction react by reasserting their unwavering foundations' (Ferber, 2000: 40). In doing so, the two movements proclaim the essential nature of these identity constructs, and as such envisage a re–masculinisation of the hierarchical gender binary – put simply, a restoration of an allegedly glorious past in which the 'white race' and heteronormative masculinity constructions were unchallenged.

Nationalist ideology, however, does not seem to be exclusively concerned with the ethnically/'racially' different outside Other. Within the national body there are contesting definitions of masculinity, and how gender relations should be envisaged and reproduced. These too are subject to a process of normative evaluation and policing. Through these practices, the nationalist ideology underlines the desired masculinity performative and proclaims its hegemonic status. In so doing, it also defines the 'abomination' falling off the normative spectrum – the non–heteronormative masculinity (cf. Kulpa, 2011; Mosse, 1996; Norocel, 2010c; Stevens, 1999). As Connell has aptly noted, there is no other conception of masculinity more destabilizing than that of homosexuality. Indeed, within the dynamics of hegemony of masculinity in the Western world, 'the relationship between heterosexual and homosexual men is central, carrying a

heavy symbolic freight. To many people homosexuality is a negation of masculinity, and homosexual men must be effeminate' (Connell, 1992: 736).

A case in point here is the emergence of political homophobia. As I have evidenced elsewhere, homosexuality has oftentimes been depicted as a disease on the otherwise healthy national body, and regarded as a possible threat to the dominating heterosexual masculinity performative, since the possibility of the latter being corrupted into homosexuality can never be excluded thereby undermining the whole national project (Norocel, 2010c). The only feasible option in such a situation has been to banish homosexuality *extra muros*, separating the 'true' masculine embodiments of the nation from its 'weak' and 'perverted' manifestations portrayed by homosexual desire and its corresponding masculinity performative<sup>18</sup>. To sum up, what I make use of in the present study is a conceptual symbiosis between the normative masculinity performative and nationalist ideology – particularly the main means to operate a separation between the various groups of men and their different masculinity performatives, with an emphasis on the reproductive heteronormative masculinity performative of the ethnic majority as the apex of the nation construct, and the various means it is afforded to dismiss and control competing masculinity performatives.

### 3.2 FOR GENDER-SENSITIVE RESEARCH OF RADICAL RIGHT POPULISM

In this chapter I synthesise the main feminist concepts that I intend to employ in the investigation of radical right populist ideology herein. In so doing, my intention has been not to deliver a detailed overview of feminist research. Rather, I have aimed to indicate how my own research project is anchored in the tradition of feminist research – providing the feminist conceptual vocabulary I employ in this work. In addition, I have reviewed the key contributions of feminist scholarship of nations and nationalism, which I considered of importance for this study. I have thus indicated a possible means to address the gender-blindness of the theoretical canon of radical right populism. More clearly, extrapolating from the findings of feminist scholarship on the field of nations and nationalism to the study of radical right populism, I argue that the *people* of radical right populist ideology may be conceptualised as a gendered construct, inasmuch as the *nation* of nationalist ideology. Additionally, the conceptual construct of the *people* – just as the *nation* and the gender performative – is, as detailed in the previous chapter,

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<sup>18</sup> It is nonetheless worth noting that the distinction between 'good' heterosexual men and 'bad' homosexual men has become less clear in the past decades. With the increase interaction between nationalism and homonormativity – take, for instance, the special 'LGBT chapters' of extreme right English Defence League (EDL) – it seems the boundaries have been moved in the direction of at least nominally incorporating into the national project those members of the LGBTQI community that submit to the nationalist ideals in the neoliberal context.

characterised by contingency and instability, being subject to a continuous process of definition, consolidation, contestation, and reinterpretation across time, as well as between various polities in which the concept is employed by the radical right populist ideology. In other words, a study of the radical right ideology could trace the discursive genealogy of the concept, and the place occupied by the hierarchical gender binary in this context; hence it would evidence the various changes, reinterpretations, and possible moments of tension across time. More clearly, the gender-sensitive lens at work in the present study 'enables us to see the extent and structure of gender hierarchy. It permits us to examine both how social constructions of masculinity and femininity shape our ways of thinking and knowing how women's and men's lives are patterned differently as a consequence of gendered practices' (Peterson & Runyan, 1993: 190).

Starting from the conceptual overlap between the *people* and the *nation*, which I noted in the previous chapter, and juxtaposing it with the gendered aspects of the national construct evidenced by feminist research in the field, I maintain that the femininity and masculinity performatives ascribed to the women and men constituting the *people* community might be seen in a similar way in radical right populist discourses as they are in nationalist discourses. There are several aspects that need to be shown here. In order to answer to the research questions I posited in the first chapter, I need to analyse how the *people* collectivity – overlapping with that of the national family construct – is gendered.

In order to do so, following on the footsteps of feminist scholarship of nationalism, I plan to employ the theoretical conceptualisation of the woman's burden of national parenthood, and the position to which women have been relegated within the national collectivity to account for the functioning of the hierarchical gender binary in radical right populist ideology. As such, heteronormativity may represent a crucial criterion of intelligibility in radical right populist discourses. Consequently, of particular importance is to investigate the place that radical populist discourses may assign to women as bearers of the community, and as signifiers of the *people* as a homogeneous collectivity. On this matter, crucial is the awareness of the normative implications of assimilating motherhood to bearing the offspring of the family father, and by extrapolation the *people's* offspring. Such a move therefore brings to attention the position of other, non-normative femininities in radical right populist ideology.

On the issue of *people's* homogeneity, as I showed in the previous chapter, the radical right populist parties appear to be preoccupied with maintaining the purity of the *people*. Such a preoccupation requires investigating radical right populist appeals to the *people's* men to defend their women from either internal or external threats – which similarly to nationalist descriptions might be oftentimes depicted in masculine terms. This may also indicate an attempt to control women's bodies through various means – either by prohibiting the women's interaction with the masculine Other under the threat of rape, or discouraging

women's autonomy and the right to control their own bodies by positing the right to abortion as problematic and relating it to the 'demographic race'.

Another aspect worth noting here is an awareness of the position of men and certain masculinity performatives at the heart of the national family construct. Such ascribing of men as family heads may reconfirm the asymmetric, patriarchal nature of the hierarchical gender binary manifest in radical right populist discourses. Here, emphasis is put on the plurality of masculinity performatives, and the position of hegemony some of them may be afforded in particular political–socio–cultural–economic circumstances. As such, certain hierarchies at work within the spectrum of masculinity performatives that underpin radical right populist discourses – more clearly, if the native heterosexual masculinity performative is heralded as the ideal in radical right populism – may involve the crafting of a hierarchy of subordination and even oppression of other masculinity performatives. The assumption of masculine leadership leads to a symbiotic relationship between the *people* and their male leaders, which in turn results in the representation of – to paraphrase Nagel (1998: 252) – honour, patriotism, cowardice, bravery, and duty as quintessential attributes of the hegemonic masculinity performative, and concurrently designate these as inherently defining dimensions for the whole body of *people*. To investigate these, in the following chapter I introduce the main tenets of the conceptual metaphor theory and present the most important lines of criticism this has met since its introduction. Having the above criticism as a point of departure, I suggest a genealogical take on the analysis of conceptual metaphors, which enables my inquiry on the gendered nature of the radical right populist discourses and the ideology they underpin.

## 4 METHODOLOGICAL NOTES AND CHOICE OF EMPIRICAL MATERIAL

The analyst of manifestations of radical right populist ideology through discourse needs to be aware of several interrelated axes of structuring the political subject – gender, ethnicity/‘race’, social class, sexuality. This stance is grounded in the gendered nature of the *people* construct in such discourses. The *people* conception, as discussed previously, rests on the generic presentation of the collectivity, in metaphorical terms, as a family. The collective identification with an enlarged family thereby enables the ordering of radical right populist discourses according to a heteronormative criterion of intelligibility. With this in mind, I suggest in the following a discussion on the concept of metaphor. Metaphor, as it is detailed in the present chapter, is not simply and innocently an embellishment of political discourse; in fact, it is actively producing the ‘reality’ that is described and reinforced through that discourse. More clearly, metaphor highlights how social relations are to be understood, in which way specific political issues are to be talked about, focuses attention on specific problems and elevates them to the centre stage of the political agenda, while purposively obscuring others. Consequently, the use of metaphor by political actors uncovers the ideological underpinnings of the discourse the metaphor is embedded in, and at the same time provides a comprehensive description of the specific worldview the said political actors entertain. Fleshing out the connection between metaphor, ideology, and discourse, I strengthen my argument for the investigation of conceptual metaphor in radical right populist discourses.

At a basic level, metaphor represents ‘the ideational construction of reality’ (Koller, 2004: 3), a communicative resource usually employed by language users to enrich ‘the expressiveness of their message through the most economical means available to them’ (Charteris–Black, 2004: 17). Put differently, metaphor can be defined as the beams of light from a ‘searchlight that selectively highlights some aspects of the unknown but leaves other aspects in the dark’ (Mühlhäusler, 2012: 9). In other words, depicting the *people* as a family collective enriches the expressiveness of radical right populist discourses, and concurrently suggests a certain level of closeness and even intimacy between the constitutive members of the *people* community. Indeed, kinship or simply ‘family’ or ‘own blood’ offers a high degree of certainty for self–identification. Against an ever globalising world characterised by fluidity and diversity, a reference to family ties enforces a view that regards the named community as immutable, ‘real’ and ‘natural’ (Baumann, 1995: 736; Carsten, 2004: 143). It is precisely the metaphorical construction that facilitates such transfer of attributes from the family concept to that of the *people*, which is of interest here.

The etymological origin of the word ‘metaphor’ is the Greek *metapherein* (*meta*– means ‘with’/‘after’, while *–pherein* stands for ‘to carry’, ‘to bear’), which

denotes a process of transfer of meaning (Aristotle, 1997: 1457<sup>b</sup>, 7–20). The aforesaid dynamic relation of motion, which metaphor brings about, has the ability to transport those participating in such communicative situations by calling into mind a specific emotional response – in a sense showing the common etymological root shared by ‘motion’ and ‘emotion’, and strengthening the central position of metaphor as bearer of meaning in communication among people (Charteris–Black, 2004: 19). It is worth noting that such a process of *metapherein* – in plain speech, of *carrying over* – takes place in a context in which the interlocutors have a specific expectation about the meaning of the metaphorical construct in question, in the sense that such a movement takes place in a communication context in which the metaphor has been previously anchored in language and discourse (Charteris–Black, 2011: 31). However, metaphors are not simple ‘doilies decorating daily speech and thought – and ensuing action – but an integral part of it. They cannot be taken away, leaving behind them some perfectly clear, unambiguous set of terms that have a one–to–one relationship with their referents’ (Yanow, 2008: 235). Put differently, metaphorical constructions are effective not only at an immediately apparent lexical level – for instance, how words are joined together in a text – but have a higher cognitive dimension as well – how these words joined together call in our minds certain ways of understanding what is being communicated to us. In this resides their importance to the study of political discourses.

The political rhetoric and the ideologically motivated conduct of political actors, which underpins political discourses, require a string of oversimplified explanations, which are expressed metaphorically. Put simply, the increasing complexity and heterogeneity of social norms has been presented by political actors in a simplified form with the help of metaphorical constructions, thereby allowing a basic understanding of such issues of common interest. Nevertheless, researchers have warned, by employing metaphors discursively, political actors make use of the metaphors’ inherent ability to disproportionately highlight certain elements of social practices, which at the same time obscure if not outright omit some others. More precisely, political actors emphasise with the help of metaphors some specific aspects of the issue at stake, while silencing some others, thereby reflecting their ideological stand on the matter (Carver & Pikalo, 2008: 3; Edelman, 2001: 4; Gregg, 2004: 60). The type of ideological underpinning that metaphors are involved in does not become apparent at once. Awareness of the relationship between a particular lexical metaphor present in a certain political discourse, the conceptual metaphor that it may be related to and their place within a wider cluster of metaphors, vary greatly from one individual to another. Nonetheless, ‘awareness of their motivation in socially influential domains of language use improves our understanding of the ideological basis for metaphor choice’ (Charteris–Black, 2004: 244). Returning to the example above, referring to the *people* in metaphorical terms as a national family emphasises the unitary

aspect of the community, and thus alleges a common albeit distant genetic heritage. At the same time, it obscures the diversity of the collectivity in terms of gender identification, social class and sexual preferences.

To account for the ideological work metaphors do, in this chapter I elaborate the methodological apparatus that enables the analysis of the discursive articulations of radical right populist ideology. This is undertaken in several steps. At first, I discuss the Aristotelian ambiguity in the use of metaphor in rhetorical contexts (Aristotle, 1997; 2010). I thereby problematise the understanding of metaphors as mere lexical embellishments and their capacity for persuasion. In so doing, I assess the key findings of metaphor research in the field of pragmatics, modern hermeneutics, and philosophy of language (cf. Black, 1993; Ricoeur, 2003; Searle, 1993). The ‘conceptual turn’ (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003) is of crucial importance for the present study. The main tenets of conceptual metaphor theory are therefore presented in detail. The Lakoffian conceptual constructs of the NATION IS A FAMILY metaphor and that of the STRICT FATHER receive particular attention (Lakoff, 2002). Its subsequent critiques (cf. Charteris–Black, 2004; Chilton, 2004; Hart, 2010; Kövecses, 2002; Tendahl, 2009) are then elaborated upon, and the feminist interventions in the study of metaphors are presented against this background (cf. Adams, 2009; Ahrens & Lee, 2009; Carney, 2008; Haste, 1994; Koller & Semino, 2009; Meier & Lombardo, 2009; von der Lippe, 1999). Discussing the challenges of designing an appropriate methodological apparatus (Boréus & Bergström, 2009) and avoiding circular argumentation (cf. Kertész & Rákosi, 2009; Kövecses, 2008), I suggest a syncretic methodology for the analysis of conceptual metaphors in discursive contexts (cf. Carver & Pikalo, 2008; Gibbs & Lonergan, 2009; Mottier, 2008; Musolff, 2003; Semino, 2008). The genealogical aspect of this methodology and its importance to understanding the ideological manifestations in radical right populist discourses is then explained at length. Subsequently, I describe the empirical material selected from the discourses of two European radical right populist parties to be analysed in the following chapters with the help of the aforesaid methodology. The parties’ newspapers are then introduced as their ideological mouthpieces, and their importance for the present investigation is shown.

#### **4.1 CRITICAL CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR THEORY: ADDRESSING THE AMBIGUITY OF METAPHORS**

The discussion concerning metaphors and their role in discourse – with a particular preoccupation for their effects in political discourses – has a considerable tradition. Despite the long history of the usage and conceptualisation of metaphors, the topic has been heatedly debated and oftentimes has become the subject of intense academic scrutiny. On this matter, Aristotle’s philosophical

works – particularly *Poetics* (1997), and *Rhetoric* (2010) – have represented pivotal points of departure for fruitful academic theorisation and primary material for critical review and reinterpretation. This may be partly attributed to the vagueness of the original Aristotelian text, but also to the different forms of reading the aforementioned texts by various researchers that have been interested either in rhetorical argumentation and the philosophical implications of metaphorical constructions (cf. Black, 1993; Ricoeur, 2003; Searle, 1993), or the cognitive conceptual understanding of metaphor (cf. Carver & Pikalo, 2008; Charteris–Black, 2004; Lakoff & Johnson, 2003). On this matter, it is worth keeping in mind that in *Poetics* Aristotle had defined metaphors as a powerful means to transfer meaning from one context – such as events, activities, ideas, objects, attributes, etc. – to another, resting on the ability to depict unusual resemblances between the two domains at stake. Although this indicates the potential of using metaphors at a philosophical level, thereby hinting at their conceptual understanding, the meaning of metaphor as a mere figure of speech is nonetheless strengthened in the opus, and hence relegates metaphor to a decorative accessory of discourse (Aristotle, 1997: 1459<sup>a</sup>, 3–8; 1460<sup>b</sup>, 6–12).

Even more so, in his theorising of rhetorical devices and strategies, suggestively titled *Rhetoric*, Aristotle had focused on language and how metaphor, through its ‘foreign air’ may obscure the intention of the speaker and ‘make the discourse appear clear and perspicuous’ (Steen, 2009: 34–35). This had not precluded Aristotle from acknowledging the cognitive power of such metaphorical construction, in the sense that metaphor was deemed able to put together two different domains in a novel way, that was previously inconceivable (Aristotle, 2010: 1404<sup>b</sup>, § 6–8; 1410<sup>a</sup>, § 3–4). Indeed, Aristotle’s theorising of metaphor has been carefully reviewed in the past two decades and a more decidedly conceptual understanding of metaphor has been suggested (Semino, 2008: 9; Turner, 1998: 47). Under these circumstances, the similarities with abstract philosophical reasoning have been shown in the Aristotelian text, such as in the following:

Metaphors should be drawn, as has been stated before [...] from objects closely related, but not obvious to everyone at first sight [...] just as in philosophy also, to observe the resemblances in widely distant things is characteristic of a sagacious penetrating intellect: like Archytas’ saying, that arbitrator and altar were the same thing; because both are the refuge of the injured or wronged.

(Aristotle, 2010: 1412a, § 5)

The usefulness of metaphorical constructions for enabling philosophical reasoning and the metaphors’ inherent conceptual structure have determined researchers to take a pragmatic perspective on the study of metaphor, thereby focusing on the persuasive capacity of metaphor (cf. Black, 1993; Ricoeur, 2003; Searle, 1993). In so doing, the pragmatics movement reiterated the Aristotelian

understanding of rhetoric as the branch of philosophy concerned with the theory of argumentation and that of composition and style. The pragmatic theories of metaphor have contributed greatly to the development of metaphor research. Indeed, the pragmatic framework for conceptualising metaphors has demonstrated that metaphorical constructions are dependent on the speakers' intention to *persuade* and rely on the use of inferences, thereby replacing logical judgement based on direct observation with a contextualised operationalization dependent on circumstantial evidence and prior conclusions (Searle, 1993). Nonetheless, the pragmatic approach claimed incorrectly that metaphorical use is restricted to special instances, and hence assumed that literal language has precedence over metaphorical language (Charteris–Black, 2004: 10–13); it is precisely the ability of metaphor to transcend the constraints of literal presence at lexical level that I discuss in the following section.

#### 4.1.1 THE LIMITATIONS OF RHETORICAL ANALYSES OF METAPHORS: EXAMPLES FROM ROMANIA AND SWEDEN

At this point it is worthwhile returning to the metaphorical representation of the nation as a family and considering the limitations of aforesaid approaches. The etymology of such terms as 'patriot' or 'fatherland'<sup>19</sup> indicates that these metaphorical constructions 'belong to a common stock of political metaphors, which have been used in Western culture since antiquity.' (Musolff, 2003: 127) In the Central and Eastern European context, namely in Romania, the depiction of the nation as a family has not diverged noticeably from the aforementioned 'Western' tradition. On this matter, it is worth mentioning a particularly salient play published in the first decade of twentieth century: *The Sunset* (Delavrancea, 1967). The play emphasised the importance of the family metaphor for the Romanian national construct and hence confirmed 'the communion of generations in the spirit of the eternal Romanian ideal' (Boia, 2001: 195). Perhaps unsurprisingly, the play has become part of the Romanian literary canon. It has enjoyed equal levels of popularity in the interwar period marked by the rise of Romanian fascism of Orthodox inspiration, in the fervently nationalist phase of the Romanian communist dictatorship, and in the years post–1989 that witnessed the syncretic reclamation of the two previous periods, and the crystallisation of radical right populism in Romania (cf. Andreescu, 2005; Gallagher, 2005; Norocel, 2010c).

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<sup>19</sup> 'Patriot' has a Greek etymology, *patriotes* meaning 'of one's father'. The 'fatherland' similarly comes from the Greek and Latin *patria*; it is widely used in Romance languages and makes direct reference to a *pater*, in other words a 'father'; in Germanic languages it is derived from the form *vaterland* with the same meaning of 'forefathers' land'.

Illustratively, the play's key figure, Stephen III, ruler of the Moldavian principality<sup>20</sup> – also known as Stephen 'the Great' – delivers a memorable speech on his deathbed. Reminding those present of his past as their 'shepherd' – a term with strong Christian and especially Christian Orthodox connotations, which also echoed the long pastoral traditions of the Romanian-speaking people – Stephen proclaims with his last powers that the land/country he has ruled over had never been the property of his princely forefathers that led the country before him. Nor did he ever own it himself. Even more so, none of those present could lay claim on owning the land/country, because it belongs to the future generations and their offspring in perpetuity. Consequently, this (home)land becomes a valuable asset to be inherited – according to the Salic law – by allegedly worthy male offspring, very much similar to how the herds of sheep were transferred from one generation of male shepherds to another – as sheep husbandry has generally been an exclusively masculine endeavour – thereby ensuring the survival of the shepherd's family. With this said, Stephen declares his readiness to hand over the effigy of princely power to his male successor, and symbolically confirm the community of blood and destiny of the inhabitants of the Romanian principality he ruled:

Remember the words of Stephen, who has been your shepherd far into his old age... that [this land/country] did not belong to my ancestors, it never belonged to me, and it does not belong to you either, for it belongs to your offspring and to your offspring's offspring till the end of all times! [...] This mantle is too heavy ... someone younger needs to bear it on his shoulders...

(*Delavrancea, 1967: 54*)

Moving to Northern Europe, in the Swedish context, the concept of *folkhem* (meaning the home/house of the [Swedish] *people*) has played a prominent role in the country's modern history (Hall, 2008: 146–148; Hellström, 2010: 95; Trägårdh, 2002: 131). Indeed, in the nineteenth century, in its initial conservative interpretation, the *folkhem* embodied the harmonious relationship between the king and his people, in a manner similar to that of the bourgeois family under the careful authority of its father (Hall, 1998: 71). The emphasis was put on the ideal of organic conservatism and its core values of orderliness, national cohesion, and

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20 Moldavia represents a historical and geographic entity, and former principality that together with Wallachia formed the basis of the original Romanian state. These two Romanian Danubian principalities had been autonomous within the Ottoman Empire and succeeded to follow a different path of development than the other neighbouring Ottoman provinces. Their rulers paid tribute to, and were the subservient political satellites of the Ottoman Porte; the two principalities avoided Islamisation and their ruling elites were tolerated by the Porte when exploiting the common people and preserving their customs and privileges in these lands. The binding force between the ruling classes and commoners was their shared Christian Orthodox faith. The figure of medieval prince Stephen III is highly symbolic since he actively opposed the ascendancy of the Porte in the Romanian principalities, and his long rule marked the climax of independent Moldavian politics (Boia, 2001: 195–196; Gallagher, 2005: 18–19; Livezeanu, 2000: 4; Verdery, 1996: 71).

naturalised hierarchical structuring (Götz, 2001: 104–105). The metaphorical construct of the national home/house became nonetheless a part of the Swedish social–democratic discourse in the early twentieth century, epitomising the party’s efforts to construct a society based on equality, solidarity and confidence in progress, in which the figure of the worker became synonymous with ‘the common folk’ (Dahlstedt, 2009: 117–119; Götz, 2001: 106; Hellström, 2010: 97). It was Per–Albin Hansson, Social–Democrat leader and Prime Minister in four governments between 1932 and 1946, who consecrated the *folkhem* founded on ‘a trinity of democracy, the people and the nation that contributed to the establishment of the modern Swedish national community’ (Hellström & Nilsson, 2010: 62). In Hansson’s view, social cohesiveness and solidarity were cornerstones of the Swedish welfare project envisaged by his party. This idealised home/house epitomised a place of equality, in which privilege and disenfranchisement were replaced by fairness, compassion, cooperation and helpfulness:

The foundations of the *folkhem* are the social consciousness and sense of togetherness. The good home does not know any privileged or any dispossessed, no darlings and no stepchildren. [...] It is equality, caring, cooperation, and helpfulness that triumph in the good home. Adapted to the *folkhem* [...] this would mean the breakdown of any social and economic barriers, which at present separate the citizens into privileged and dispossessed, dominant and dependent, into rich and poor, wealthy and impoverished, plunderers and plundered.

(Hansson, 2010: 57–58) (*Italics – mine*)

What the two metaphorical constructions from the Romanian and Swedish contexts unveil are the limitations of a superficial lexical reading – in the sense of analysing only how the words have been arranged together in the two transcribed quotes – in search for the national family metaphor. In order to account for the complexity of the two metaphorical constructions, the analysis needs to take place at a higher, conceptual level – one which connects the words arranged in a specific formation as reproduced above with a more abstract register. After a brief glance at the two examples, it becomes readily apparent that for instance in the Romanian example one cannot claim that the metaphorical construction of the national family is in use at lexical level. What may be identified, however, is the metaphorical representation of the (male) political leader as ‘shepherd’ and an intention to *persuade* the readers about the uninterrupted genealogy of the country’s inhabitants – hence evidence of rendering in a pragmatic key. On the other hand, the Swedish concept of the *folkhem* does not have an exclusively lexical metaphorical value. It too can be understood in a pragmatic manner as evidence of the speaker’s intention to *persuade* his public about a community of destiny gathered under the protective roof of one shared home – the Swedish

people's home/house – and concomitantly as an intention for a more complex structuring of the discourse. In other words, in both cases the national family metaphorical construction does not become immediately apparent, but it nonetheless emerges from the context at a higher cognitive level. This bears witness to the presence of metaphor at a conceptual level. Consequently, the following section discusses the conceptual aspect of metaphorical constructions.

#### 4.1.2 THE CONCEPTUAL TURN IN THE ANALYSES OF METAPHORS AND CRITICISMS OF CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR THEORY

Generally speaking, conceptual linguists have asserted that metaphors need not be understood as mere rhetorical embellishments, and have in turn elaborated a theory of metaphors as *foundational* to the human conceptual system (cf. Charteris–Black, 2004; Gibbs, 1998; Lakoff & Johnson, 2003; Semino, 2008; Tendahl, 2009). Such a theoretical standpoint has been founded on the aforementioned constitutive ambiguity of Aristotle's works, and benefited from the insights of research on the pragmatic aspect and, hence, the significant role played by metaphors in abstract reasoning. According to Conceptual Metaphor Theory, any lexical artefact<sup>21</sup> within a given discourse gains meaning according to a conceptual structure. This conceptual structure is context bound, being founded on cultural and physical experiences, very much alike conventional metaphors (Kövecses, 2008: 179; Tendahl, 2009: 2–3; von der Lippe, 1999: 181–183). Hence, meaning is embedded in the appropriation and employment of a conceptual system (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003: 197).

In the context of conceptual metaphor theory then, a distinction has been made between the terms *metaphor* and *metaphorical concept*, on the one hand, and *metaphorical expression*, on the other. *Metaphor*, often used interchangeably with *metaphorical concept*, entails in this context 'a cross domain mapping in the conceptual system' (Lakoff, 1993: 203), where the notion of mapping is imported from the mathematical terminology. More clearly, the target domain, which is explained with the help of conceptual metaphors, generally makes reference to areas of experience that are typically unfamiliar, of a certain level of abstraction and complexity. Conversely, the source domain, which provides a new explanation of the target domain, oftentimes appeals to easily recognizable, rather concrete and physical experiences (Semino, 2008: 6). Applying this scheme to the matter at hand, the concept of NATION, as shown in the metaphorical expressions discussed above, is explicated at a conceptual level in terms of a FAMILY and the relations that emerge between its various members; we thereby arrive at the NATION IS A FAMILY conceptual metaphor and its articulations. In contrast to that, the term

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<sup>21</sup> Here, a lexical artefact is considered to be a lexical sequence that may contain a specific group of words, which are arranged along one or several sentences.

*metaphorical expression* makes reference to the lexical ‘surface realization of such a cross–domain–mapping’ (Lakoff, 1993: 203). Nonetheless, there is an implicit connection between the two: the ‘inherent, literal, nonmetaphorical skeleton, which is simply not rich enough to serve as a full–fledged concept’ is elaborated through ‘a collection of stable, conventional’ *metaphorical expressions* in various ways (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999: 128). Put differently, a *conceptual metaphor* ‘is a formal statement of any idea that is hidden in a figure of speech (e.g. metaphor, or metonym for that matter) that can be inferred from a number’ of *metaphorical expressions* and thereby enables the resolution of semantic tensions that the aforesaid expressions have given rise to in the text (Charteris–Black, 2004: 15). Even more so, *conceptual metaphors* can then be grouped into *metaphorical clusters* – which represent a cohesive system of metaphorical concepts and their adjoining discursive articulations that commence from a common condition or image to transmit a specific experience or idea. Analysing the interplay between the various *conceptual metaphors* that together constitute a *metaphorical cluster*, and their lexical manifestation in text through *metaphorical expressions*, unveils significant aspects concerning the coherence of a particular discourse and offers important cues about the underlying ideology in the discourse at stake:

The purpose of inferring conceptual metaphors from surface ones is to enable us to identify patterns of interrelationship between metaphors that account for their meaning. Similarly, interrelating conceptual metaphors through the identification of conceptual [clusters] can assist in accounting for coherence in particular discourses. Identification and description of these conceptual levels enhances our understanding of their role in ideology and contributes to theory building because it provides a point of access into the thoughts that underlie language use.

(Charteris–Black, 2004: 244)

The main argument is hence that the use of metaphors is not ideologically innocent; rather they influence people’s fundamental social beliefs and their political manifestations (Charteris–Black, 2004: 24). The preference for a certain conceptual metaphor in a specific social context, researchers have argued, has a crucial impact on how one structures reality. It determines what is explained and with which means and what is left outside this framework of intelligibility; hence, it highlights the various power relations at work in that particular discourse (Boréus & Bergström, 2009: 267; Charteris–Black, 2011: 45). In relation to this, Jonathan Charteris–Black has noted that traditional Conceptual Metaphor Theory is preoccupied with the cognitive linguistic aspect at the expense of considering the wider discursive implication of metaphorical use. He has therefore argued for a critical study of metaphor that is aware of the importance of ideology in discourse. Charteris–Black demonstrated further the importance of such an approach to the study of politics:

Critical metaphor analysis provides us with a methodology for the analysis and interpretation of ideology and illustrates how rhetoric is used for the purpose of legitimisation. Identification of conceptual metaphors is inevitably subjective, like all qualitative judgements, but the analytical method is clear and the reader is free to challenge metaphor classifications. [...] When analysing political speeches using critical metaphor analysis the cognitive semantic approach needs to be complemented with a summary of the social context in which the speeches were made and of the overall verbal context of metaphor.

*(Charteris-Black, 2011: 49–50)*

This brings us one step closer to the matter at stake; the ideological underpinning of the utilisation of conceptual metaphors in political discourses – as was discussed at length in the first chapter, section 1.1.1. Acknowledging that politics is ‘the art of using power in order to achieve social goals’, some researchers have argued that utilising ‘the power of language’ can provide more easily and cheaply available results than for instance the power exercised forcefully, through the police and army (De Landtsheer, 2009: 60; Ringmar, 2007: 119; von der Lippe, 1999: 230). And here metaphors play a critical role since they offer the speaker the power to organise/explain social life in a specific manner. More clearly, metaphors ‘tell you what things are and how they hang together; metaphors define the relationship between superiors and subordinates and between social classes; they identify social problems and their solutions and tell us what is feasible, laudable and true’ (Ringmar, 2007: 119). In this respect, metaphors have been considered to ‘act as discursive hubs, developing meaning in the interplay of texts and contexts’ (Carver & Pikalo, 2008: 3–4). Indeed, by concentrating their attention on the style of political language and the particular forms taken by political communication, some scholars have attempted to complement those studies that take only manifest content into account and argue that the manner politicians express their thoughts affects the meaning acquired by those words employed in their speeches (Vertessen & De Landtsheer, 2008: 271).

Metaphor plays in other words a decisive role in the dynamic relationship between discourse and ideology. Not only that ‘discourses reflect particular ideologies, but also contribute to shape them and change them; ideologies result from discursal and social practices but also determines and constrains these practices’ (Semino, 2008: 90). Under these circumstances, metaphorical expressions are an important element of discourse, and as such a constitutive feature of ideology, by purposefully emphasising a certain aspect while obscuring some others (Charteris-Black, 2011: 44; Chilton, 1996: 74; Hart, 2010: 128–129). Even more so, some metaphors can be actively employed both ‘to “name” and to “frame” particular initiatives, with which they become inextricably associated. Second, once a particular metaphor occupies a prominent position in the public domain, it can be alluded to and exploited in different ways by different

participants in political debates.’ (Semino, 2008: 117) In this light, the analysis of conceptual metaphors that uncovers the ideological underpinnings that motivate their presence in discourse is to be regarded as part of the wider scholarly endeavour of critical discourse analysis, concerned with how power relations are constituted and reified through discourse (Fairclough, 2003: 75–77; Hart, 2010: 6–8; Stenvoll, 2008: 36–37; van Dijk, 1994: 164; Wodak, 2006: 179–181; Wodak & Meyer, 2009: 13–15).

Of particular importance here are the different ways that the NATION IS A FAMILY conceptual metaphor can be embedded in discourse. Nations are conceptualised in terms of extended families, incorporating the patriarchal and heterosexual underpinning of the family as made up of a father, mother, and their offspring. The aforesaid conceptual metaphorical construction has been investigated by George Lakoff in his study titled *Moral Politics* (2002). The Lakoffian conceptualisation of the national family has been enunciated in the specific context of the political discourses in the United States of America (USA); accounting for the ideological battle between the right–conservative Republican Party, and the left–liberal Democratic Party. Indeed, Lakoff initially posited that the NATION IS A FAMILY represented the link between a moral stance founded on the concept of family and the conceptualisation of the national construct in family terms – more clearly, the existence of a ‘family–based morality’ at work in politics. The consequence of such an approach to politics is reflected in the different articulation of the national family metaphor in the conservative and liberal politics of the USA:

The link between the family–based morality and politics comes from one of the most common ways of conceptualising what a nation is, namely, as a family. It is the common, unconscious, and automatic metaphor of the Nation–as–Family that produces contemporary conservatism from Strict Father morality and contemporary liberalism from Nurturant Parent morality.

(Lakoff, 2002: 13)

The metaphorical construction of the nation in terms of family relations and family morality rests on the suggestive power that family as a concept has across societies and its connotations of ‘close or “thick” relationships with a basis in descent’ (Honohan, 2008: 73). However, the very concept of *family* may vary greatly across time within one particular society, but also from one society to another (Howe, 2006: 64; Kövecses, 2005: 290–292; Ringmar, 2007: 123–124). Even more so, within one given society morality merges with politics and thereby determines a person’s political and ideological convictions (Kövecses, 2002: 63–64). The two competing views on morality underlined in the Lakoffian model understand the national family in two different ways. The first as comprising of independent and self–reliant individuals whose morality is acquired through discipline and regard the head of state or party leader as the *pater familias* –

master of the house or STRICT FATHER – in its right–wing, conservative interpretation. Alternatively, the national family consists of people more inclined to cooperation and whose morality is achieved through nurturing rather than discipline and thereby entrust their leadership to a NURTURANT PARENT – in its more progressively liberal rendering<sup>22</sup>.

More clearly, previous research suggests that in the discourse of the right–wing conservative Republican Party, the national family is portrayed under the leadership of a strict father figure (cf. Ahrens, 2011; Cienki, 2004; 2005; 2008; Lakoff, 2002). The conservative discourse displays a vocabulary that abounds in such words as ‘character’, ‘virtue’, ‘discipline’, ‘strong’, ‘punishment’, ‘individual responsibility’, ‘backbone’, ‘standards’, ‘authority’, ‘heritage’, ‘competition’, ‘earn’, ‘hard work’, ‘traditional common sense’, ‘freedom’ used in a positive key. Concomitantly, there are also words with a negative connotation that are generally associated with their political opponents, such as ‘intrusion’, ‘interference’, ‘meddling’, ‘dependency’, ‘self–indulgent’, ‘elite’, ‘quotas’, ‘breakdown’, ‘corrupt’, ‘decay’, ‘rot’, ‘degenerate’, ‘deviant’, ‘lifestyle’ (Lakoff, 2002: 30). Reflecting the preference for this particular vocabulary, the interrelated conceptual metaphors of the NATION IS A FAMILY and that of the STRICT FATHER, which lies at its heart, articulate a distinctive *metaphorical cluster* that structures the intelligibility of right–wing conservative discourse and thereby provides it with a certain ideological consistency.

I detail below several conceptual dimensions that structure the aforementioned metaphorical cluster, as discerned from the detailed description of the model provided by Lakoff (2002); I consider these dimensions of cardinal importance for the present study:

- Order – expresses the legitimation of traditional hierarchy and power relations. It naturalises the view that ‘the rich are either morally or naturally superior to the poor’ (Lakoff, 2002: 100). Additionally, there is also a problematic gender aspect specific to this dimension that naturalises dominance, positioning ‘God over human beings; human beings over nature; parents over children; men over women.’ (Lakoff, 2002: 304) This is particularly important in justifying, from a conservative point of view, men’s authority over women, not only within the family but also in society at large.
- Authority – articulates the notion of authority in terms of the dyadic relationship between legitimacy and illegitimacy. It thereby enables the transfer from resentment towards meddling parents to resentment directed against authority figures that are also perceived as intrusive (Lakoff, 2002: 100). On

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<sup>22</sup> Translating the metaphor model to a European context, there is an arguably more progressive left–leaning political attitude, which emphasizes the parent’s figure as a nurturing presence at the head of family. It is noteworthy in this context that the head of family appears to be assigned an ambiguous gender identification – the ‘parent’ – which is possibly indicative of the aforesaid emphasis on the nurturing attribute and thereby the flexibility of the position that may be occupied by either a man or a woman.

this matter, I consider that the authority dimension of the cluster enables the portrayal of political opponents (especially the party/coalition in power) as illegitimate and intrusive.

- **Strength** – is considered of great importance, as it enforces ‘the strict dichotomy between good and evil, the internal evils, asceticism, and the immorality of moral weakness.’ (Lakoff, 2002: 100)
- **Boundaries** – provides a specific ‘spatial logic of the dangers of deviance’ (Lakoff, 2002: 100). This dimension makes reference to actions within a certain permissible path that is congruent with conservative values. Importantly, the actions ‘characterised metaphorically as “deviant” threaten the very identity of normal people, calling their most common and therefore most sacred values into question.’ (Lakoff, 2002: 85)
- **Wholeness** – makes ‘moral unity and uniformity a virtue and suggest the imminent and serious danger of any sign of moral nonunity and nonuniformity.’ (Lakoff, 2002: 100) Indeed, this dimension allows for deeming those ‘deviants’ that transgress the ‘natural, strict, uniform, unchanging standards behaviour’ as societal threats, which are described in terms of ‘degenerate people’ that trigger the ‘rupture’ or ‘tearing’ of society’s moral fabric (Lakoff, 2002: 90–91).
- **Essence** – basically makes reference to an essence, a so-called ‘character’, to be inferred from significant past deeds and to provide reliable cues about future actions (Lakoff, 2002: 87–90).
- **Purity** – generally paired with the above mentioned ‘essence’ dimension, in the sense that it envisages a process that differentiates between purity, be it physical or moral, and impurity, often seen in terms of ‘filth’, ‘corruption’. ‘Just as substances, to be usable, must be purged of impurities, so societies, to be viable, must be purged of corrupting individuals or practices.’ (Lakoff, 2002: 92–93)
- **Health** – it is somewhat interrelated with the previous two dimensions. The difference resides in the emphasis put on the logic of disease in addition to that of purity discussed above: abominable acts and attitudes are spreading like a disease in the healthy body of citizens, thus the fear of contamination and the necessity of isolation and control (Lakoff, 2002: 101). This needs to be supplemented, I argue, with the system’s ‘self-defence’ mechanisms (Lakoff, 2002: 97–98), particularly with regard to opposition to feminism and non-heteronormativity that are seen as ‘violating’ the natural order, thereby engendering the collapse of the ideological stance that entails this metaphorical cluster.
- **Nurturance** – is a conditional dimension, tightly connected to authority, strength and discipline. More clearly, nurturance is envisioned as the reward aspect of the learning process, which is centred on such ideas as self-discipline and responsibility; its lack thereof is regarded as a means to punish the individual’s failing in the learning act (Lakoff, 2002: 101).

The conceptual model developed by Lakoff has nonetheless been criticised on several accounts. Indeed, several researchers have claimed that it is too strongly influenced by the nature model, in the sense of considering language, and thus conceptual metaphor, a universal property of the body/mind, thereby paying little attention, if any, to the importance of culture and ideology in shaping metaphorical concepts (Goatly, 2007: 383–388; Kövecses, 2005: 174–176; Ritchie, 2006: 4; von der Lippe, 1999: 221–226). Another criticism raised against the model suggested by Lakoff concerns its indebtedness to the tradition of generative grammar, in the sense that it relies heavily on ‘intuitively plausible sentences, but not attested examples of linguistic data from any identifiable source’ (Cienki, 2008: 241). Lakoff’s model has also been criticised by feminist scholars for its limitations in accounting for the gendered nature of the family construction and, hence, the gendered effects such a conceptual model entails (cf. Ahrens, 2011; Ahrens & Lee, 2009; Honohan, 2008).

Despite its shortcomings noted above, the Lakoffian model has been developed further (cf. Cienki, 2004; 2008; Kövecses, 2002; Ringmar, 2008; Semino, 2008), and even utilised in other national contexts as well (cf. Charteris–Black, 2011; Hidalgo Tenorio, 2009; Musolff, 2003). The updated model was first employed by several scholars continuing the examination of the discursive articulations of the antagonistic conceptual dyad STRICT FATHER and NURTURANT PARENT in the USA political context (cf. Ahrens, 2011; Cienki, 2004; 2005; 2008). Noting the general difficulty to draw clear lines between the two systems of conceptual metaphors, Alan Cienki has recommended investigating the articulations of the NATION IS A FAMILY conceptual metaphor in connection with that of the STRICT FATHER in the political discourses of groups representing a strong political orientation, such as radical parties on either sides of the political spectrum in other political settings (Cienki, 2005: 305). Various researchers have since then utilised the model to study national politics in European context (cf. Charteris–Black, 2011; Hidalgo Tenorio, 2009; Musolff, 2003). A conclusion generally agreed upon by scholars of conceptual metaphor in Europe concerns the richness in metaphorical constructions specific to the discourses of radical parties, particularly those on the radical right fringe, and especially at election times (Charteris–Black, 2011: 59; De Landtsheer, 1998: 129–145; Vertessen & De Landtsheer, 2008: 274–275).

In this light, I intend to employ the conceptual model detailed above to analyse the means afforded to radical right populist ideology to conceptualise the hierarchical gender binary in its discursive manifestations in Romania and in Sweden. My starting point is the observation that while conservative in its essence, the radical right populist interpretations of the metaphorical cluster actually expand further its borders of intelligibility. This is achieved through overstatement and oversimplification – emphasising acutely contrasting notions that underpin the metaphorical cluster. There are nonetheless several aspects of the Lakoffian model that need to be discussed and further amended in order to

allow for a comprehensive and clear articulation of the methodological apparatus at work in the present inquiry. Most importantly, the Lakoffian model of the national family under the stewardship of a strict father figure appears rather unconcerned with gender. Consequently, Conceptual Metaphor Theory is discussed from a gender perspective, and then its shortcomings are addressed by suggesting a genealogical perspective on the analysis of conceptual metaphors.

#### 4.1.3 FEMINIST INTERVENTIONS IN CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR THEORY

Conceptual Metaphor Theory does not seem to be aware of the far-reaching consequences of the articulation of ideological constructions along several interrelated dimensions, such as gender, ethnicity/‘race’, social class, sexuality. Key in this context is the fact that *conceptual metaphor* and its surface manifestation through metaphorical expression are never neutral (Cohn, 1987: 716; Koller, 2004: 20; Wolf & Polzenhagen, 2003: 263). Metaphor is commonly utilised when political actors intend to exploit stereotypical portrayals of various groups within society, or simply manipulate and deepen people’s confusion on a specific political subject. For instance, metaphor may be used to naturalise a particular ideological conviction, such as depicting women as inherently weak and naturally subordinate (Lazar, 2005: 7–8); at the same time, certain social manifestations that are deemed undesirable may be stigmatised, such as women’s emancipation efforts, or the political participation of ethnic/‘racial’ and religious minorities (Momani, Badarneh & Migdadi, 2009). When accounted for in metaphorical form, gender is conceptualised as an antithetical binary, with profound implications for how individuals may interpret the gender performative and how we as individuals represent ourselves as masculine or feminine with the aid of metaphor (Koller & Semino, 2009: 9). Such a metaphor of gender plays a cardinal role in the reproduction and reinforcement of certain aspects of social interactions that become associated with the masculine–feminine duality, such as the public–private, active–passive, and rational–intuitive complementarities:

The primary metaphor of gender is *dualism and polarity*. The metaphor of dualism automatically casts A in antithesis to B; it makes the definition of A as the negation of B. [...] But the extra power of the metaphor comes from mapping other dualities on to gender, entwining masculinity and femininity with such dualities as active–passive, public–private, rational–intuitive. These enrich the meaning of masculinity and femininity, but they also become contaminated with associations of masculine and feminine. The whole operates as a continual feedback loop, reinforcing and reproducing itself.

(Haste, 1994: 11) (*Italics in original*)

As constitutive and constituted element of discourse, conceptual metaphor depicts a deeply gendered hierarchy, in which men and masculinities are associated with leadership and power, reason, strength, and creativity while women embody deference, irrationality, weakness, and procreation. From this perspective, the metaphorical representation of gender performatives resonates strongly with the theorisations of gender I have reviewed in the previous chapter, in the sense that it reminds us of the antithetic description of the two genders entangled in the heterosexual matrix, and confirms metaphor as the power/discourse nexus previously discussed (cf. Butler, 1990: 151; 1995: 135; Carney, 2008: 168; Cohn, 1987: 696; Haste, 1994: 60–81; Kress, 1989: 202). Indeed, the polarised duality metaphor has immediate and unequal consequences, inasmuch as certain ‘representations of masculinity or femininity do ideological work in that they help to maintain [...] notions of gender identity that benefit one group while disadvantaging another’ (Koller & Semino, 2009: 13).

This often leads to the oversimplification of women’s sexual motivation as ‘a desire for parenting’. The underpinning conceptual metaphor is that of the woman as wife/Madonna. She desires children and sex has solely a reproductive purpose, and thereby her sexuality is defused and intimately associated to her fecundity. In this light, for the man to make love to her and have children is a form of worship (Haste, 1994: 172). There are however other depictions of women that have a strong metaphorical anchoring at conceptual level. These are the portrayals of women as whores (in the sense of women deprived of the marital bliss husbands provide to their wives), women as waifs (innocent and inexperienced young women offering themselves and their sexuality to the protecting man), and women as witches (sexually, socially and supernaturally powerful thus engendering the absolute threat to masculine superiority). Following the principle of complementarity, men are not only represented as family fathers. Men thus appear as warriors (loosely defined to accommodate both the figure of wanderer and wife-beater, thereby emphasising toughness and remoteness from and inability to understand women, unlike the successfully married men) and as whizzkids and warlocks (rationality is key here and women and marriage are perceived as obstacles, therefore men afford themselves a position of demiurgic solitude) (cf. Cohn, 1987: 699–702; Haste, 1994: 172–180; 247–249; Hooper, 2001: 151–154). In other words, women appear always engaged in some relationship with a man, relationship which gives meaning to their social being; in contrast, men seem autonomous social beings. With this in mind, I call attention to the importance given to the family father and this metaphor's position among other metaphorical depictions of masculinity performative. As Helen Haste has aptly noted, the role of the ‘father’ is metaphorically equated with that of the natural and rightful ‘leader’, since:

The prototype of masculinity includes the ability to provide for and protect one’s family; this is defined as a relationship between a person and his

‘dependants’ – a term which implies weakness, inferiority and immaturity. The male lives at the nexus of public and private worlds: he has power in relation to both. Femininity is identified with serving emotional and physical demands; woman’s own needs are subsumed by her definition as need-meeter to others.

*(Haste, 1994: 69)*

Particularly problematic here, Petra Meier and Emanuela Lombardo noted in their investigation of power as a conceptual metaphor of gender inequality, is the formulation of men’s political power as an invisible unstated norm that is quietly naturalised in political discourses across Europe with the implicit effect of rendering women in a position of subordination. In this sense, ‘the maintenance in power of the male group is protected against possible changes by continuous processes of normalisation’ of such discourses (Meier & Lombardo, 2009: 248). There is I argue another, racialised dimension of the hierarchy, one which assimilates masculinity to ‘whiteness’, understood as hegemonic ‘normality’, and concurrently associates femininity to ‘racial’ difference and hence a position of subordinated ‘peculiarity’. Concomitant with the process of naturalisation of white masculine superiority there unfolds a similar discursive transformation, as Deborah Chambers has noted, one which erects the native white nuclear family to the position of universal standard to which all others cultural backgrounds and family constellations are compared:

The underlying structures of racism that operate within [...] political discourses on the family are crucial aspects of the systematic privileging of the [native], white nuclear ideal. The white nuclear family cannot be elevated to the status of an ideal without inferiorising other cultures. The inferiorisation of non-white families operates both materially and at the level of representations through academic research that supports political rhetoric, welfare reform and family policy.

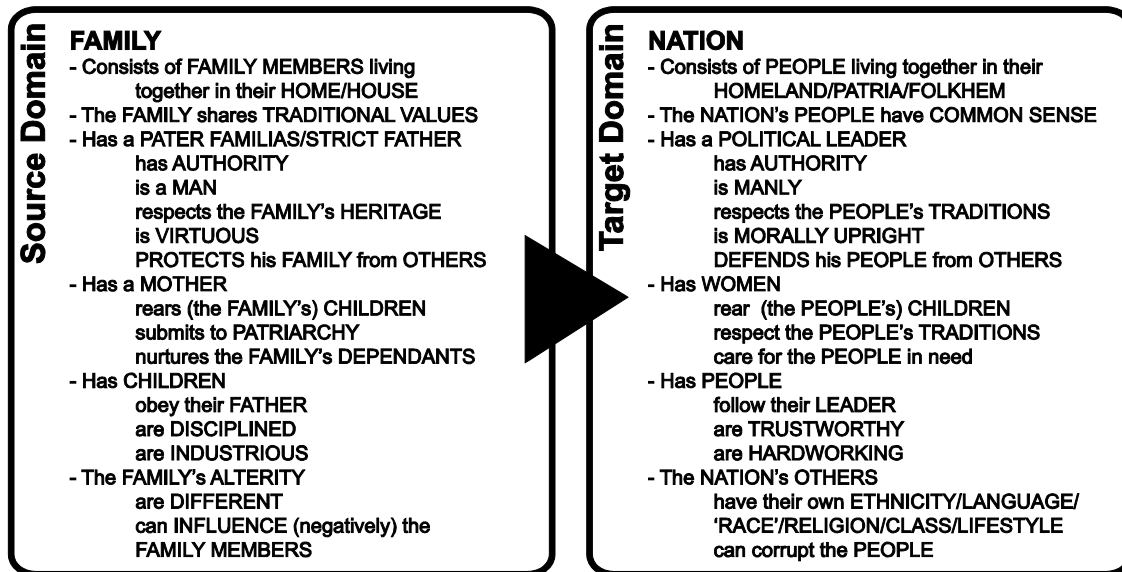
*(Chambers, 2001: 14)*

Under these circumstances, the ‘racial’ aspect is juxtaposed with that of the patriarchal gender order. The ability to understand the gender performatives at the intersection between ethnicity/‘race’, social class, citizenship status, sexual orientation (cf. Collins, 1998; 2004; McClintock, 1995; Mohanty, 2003) enables a better understanding of how the various manifestations of gender in and through metaphorical conceptual structures are in their turn reifying a similar hierarchy among the various gender performatives at the intersection of the aforementioned systems of social organisation. The said hierarchy appears to be crowned by the conceptual representation of the traditional heteronormative family. In relation to this, those politicians who argue about an emerging crisis of family values generally relate this to the alleged crisis of gender identities that develops as a

consequence of the battle for gender equality (Chambers, 2001: 143; Stevens, 1999: 234–235). The solution readily available is a return to traditional gender roles and a reinforcement of ‘racial’ divisions: not only that the nuclear family is to be preserved, but its inherent purity is to be safeguarded. Such a stance indicates the position of the nuclear family as a crucial element in the discursive manifestations of modern political ideology. In her study of politics in the USA, Karen Adams has compellingly argued that identification with the nuclear family and assertion of the parental responsibilities therein, or at least the promise of an impending heterosexual marriage, actively ‘protect against reading candidates as having alternative identities or not being “settled”, “stable” people’ (Adams, 2009: 191). More clearly, unhesitant subscription to family values and active and actual participation into a nuclear family construct are expected on behalf of the politicians as a sign of seriousness and normality.

Considering the above, a first conclusion is that the NATION IS A FAMILY is constrained to a compulsory family–centred heterosexuality. The addition of the STRICT FATHER conceptual metaphor engenders a further entrapment of both women and men in patriarchal heteronormativity, which posits the family’s head as the source of authority and guardian of ‘natural order’. In this light, the STRICT FATHER projects the radical right populist leader’s authority over those who willingly subject themselves to his rule, and justifies the leader’s right to maintain order and discipline dissenters (Lakoff, 2002: 70). This embodies man’s “‘natural’ instrumentality”, which equips the radical right populist party’s chairman ‘for leadership in the home and the external world’ (Haste, 1994: 63). In this respect, the STRICT FATHER conceptual metaphor is aggregated into a diffuse symbiotic relationship with that of the NATION IS A FAMILY. This leads to a naturalisation of the leader’s masculinity understood as the apex of the patriarchal heteronormative national family. Attempting a systematisation of these arguments, the symbiotic relationship between the national construct and the leader as a fatherly figure described above, together with the metaphorical processes of *metapherein*, of ‘carrying over’ meaning from the source domain of FAMILY to the target domain of NATION, are schematically depicted in the Figure 1 below. It corroborates the Lakoffian dimensions for articulating the metaphorical cluster for the NATION IS A FAMILY discussed in the previous section with the critique of feminist scholars on the gendered nature of such conceptual structures. In conclusion, I maintain that a feminist lens to the theorisation of conceptual metaphor sheds light on the discrete hierarchical gender binary at work in the conceptual construct of interest here. Furthermore, it shows that the analysis of such conceptual structures needs to be undertaken only once armed with a specific sensitivity to the intersection of various systems of social organisation, in terms of gender, ethnic belonging/‘race’, social class, and sexuality.

**Figure 1** *NATION IS A FAMILY – the process of metapherein*



**4.1.4 CRITICAL METAPHOR THEORY AND THE GENEALOGICAL PERSPECTIVE: INNOVATIVE WAYS TO INVESTIGATE CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS**

Conceptual Metaphor Theory has nevertheless met with a series of criticisms. This has come along three main lines. First, several scholars have underlined the limitations of Conceptual Metaphor Theory in its initial form. Some have suggested therefore a more dynamic conceptual construct, such as Conceptual Blending Theory. This attempts to address the alleged source domain to target domain directionality of conceptual metaphors and argues for the existence of an intermediary field of conceptual blending, thereby operating with a four-space model instead of the two-domain model to account for the new complexity (cf. Coulson, 2001; Fauconnier & Turner 1996; 2003; Ritchie, 2006). Second, some scholars have underlined the challenge of designing an appropriate methodological apparatus for the investigation of conceptual metaphors (Boréus & Bergström, 2009: 276–278; Cienki, 2005: 304; Kövecses, 2008: 168–169). Third, criticism has been directed at the circular reasoning that an analysis of conceptual metaphors can become entrapped in, in the sense that the postulation of a conceptual structure eventually leads to the finding of such a formation in the empirical material that is investigated (Kertész & Rákosi, 2009, 703–708; Ritchie, 2006: 25–29).

Addressing the first criticism, while acknowledging the inherent limitations of classical Conceptual Metaphor Theory, I contest the usefulness of the four-space model suggested by Conceptual Blending Theory. In fact, I maintain that on the

matter of interest for the present investigation, there is a strong directionality from the source domain, FAMILY, towards the target domain, NATION, as depicted above in Figure 1. In turn, I subscribe to a more innovative research tradition, namely that of Critical Metaphor Analysis (cf. Charteris–Black, 2004; 2011; Hart, 2010; Kövecses, 2009; Semino, 2008), which maintains that metaphors exist as a fundamental feature of political discourse in different genres and ‘proclaims that in this context metaphor is both strategic and ideological’ (Hart, 2010: 127).

More clearly, in my understanding of Critical Metaphor Theory, conceptual metaphors are employed strategically in political discourses since they focus attention on specific issues, and define their limits of intelligibility. For example, by insisting on the nation as a family construct with clear boundaries between the in–group and its immediate alterity, it obscures the contending account of viewing of the nation as a community of equals that is open to external influences. At the same time, conceptual metaphors are anchored in certain ideological convictions that are reflected in the way the national family is depicted in an exclusionary manner, as in the example above. I therefore argue that the Critical Metaphor Analysis is the most appropriate methodological perspective for the present study, inasmuch as it acknowledges that metaphors are intrinsically artefacts of discourse, and hence dependent on the context in which they are produced. Indeed, conceptual metaphors operate as discursive nexuses that generate meaning in the interlay of text and context. In other words, the analysis of metaphors needs to be undertaken having in mind the very discourse in which they are embedded (Carver & Pikalo, 2008: 3; Gibbs & Lonergan, 2009: 251; Semino, 2008: 30–32). Put simply, the stream of Critical Metaphor Theory at work in the present study is concerned with how power relations and ideological stances are defined and reified through metaphor at the level of discourse and, as such, it can be regarded as a branch of the wider effort to assess discourse critically (Fairclough, 2003: 75–77; Hart, 2010: 6–8; Stenvoll, 2008: 36–37; van Dijk, 1998: 164; Wodak, 2006: 179–181).

When designing the methodology for this study, I have opted for a top–down deductive approach<sup>23</sup>. It involves *a priori* postulation of conceptual metaphors followed by their comprehensive examination, thereby placing the conceptual metaphors at the centre of attention, and treating them as higher–level cognitive structures (cf. Cienki, 2005; 2008). This is done bearing in mind the challenge of irregularity, which means that ‘the individual metaphorical expressions will be found predominantly irregular as regards their semantic behaviour despite the fact that, in the main, they come into existence as a result of regular cognitive

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<sup>23</sup> The Corpus Linguistic Analysis, in turn, employs a bottom–up approach (cf. Pragglejaz Group, 2007; Stefanowitsch, 2007). Corpora represent large collections of texts, originally crafted by hand, but more recently derived by automated processes. The qualitative study of metaphor in these corpora involves a computer aided search for metaphorical patters across the data, and in general limits these studies to simple string searches. Although it can provide a greater amount of metaphorical expressions for certain target domains in a particular corpus, such an approach does not necessarily entail a qualitative advantage (Kövecses, 2008).

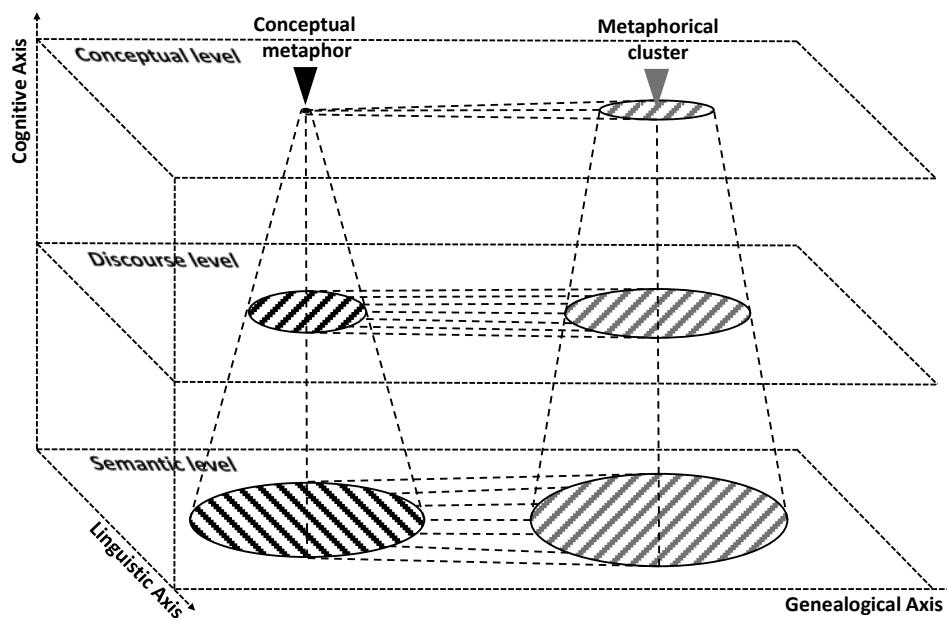
processes, such as conceptual metaphors' (Kövecses, 2008: 170). At the same time, the analysis accounts for the 'the pressure of local context' within the metaphorical construct. I thereby acknowledge that conceptual metaphors and their corresponding metaphorical clusters undergo a process of adaptation and change and may vary from one political context to another (Chilton & Ilyin, 1993: 27; Dobrovolskij & Piirainen, 2005: 355–356; Kövecses, 2008: 181).

The present study is also a reaction to Véronique Mottier's encouragement to broaden the analytical scope of metaphor research to account for the wider discursive context and inherent ideological entailments, while taking seriously the problem of researcher's situated subjectivity. Following her recommendation in the design of the methodological apparatus that is detailed in the following, the aim has been to reposition the unit of analysis from the lexical level of statements, which enables the examination of superficial *metaphorical expressions*, to the level of discourse, which offers an insight on the higher cognitive structuring through *conceptual metaphors*. Such a move would allow, as she aptly puts it, a more comprehensive investigation of the 'wider cultural horizon of meaning and the institutions and power relations that structure it, thereby allowing us to locate the analysis of metaphor in relation to wider issues of social and political action and transformation.' (Mottier, 2008: 188) With this in mind, in the following the analysis of conceptual metaphors and their adjoining metaphorical clusters is undertaken at an intermediate level, the discursive level, as depicted in Figure 2 below. This is done, however, commencing from a clear anchoring point – the *conceptual metaphor* to be studied – at the conceptual level, with a special awareness of the fact that the conceptual structure may not necessarily be expressed at all times with the aid of the same generic lexical artefacts (such as one clearly identified lexical metaphor, for example) – at the lexical level.

I have attempted to do so by carefully depicting the *genealogical transformations* of the conceptual metaphors and their corresponding metaphorical clusters, as schematically depicted in the Figure 2 below. A caveat: the *genealogy* of conceptual metaphors need not be understood as a quest for their origins, nor for a depiction of their alleged linear development, since in Figure 2 the genealogical axis indicates temporal contingency. Rather, genealogy here involves the investigation across time of the multifaceted extensions and even at times contradictory turns that metaphors reveal across a certain discourse. In other words, there is not an exclusive left–right direction of reading the process thus described, as both the conceptual metaphor and the adjoining metaphorical cluster are subject to (re)iteration, (re)interpretation, and conceptual (re)positioning. The meaning of *genealogy* as a conceptual tool at work in the present study follows in the footsteps of Foucauldian scholarship that has consecrated the term (cf. Foucault, 1990; 1998; 2000). More clearly, my interest here is not to identify the original form of the conceptual metaphors at work in radical right populist discourses, but rather to trace their complex course of descent. In a sense, as I have already mentioned in the introduction, such a

methodological approach has some affinities with the ‘lifespan model’ of analysing radical right populist ideology (Meret, 2010). However, the emphasis in the present study is on tracing those various ideological transformations and adaptations of interest as manifest through conceptual metaphors at the level of discourse. On this matter, it echoes the appeals of researchers of rhetorical political analysis to examine the ‘genealogies’ of concepts taken for granted in political discourses, generally labelled political ‘common sense values’ and reminding of the conceptual structures of interest here (cf. Finlayson, 2007: 560; 2012:763).

**Figure 2** *Genealogical transformations: Multilevel manifestations of conceptual metaphor and adjoining metaphorical cluster*



Finally, there are several means to address the challenge of circularity demonstrated by the critics of conceptual metaphor. Considering the methodological apparatus sketched above, the aim is to strive for a *cyclic argumentation*, or to be able to return to the point of departure but at a different cognitive level, ‘since a modified, prismatically re-evaluated, qualitatively new information state is created’ (Kertész & Rákosi, 2009: 718). More explicitly, the cyclic and prismatic qualities of such an analytical enterprise rest on the cyclic nature of reasoning, or more clearly on the retrospective re-evaluation, which entails the continuous process through which previous decisions are revised and corrected, and alternatives are suggested (Rescher, 1987: 304). Nonetheless, the retrospective re-evaluation is not only cyclic but also prismatic, in the sense that the various cycles of revisions continuously change the perspective from which the

empirical material is analysed. Such a cyclic argumentation is considered to be *effective*, and thereby it differs from the circular reasoning that fails to re-evaluate the context and hence witnesses the flat return of the analysis to its moment of inception (Kertész & Rákosi, 2009: 718; Rescher, 1987: 307).

Corroborating the observations detailed above with the principal dimensions for articulating the metaphorical cluster of the NATION IS A FAMILY, as presented herein inspired by the scholars of conceptual metaphor (cf. Ahrens, 2011; Lakoff, 2002; Kövecses, 2002; Ringmar, 2008; Semino, 2008), and amended with the feminist interventions (Haste, 1994: 172–180; 247–249; Lazar, 2005: 7–8), the following top–down grid of analysis has been developed to serve as a deductive chain of arguments (Steen, 2007: 31–33). It is worth noting that it has been crafted bearing in mind the inherent logic of articulation of radical right populist ideology, from a feminist perspective. More clearly, it accounts for the three key aspects discussed in the previous chapters: the intrinsic unity of the gendered *people*, perceived as a community of blood constructed along the bodies of women as signifiers of national differences; the Manichean opposition between the *people* and elites, manifested as a means of demarcation between the purity and normalcy of average citizenry from the abject and abnormal alterity of political elites; and the sovereignty of the *people* that is expressed through the relegation of its political will into the acts of the radical right populist leader, underpinned by a heteronormative masculinity (Bacchetta & Power, 2002: 8; Chiantera–Stutte & Petö, 2003: 3; Ignazi, 2003: 32–33; Jungar, 2010: 209–214; Mudde, 2007: 63–89; Petö, 2010: 190–195). In so doing, I agree with Alice Deignan that specific conceptual metaphors convey certain ideological positions through the relationships they suggest between the various parts of the discourse, and through the way they are extending into metaphorical clusters (Deignan, 2005: 131). The deductive chain of arguments, which extends the logical implications of Figure 1 presented above, has been consequently structured as follows (cf. Steinhart, 2001: 196–202):

If the nation is a family then:

- The members of the nation/ the *people* inhabit a specific space, either identified in terms of their home or their heartland – their ‘home country’ – which has come under threat. There is an inherent connection between the place they populate and appeals to a set of shared traditions.
- The *people* submit to the parent’s authority, embodied by the radical right populist leader, whereby their position as dependants is acknowledged.
- The *people* are replicating a traditional hierarchy and power relations, whereby women submit to the ideal of normative motherhood – and even renounce gender equality – and thus become dependent on their men for defence from the masculine Others.
- The *people* need to defend their moral strength against corrupting influences, and clear boundaries are to be drawn between the morally pure members of the nation – which is perceived as a ‘healthy’ unitary whole – and the corrupted

deviant Others, understood to be embodied by the radical right populist leader's political contenders, but also by Others – such as religiously different, non–majority ethnic groups, or sexually non–normative communities.

- The parental authority comes to embody all the positive attributes of the *people* in the person of the radical right populist leader; in other words, the leader incarnates the interconnected conceptual metaphor of the STRICT FATHER.

Importantly, the development of the aforesaid chain of arguments is to be understood from a *genealogical perspective*. Paraphrasing Foucault (2000: 374), the study entails maintaining the analysed events in their context, documenting the slight repositioning and (re)interpretation of the conceptual structure, and evidencing the development and ramifications of the metaphorical cluster of interest here. The following section describes how the designed grid of analysis has been applied to the study of conceptual metaphors in radical right populist discourses. It details the selection of cases that have been studied and explains the strategic choices and inherent limitations of the present investigation.

## 4.2 A GENEALOGY OF CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS AT WORK IN RADICAL RIGHT POPULISM IN ROMANIA AND SWEDEN

Equipped with the methodological toolkit described above, this academic inquiry focuses on two particular manifestations of radical right populist discourses in Europe, namely Romania and Sweden. In selecting the two cases, I have been guided by a three–step process. First, following the theoretical propositions of the methodological model developed above, I have chosen to research the NATION IS A FAMILY and the STRICT FATHER conceptual metaphors in the context of radical right populist discourses in Europe. Second, considering rival explanations, I have opted for those cases which I deemed that might offer competing views on the use of metaphorical constructions, given the countries' different historical, socio–economic and political developments in the European periphery or, put differently, making use of the cases' complexity and specificity (Carmel, 1999: 143; George & Bennett, 2005: 83–84; Landman, 2005: 41; Platt, 2007: 110). Indeed, the Romanian case details the development of radical right populism in Central and Eastern Europe, serving as an example of the profound radicalisation of such discourses in the region. The country has witnessed to a dramatic return to a traditionally patriarchal gender structuring. In turn, the choice of the Swedish case was motivated by that fact that radical right populism had previously been deemed to have failed in the country and, in addition, Sweden has generally been considered a textbook example of a welfare state and the embodiment of a gender equality regime. Third, developing a descriptive framework, I have attempted to enable a clearer structuring of the analysis. It is worth noting that the two studies have been treated as two examples of 'authenticated anecdote' (Simons, 2009: 4),

in the sense that their investigation has been shaped by the theoretical propositions of Critical Metaphor Theory, amended with a thick description of each case study (Yin, 2009: 130). The selected cases fit nonetheless the label 'heuristic case studies', as my ambition has been to tie directly to theory building in an active and deliberate manner, in a sense searching purposefully for generalisable relations in Critical Metaphor Theory (cf. Eckstein, 1992: 143–147; George & Bennett, 2005: 75).

The first case study is the Romanian radical right populist party: the Greater Romania Party<sup>24</sup> (*Partidul România Mare*, PRM). In the Romanian context, Corneliu Vadim Tudor – leader of the PRM – is representative of the preponderantly male radical right populist leadership in Central and Eastern Europe (with the noteworthy exceptions from Hungary and Ukraine). He embodies the radical right populist appeal for a return to traditional, patriarchal family values. Nonetheless, what sets him apart from other radical–right populist leaders is his constant praise of collectivistic traditions, and his continuous attempts not only to present himself as a providential leader, but to surround his persona with an aura of *Orthodox messianism* – a well–documented trait of Romanian radicalism (Dobrescu, 2003: 407–410; Tismaneanu & Pavel, 1994: 408). Other Romanian political parties have also resorted to Orthodox messianism and appeals to charismatic leadership, but the PRM and its leader allow a better understanding of the interplay between nationalism, populism, Christian Orthodox faith, and reductionist gender interpretations<sup>25</sup>. Importantly, while during the communist regime, gender equality was legislated and efforts were at least announced to undermine patriarchal ordering, the post–revolutionary Romania witnessed a backlash against feminism and a forceful advancement of an updated form of patriarchal imagery. The transition occurred from a 'fatherless patriarchy' of the communist parent–state to a modernised pseudo–Orthodox family–centred patriarchy, with women heavily dependent on men's income and political decisions (Miroiu, 2010: 580–589; Verdery, 1996: 61–82).

The investigation of the NATION IS A FAMILY and that of the STRICT FATHER conceptual metaphors is detailed in the Romanian case through an analysis of the articles published in the PRM's main media outlet, the weekly Greater Romania Magazine (*Revista România Mare*). The chosen sources are editorials authored by Corneliu Vadim Tudor, as they reflect the party's recent history. Tudor has usually

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24 The appellation 'Greater Romania Party' is employed by most scholarship in the field and makes reference to the party's irredentist appeals and constant reference to an alleged golden age, the so–called interwar 'Greater Romania' (Livezeanu, 2000: 1–28), although the direct literal translation from Romanian would be 'Great Romania Party'.

25 The Romanian political scene has also witnessed another radical right populist party, the New Generation Party (*Partidul Noua Generație*, PNG). However, the PRM is the most successful Romanian radical right populism to date. Tellingly, the former PNG leader George Becali, after an unsuccessful presidential bid in 2004, joined forces with the PRM. Becali was elected to the European Parliament on the PRM list in 2009.

been the PRM's presidential candidate, though unsuccessful. His political activity and his editorials have been revealed to being xenophobic, anti-Semitic, anti-Hungarian, and anti-Romani, but his discourse has rarely been analysed from a feminist perspective (cf. Andreescu, 2005; Chen, 2003; Gallagher, 2005; Mudde, 2005; Shafir, 2008; Soare, 2010). Tudor is the uncontested driving force of radical right populism in Romania, both in terms of political leadership and intellectual mentorship, exploiting the discontent that people feel in front of the market economy.

With this in mind, I have collected those editorials that were published around three major events in Tudor's political career. The first section of this empirical material elaborates on his activity around the Romanian presidential elections in 2000, from the first issue in January 2000 until the first post-election issue in December that year, which witnessed Tudor's surprising runoff against Ion Iliescu – the candidate of the centre-left. The second one contains Tudor's editorials from around the 2004 Romanian presidential elections, following a similar pattern of selection as described above, which marked a serious decrease in Tudor's political appeal. The third and final cluster concentrates on his writings amid the 2009 EU Parliamentary elections, from first issue in January 2009 to the last issue in June 2009, which led to the PRM gaining three seats in the European Parliament, including Tudor himself becoming an MEP. In total, 55 editorials or approximately 32,300-word text-discourse were selected.

In the North European case, on the other hand, the analysis focuses on the Sweden Democrats (*Sverigedemokraterna*, SD). Until recently the SD has been treated by scholars of populism as a failed case among other European radical right populist parties, since it constantly failed to achieve parliamentary representation (cf. Rydgren, 2002; 2006; Widfeldt, 2000). However, the party succeeded in gaining parliamentary representation as a result of the 2010 Swedish Parliamentary elections. The SD is to date the most successful radical right populist party in Sweden<sup>26</sup>, with a past tainted by close collaboration with openly undemocratic, neo-Nazi and other radical right groupings (cf. Larsson & Ekman, 2001; Mattsson, 2009). While most of the public discussions have focused on the SD's crypto-racism thinly dissimulated behind its discourse of law and order and tightened immigration rules, little attention has been paid to another aspect of their political platform, namely the idyllic depiction of the Swedish national welfare project.

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<sup>26</sup> The SD is not the only radical right populist party in Swedish politics. New Democracy (*Ny Demokrati*, NyD) was a short-lived populist political entity that emerged in the early 1990s amid the painful restructuring of the Swedish welfare state. The NyD capitalised on popular dissatisfaction and surprisingly gained parliamentary representation in the 1991 elections, only to disappear just as abruptly from Swedish politics in 1994 (cf. Hannerz, 2006; Rydgren, 2006). On the other hand, the National Democrats (*Nationaldemokraterna*, ND) are the result of a former SD-faction founding its own party. The ND is so far represented only at the local level in a few municipalities across Sweden, thereby of little relevance at national level.

Consequently, this work concentrates on the discursive production of the SD party leader, Jimmie Åkesson, who succeeded in bringing the SD into the Swedish Parliament. The collected empirical material in this case consists of Åkesson's editorials, interviews, and other interventions that were published in the party organ, the Sweden Democrat Courier (*SD-Kuriren*), from Åkesson's rise to the SD's leadership in 2005 until the 2010 Swedish Parliamentary elections. In this case, the episodes chosen for selecting empirical material were as follows. Firstly, the 2005 Swedish Lutheran Church elections: with material collected beginning with the newspaper's May issue and Jimmie Åkesson's election to party chairmanship, to the first post-election issue in October 2005. Secondly, the 2006 Swedish Parliamentary elections: from the January 2006 issue until the October issue the same year, after the elections. Thirdly, the 2009 church elections and the EU Parliamentary elections the same year, following a similar pattern of selection as described above. And, finally, the 2010 Swedish Parliamentary elections: from the January issue to the October 2010 issue which discussed the party's access into the Swedish Parliament. The choice is motivated by the fact that the newspaper has been one of the very few outlets available to the SD and Åkesson to discursively elaborate on the party's social and political construct. In all, I have selected 95 editorials, interviews and articles, totalling an approximately 37,160-word text-discourse. The slightly larger amount of empirical material in the Swedish case is motivated by the shorter timeframe than it was used in the Romanian study.

At a first glance, the timeframes for the two cases appear to be rather short in comparison to the original genealogical analyses that stretched over several centuries (cf. Foucault, 1995; 1998). On this matter, I agree with other researchers that a genealogical analysis cannot have a pretension to totalising knowledge (Moi, 2008: 28–30); consequently, genealogy has neither an obvious point of inception, nor a definitive moment of conclusion (Tollin, 2011: 45–48). Such a genealogical analysis is an on-going project and, from this point of view, it has a striking resemblance to the housework chores. In other words, the scholar's work resembles that of the housewife's:

Since there is no obvious end to the textual network explored by the genealogical project, the project can never lead to a final totalisation of knowledge: a genealogist's work is never done. Genealogy is very much like housework: like the housewife, the genealogist stops [his] work for fairly pragmatic reasons: the floor is clean enough; it is time to start cooking instead; it is too late and one is too tired to continue. The next day, there is always a need for more cooking, more dusting, more cleaning; occasionally, nothing short of complete redecoration will do.

(Moi, 2008: 30)

With this observation in mind, the grid of analysis described in the previous section has been carefully employed during the study of the gathered text-discourses, resting on the conceptual metaphor's structuring as a unified *gestalt* (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003: 77–86). As such, the collected empirical material, from both Romania and Sweden, has been analysed without the assistance of artificial intelligence, in a similar manner to other researchers' analyses of conceptual metaphors from a gender perspective (cf. Lazar, 2009; Lim, 2009), thereby differing in my analytical method from researchers of corpus linguistics that rely heavily on computer aided analyses in the identification of certain bottom-up patterns for metaphorical expression (cf. Ahrens & Lee, 2009; Charteris-Black, 2011; Koller, 2004; Pragglejaz Group, 2007). The reason for such an approach has been twofold. Keeping in mind the three levels on the cognitive axis depicted in Figure 2, I have been first motivated by Gerard Steen's observation that although there is a systematic causal connection between a certain conceptual structure and a specific linguistic expression, such a connection is never complete (Steen, 2007: 33). Second, I have taken into account Steen's assertion that the process of 'carrying over' from the source domain, FAMILY, to the target domain, NATION, is not necessarily contained in the space of one sentence, being able to transgress across sentences in extended metaphors, analogies or other such discursive constructions (Steen, 2008: 233–235). These stances build on the observation that at the level of discourse, conceptual metaphor need not be restricted to being expressed in literal, direct language, but in fact can be expressed indirectly, emerging from the specific topic of the discourse it is embedded in (Cameron *et al*, 2009: 71; Hart, 2010: 129; Howe, 2006: 64; Lazar, 2009: 211–212; Steen, 2007: 270).

Consequently, the investigation has been undertaken in several steps, in a sense adapting the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) (Cameron *et al*, 2009: 71–72; Pragglejaz Group, 2007: 3) to the specificities of a critical analysis of conceptual metaphors in discourse. Firstly, the collected material – all editorials and interviews for each case understood as a unitary text-discourse – has been carefully read several times in order to establish a general understanding of the major political issues in their respective context. Special attention has been paid to the ambient discourse in which the conceptual metaphor is thought to be manifested, and to the specificities of the original language the discourse has initially occurred (Deignan, 2005: 125; Kövecses, 2006: 150–151; Mühlhäusler, 2012: 1–10). More precisely, a very detailed stage setting, which accounted for the political discourse in which conceptual metaphors have occurred and the wider cultural context that made their existence possible, has been deemed of crucial importance for the present project. This aspect has also been shown by Zoltán Kövecses' extensive discussion on the principle of irregularity of higher-level cognitive structures (Kövecses, 2002: 186–189; 2008: 170).

Secondly, the main arguments of the aforementioned deductive chain have been given a generic lexical unit – be it word, or even a whole phrase when deemed necessary, inspired by the model's initial description as discussed at length in section 4.1.2, to enable the systematic categorisation necessary for the screening of gathered empirical material. The first argument has therefore been contracted to such lexical expressions as 'home country', 'heartland', 'motherland', 'fatherland' – with its specifically Romanian detailing, namely 'patria', 'Romania', 'Romanian people', and respectively its Swedish variant, the 'folkhem', 'Sweden', 'Swedish people'. The second argument has been synthesised into the following constructs: 'dependants', 'children', 'elderly', 'family members', but also 'Romanians', respectively 'Swedes'; the third into 'mothers', 'our women' in general, with a focus on 'Romanian women', respectively 'Swedish women', but also 'traditional family values'. The fourth included such lexical constructions as 'corrupt', 'elite', 'lifestyle', 'intrusion', 'pure', 'virtue', 'heritage', 'religion', and references to possible minority groups (understood here in terms of ethnicity/'race', religion, or sexuality). Finally, the fifth has been contracted to such lexical expressions as 'leadership', 'mentorship', 'guiding', but also wider references to salvation in connection to people's politics. These lexical units have been employed for analysing and structuring the empirical material; however, the lexical artefacts mentioned above have only served as initial cues in perusing each text–discourse and, whenever unsure, I have opted for an extensive search for synonymous expressions and related concepts, even across sentences within the same editorial or interview.

Thirdly, the aforementioned conceptual structures have been monitored along the text–discourse in order to record their eventual transformations or possible (re)interpretations across time. Documenting their genealogical development in the analysis of the empirical material, I have attempted to give an account of the process of change and adaptation that conceptual metaphors and their corresponding metaphorical clusters undergo from one political context to another. More precisely, this entails the different manifestations of the chosen conceptual metaphor in the Romanian and Swedish political contexts, but also the clusters' own transformation across time to accommodate new meanings, thereby striving to provide a cyclic argumentation and as such to avoid circular reasoning and the self–reinforcement of analysis.

Finally, the results of analysis have been structured into five generic domains, which reflect closely the analytical grid that informed the investigation – the binding force of the national family; the national family and its dependants; women, politics, and the national family; the national family and its Others – which together provide a thick description on the present state of the national family; and last, but not least, the place of the political man in the national family. These domains have impacted directly on the internal organisation of the two following chapters, which present the case studies. Under these circumstances, special attention has been paid to the genealogical aspect, in the sense of

evidencing those instances – illustrated with direct citations from the analysed empirical material – in which the metaphorical cluster has been extended to incorporate new meaning from one election period to another.

There are nonetheless certain inherent limitations in the employed method that I am well aware of. A major limitation, in this context, is that the analysis of conceptual metaphors relies on the scholar's subjective interpretation that, in turn, may have an impact on the validity and reliability of present study if one is to apply to it the strictly quantitative assessment criteria. In this regard, I subscribe wholly to Michelle Lazar's (2005: 14–19) appeals for feminist reflexivity as a praxis in undertaking my own research. More clearly, I am aware of my own abilities and limitations as a researcher to identify and interpret conceptual structures. These skills are in turn determined by my academic trajectory and exposure to certain scholarly communities (such as membership in the feminist research community), my acquired language skills – in both Romanian and Swedish (having the former as my mother tongue, and the latter as a second principal language) – and my ability to decode and interpret specific cultural codes, from both Romania and Sweden (and thereby my ability to express concisely and comprehensively the results of my analysis in English), and finally my own lived experience and submersion into the researched cultures. In other words, I have productively employed my complex relationship with the two countries, that exhibits both aspects of being an insider and outsider, which I have developed over years with the two countries, cultures, and languages, so that I am able to produce the most effective insights into the gathered empirical material (cf. Bevir & Rhodes, 2003: 34; Carmel, 1999: 145). More clearly, a perfect replication of the present study may not be possible, because I am a uniquely situated individual, as described above. However, this resonates with earlier calls for a situated subjectivity in the analysis of conceptual metaphor in discourse (Mottier, 2008: 188). To paraphrase Peter Mühlhäusler (2012: 1), if the influential work on conceptual metaphors by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (2003) has been preoccupied with the 'metaphors WE live by' – in which the pronoun 'we' seems to embody the conceptual metaphor of the (mainly) English-speaking Western academe –, in this study, I have attempted to show the ideological work certain conceptual metaphors OTHERS live by – in which 'others' is the mark of those non-native English-speaking researchers from elsewhere<sup>27</sup>.

Nonetheless, with regard to the issue of the generalisability of the findings in present study, it is necessary to underline that my feminist genealogical analysis of the conceptual metaphors at work in radical right populist discourses does not aim to solidify a certain normative take on the issue of the aforesaid ideology and its manifestations across Europe. At best, it can be regarded as an investigation of

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27 The results of my analysis have also undergone the process of blind peer-reviewing, having already been published in an array of academic journals, as noted in Acknowledgements (Norocel, 2009; 2010a; 2010b; 2011; 2013a; 2013b).

specific political contexts, in which the analysis of the ideological underpinning that conceptual metaphors and their corresponding metaphorical clusters are involved in enables the articulation of novel critical inroads that expand the understanding of the phenomenon from a feminist perspective. In conclusion, the aim of the present inquiry is to shed light on the ideological constructions of gendered identities with the help of conceptual metaphors in two specific national contexts within a well-defined period that I consider most suitable for my academic endeavour. With this in mind, I subsequently analyse the *NATION IS A FAMILY* and its symbiotic relationship with the *STRICT FATHER* metaphor in the Romanian context, followed by a separate chapter that analyses the family national construct in the Swedish setting. Then I summarise the findings of this work and indicate future avenues of research in a concluding chapter.

## 5 WE WILL BE AGAIN WHAT WE ONCE WERE AND EVEN MORE THAN THAT! THE *TRIBUNE* TO TAKE CARE OF THE ROMANIAN FAMILY (2000–2009)

In this chapter I analyse the discursive articulations of the radical right populist ideology in the Romanian context. I start by indicating the particularities of Romanian democratic multi-party regime in the post-1989 context. In relation to this, I explain the specificities of the Romanian semi-presidential system of government, and introduce the main parties in national politics. Against this background, I discuss the consolidation of a conservative and masculine public sphere in the process of the transition to a democratic multi-party system, which consequently places women who choose to become engaged in party politics in a precarious position. In connection to that, I discuss the situation of political marginality experienced by ethnic minorities in the country: the Hungarian minority, which, numerically, is second in size to the Romanian ethnic majority; the Romani (Rroma) minority, which seems to be the source of most societal anxieties; and the Jewish minority – important for historical reasons despite its near invisibility statistically. In so doing, I connect the imposition of pseudo-Orthodox family-centred patriarchy to the parallel processes of the consolidation of democracy, state consolidation, and fervent nationalism. Then I introduce the main radical right populist force in Romanian politics, its leader, and the party mouthpiece.

Analysing the genealogical articulations of the *NATION IS A FAMILY* conceptual metaphor in Romania, I first explore the alleged moral wholeness of the Romanian national family. With this in mind, I show the centrality afforded to Orthodox Christianity in defining Romanian ethnic purity and how it confirms the moral superiority of the Romanian national family. At the same time, this enables a detailed examination of the different positions within the Romanian national family afforded to its various members. This includes the place of family dependants, the role of women in the life of the national family, the threat posited by the family's Others (be them ethnic minorities or members of the LGBTQI community), and the position of the Romanian man in this context. In so doing, I analyse the discursive effects of constantly reinterpreting the *NATION IS A FAMILY* conceptual metaphor and the place of the *STRICT FATHER* conceptual metaphor – describing the masculinity performative of the Romanian radical right populist leader – in the metaphorical cluster thus created. I then conclude the chapter by demonstrating the specificities of radical right populist discursive manifestations in Romania.

## 5.1 PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY IN ROMANIA THROUGH A FEMINIST LENS

In the aftermath of the violent uprising against the Ceaușescu regime in December 1989, Romania entered a phase in which it appeared to embrace the principles of representative democracy and all too eagerly adopt market capitalism in a form that did not seriously dislodge pre-existing clientelistic political and economic relations (cf. Chiva, 2005a; Gallagher, 2005; Miroiu, 2010; Pasti, 2003; Tismaneanu, 1998; Soare, 2010; Sum & King, 2011). The new constitution acknowledged Romania as a semi-presidential republic, with a head of state directly elected through popular vote, and a bicameral Parliament (the Chamber of Deputies, respectively the Romanian Senate), in which the two houses have almost identical legislative powers. The Chamber of Deputies has between 327 and 385 seats up for electoral competition between the parties. An additional 11 to 18 seats have been directly allocated to the representatives of acknowledged ethnic minority groups of Romania<sup>28</sup>. The Senate has between 119 and 143 seats.

The November 2000 Parliamentary and Presidential elections were considered a sign of democratic consolidation, in terms of democratic alternation of power between the formerly governing coalition and allied opposition parties. Furthermore, these elections marked the introduction of a 5 percent threshold for parties and 10 percent for party coalitions, which has actively limited the number of political forces gaining access into the Parliament. Up to the 2008 Parliamentary elections, the voting system was on lists discretionarily determined by the party centre: a perfect means for the party leaders to form and exert control over extensive clientelistic networks. The new electoral law of 2008 replaced the proportional representation with a complex system based on a majority vote, which eventually turned out to disadvantage the PRM (Marian & King, 2010: 11; Stan & Vancea, 2009: 50). Another novelty was the decoupling of the Parliamentary elections (arranged in November 2008) from the Presidential elections (in December 2009), and the organising of the June 2009 elections for the European Parliament, the first complete five-year mandate, after Romania had joined the European Union in January 2007<sup>29</sup>.

The introduction of a democratic form of government in Romania has also had a significant impact on the participation of women in post-1989 politics. Romanian feminist researchers have argued that few women had been actively

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<sup>28</sup> The seats reflects the number of officially recognised minorities in Romania: Hungarian, Romani (Rroma), Ukrainian, German, Russian/Lipovan, Turkish, Tatar, Serbian, Slovakian, Bulgarian, Croatian, Greek, Jewish, Czech, Polish, Italian, Armenian, and Csango people. According to the 2002 census, the ethnic Romanians constituted approximately 89.5 percent of the total population, while the most numerous ethnic minorities were the Hungarian (approximately 6.6 percent of the population) and the Roma minority (approximately 2.5 percent). The remaining minority groups represented less than 0.5 percent each of the total Romanian population (INSSE, 2003).

<sup>29</sup> In November 2007 there have been organised elections for a 'short mandate' (until 2009) for the Romanian representatives in the European Parliament.

involved in the process of crafting the configuration of the democratic political system to be implemented in Romania in the aftermath of the Ceaușescu regime's fall (cf. Chiva, 2005a; 2005b; Miroiu, 2004; 2010; Miroiu & Popescu, 2004; Pasti, 2003). This has had a negative effect on women's opportunity to participate from a position of parity with men in Romanian democratic politics. Concomitantly, the advent of the multi-party system in Romania witnessed a return to traditionalist patriarchy and a conception of the political arena as 'improper' for women and their assignment to a secondary space, that of the domestic enclosure or of the non-governmental environment<sup>30</sup> (Chiva, 2005a: 971–972; Magyari–Vincze, 2005: 204; Miroiu & Popescu, 2004: 299–300; Pasti, 2003: 214–215; Surugiu, 2006: 229). Women in the Romanian transition did not only have to accept a relegation to an inferior position in relation to men, but have been confined to a situation in which they became objects of masculine pride and sexuality (Iancu, 2006: 60; Ștefan, 2006: 28). Entering the public space, women lost their position as subjects, becoming objectified bodies; indeed, the woman's bodily appearance has been valued not as an aesthetic quality *per se*, but as a potentially erotic attribute that could attract the attention of a man:

In the public space, the woman is *embodied as a femme fatale* (although in a *subaltern* position to her chief), cementing the idea that success predominantly depends on physical qualities, not on job performance, coupled with other such misconceptions: the stereotype of the *woman as a body*, accompanied by her preoccupation with her bodily appearance [...]. Here one must observe that the woman's body [...] becomes noticed if others can enjoy it, thereby becoming a 'sex bomb', in other words the result of masculine fantasy.

(Ștefan, 2006: 28) (*Italics in original*)

Perhaps unsurprisingly in this context, all politicians, irrespective of their political affiliation, have portrayed themselves as 'staunch supporters of marriage and the family' (Chiva, 2005b: 84) strengthening the conception that a man's political participation finds its complementarity and fulfilment in the heteronormative context of family, where women provide the necessary sanctuary from politics, which is often depicted as a battlefield (Iancu, 2006: 61; Miroiu, 2004: 272–279; Pasti, 2003: 217–226). In regard to women's position in society,

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30 In 1985, the proportion of women in the Grand National Assembly, a rubber-stamp parliament, had been of 33 percent. The situation worsened significantly after the fall of the Ceaușescu dictatorship, reaching a minimum of 3.65 percent (Chamber of Deputies) and 2.10 percent (Romanian Senate) in the 1996 elections, and increasing only slightly to 10.70 percent (Chamber of Deputies) and 7.14 percent (Romanian Senate) in the 2000 elections, changing in 2004 to 11.14 percent (Chamber of Deputies) and respectively 9.48 percent (Romanian Senate). As a result of the 2008 elections, the situation did not alter dramatically, with 11.30 percent (Chamber of Deputies) and 5.83 percent (Romanian Senate) (Băluță, 2006: 142; Chiva, 2005a: 972–973; Miroiu, 2010: 582; Tănase & Moșneag, 2006: 178).

Mihaela Miroiu and Liliana Popescu (2004) have argued that women in Romania are subject to a double paternalism. On the one hand, the Romanian Army and the Romanian Orthodox Church<sup>31</sup>, 'hardly pillars of liberal democracy, jointly occupy the foremost position in opinion polls studying people's trust in institutions' (Andreescu, 2005: 204). Such figures have been interpreted indicative of the citizens' reliance on easily recognisable hierarchies, orders and constraints, and scepticism to a voluntary assertion of their rights and liberties. On the other, the post-1989 developments have witnessed 'the massive dependence of women on men's income and on men's political decisions' (Miroiu, 2010: 588). The result has been women's subordination to both the authoritarian and patriarchal model, thereby occupying a position of double inferiority and dependence in Romanian society (Miroiu & Popescu, 2004: 300).

Another thorny issue, as Cristina Chiva (2005b) has pointed out, has been the transition from the nationalist-fuelled communism of the Ceaușescu regime to a democratic multi-party system able to reflect the ethnic diversity<sup>32</sup> of the country. The said transition has been marked however by the crystallisation of a male-dominated political order under the national banner, thereby juxtaposing the exclusion of ethnic minority groups with the marginalisation of women: 'state-building, nationalism and democracy-building have been closely intertwined during the consolidation of a fraternal, masculine public political sphere in the wake of communism' (Chiva, 2005b: 81). Such a development had direct and immediate consequences for those ethnic minorities that survived the politics of assimilation of the Ceaușescu dictatorship. These 'national minorities', the appellation of ethnic minorities in Romanian official texts, have now been faced with the challenge of accommodating to the new political context where the idea of the 'Romanian nation' in fact referred to the Romanian ethnic majority. The result has been 'an understanding of the state as promoting the interests of the

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31 With concern to the confessional makeup, in the 2002 census a clear majority identified themselves as Christian Orthodox (86.8 percent), followed in descending order by Christian Catholic (4.7 percent), Reformed/Christian Lutheran (3.2 percent), and Pentecostal (1.5 percent). Among the other religious denominations, 0.3 percent claimed Islam as their religion, and 0.1 percent registered as Jewish. Only 0.1 percent declared themselves to be atheist (INSSE, 2003). According to the preliminary data from the 2011 census, the Christian Orthodox faith was claimed by a majority (85.5 percent), followed by Christian Catholic (4.6 percent), and Reformed/Christian Lutheran (3.2 percent). There are no clear data concerning the amount of people claiming Islamic or Jewish faith as their religion. The number of atheists was recorded at 0.1 percent (INSSE, 2012). Comparing the data concerning confessional affiliation and ethnic identification (see footnote 28), one may notice that a clear majority of the ethnic Romanians identifies themselves as Christian Orthodox. The religious affiliations of the most important minorities, particularly the Hungarian and to a certain extent even the Romani minority, are more diverse.

32 I am nonetheless aware of the internal heterogeneity of the ethnic labelling. On this matter, I agree with Enikő Magyari-Vincze's (2005) observation that analysing more closely the ideas and practices that underpin the 'proper gender order' of post-1989 Romanian families, there are greater communalities to be found among women across the ethnic boundaries – and among men themselves, respectively – than between the women and men of the same ethnic group (Magyari-Vincze, 2005: 222).

hegemonic ethnic group, at the expense of “national minorities”.’ (Chiva, 2005b: 81)

The ethnic minorities in Romania have reacted differently to these developments. At one extreme, there has been the quiet exodus of the German minority, which witnessed its numbers dwindling from approximately 200,000 in December 1989 to barely 60,000 people registered as Germans in the 2002 census (Gallagher, 2005: 81–82), and to nearly half these numbers ten years later. At the other extreme, the Hungarian minority in Romania has been mobilised around a political entity to represent its interests in the emerging political framework. The Hungarian minority in Romania has long been represented by a political party, the Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania (*Uniunea Democrată Maghiară din România*, UDMR/*Romániai Magyar Demokrata Szövetség*, RMDSZ), that has competed in elections side by side with the other major parties in Romania. The UDMR/RMDSZ has generally received some 6 to 7 percent of the national votes in each post-1989 poll, which is indicative of the percentage of Hungarian minority population among the overall Romanian citizens (Chiva, 2005a: 976; Popescu, 2003: 325–326; Stan & Vancea, 2009: 48).

In turn, the second most numerous minority, the Romani (officially referred to as Rroma, but disparagingly identified as Țigani), has experienced a tremendous pressure towards acculturation and assimilation into the Romanian ethnic majority<sup>33</sup>. With a history of enslavement until 1858, victims of Romanian state-sponsored deportations and systematic extermination (the *Porajmos* – the Romani equivalent of the Holocaust) during the Second World War, and stereotypical depiction as a ‘parasitical’ presence during the Ceaușescu dictatorship, ‘the Țigan Other has been used as the symbolic node for a wide variety of social anxieties’ (Woodcock, 2007: 495). There has been no Romani political party or mobilisation, comparable to the UDMR/RMDSZ, able to compete on an equal footing with the Romanian mainstream political parties. Rather, the Romani minority’s interests have been generally defended by its sole, constitutionally guaranteed, representative in the Chamber of Deputies. As such, the two most visible minority ethnic groups (the Hungarian and Romani minority, respectively) have become the main subjects of nationalistic attacks. Concomitantly, interwar anti-Semitism resurfaced in Romanian politics, despite the significantly diminished number of Jews still living in the country, leading

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33 According to the 2002 census, the Romani represented approximately 2.5 per cent of the total population; in the 2011 census there were registered 3.2 per cent as Romani (INSSE, 2003; 2012). However, the accuracy of this data has been disputed. A major criticism pertained to the lack of reliable statistics for the Romani living in Romania, since not all of them have been officially registered. A second criticism regarded the Romani’s position as the socially and economically most disadvantaged minority in Romania. Arguably, few Romani had registered their ethnic belonging, a consequence of social stigma and pervasive discrimination (cf. Magyari-Vincze, 2005; Woodcock, 2007). Some scholars have even maintained that the Romani minority amounts to between 5 and 9.2 per cent of the total population in Romania (Barany, 1998: 313; Crowe, 2003: 87).

researchers to talk about an anti-Semitism without Jews (cf. Oişteanu, 2001; Shafir, 2008).

Indeed, the post-1989 Romanian political scene has witnessed the emergence of several radical parties, both on the left and right. The Socialist Labour Party (*Partidul Socialist al Muncii*, PSM), an unrepentant successor of the Romanian Communist Party; the Greater Romania Party (*Partidul România Mare*, PRM); and Party of Romanian National Unity (*Partidul Unităţii Naţionale a Românilor*, PUNR) were most important of these. However, the PUNR leader defected to the PRM in 1998, together with a significant number of party representatives, thereby leading to the disappearance of the PUNR from national politics and imposition of the PRM as the sole serious radical right populist contender in Romanian national politics in the 2000 Parliamentary and Presidential elections (Gallagher, 2005: 101–107; Sum, 2010: 21).

Ideologically, the PRM seems to have continued the hybrid line of ‘nationalist communism’ of the Ceauşescu regime (Miroiu, 2004: 215). The Ceauşescu dictatorship operated a juxtaposition of the legacy of authoritarianism of the pro-Nazi military regimes of the Second World War and the mysticism of the extreme-right – especially manifest in the marriage between organicist nationalism and Orthodox religious fervour – on ‘the institutional body of Romanian Stalinism’ (Tismaneanu, 2001: 246–247; Tismaneanu & Pavel, 1994: 402). The PRM appears to have carried over this legacy into the new political environment. Some scholars have compellingly argued that, on the one hand, the PRM’s economic programme has constantly been left-wing, characterised by paternalist statist thinking. On the other hand, the corollary of the PRM’s right-wing inclinations has been its hyper-nationalistic, xenophobic populism draped in Orthodox mysticism (Gallagher, 2005: 272; Mungiu-Pippidi, 2001: 235; Soare, 2010: 113; Sum, 2010: 27; Tismaneanu & Pavel, 1994: 417–418). On this matter, Vladimir Tismaneanu and Gail Kligman (2001) have maintained that the PRM ‘locates itself in an elusive amalgamation of nostalgia for communist and fascist ideals, hostility to modernity and diversity, and a militaristic, some would say phallogocentric, cult of the nation (racially defined), associated with a Greater Romania movement and with a supreme leader (*conducător*)’ (*Italics – mine*) (Tismaneanu & Kligman, 2001: 83). However, it is noteworthy that the interpretation of nationalism in a religious key has long been a characteristic of the radical right populism across the whole Europe, with no clear-cut distinctions between its Western and Eastern regions (Glick Schiller, 2005: 527; Kitschelt & McGann, 1997: 19–20).

The position of the weekly magazine Greater Romania Magazine (*Revista România Mare*, hereafter RRM<sup>34</sup>) in the Romanian political context is a singular

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34 The magazine’s slogan reads: ‘We will be again what we once were and even more than that!’ It is attributed to Petru Rareş – a descendent of Stephen ‘the Great’ mentioned in the previous chapter – and it was often employed in the interwar period to justify the crafting of the Greater Romania polity. The title of present chapter makes direct reference to it.

one. According to several researchers, the RRM has been, since its founding in May 1990, not only the mouthpiece of the main radical right populist party in Romania. In fact, the RRM was central to the founding of PRM party itself in November of the same year (cf. Andreescu, 2005; Gallagher, 2005; Soare, 2010; Stewart, 2008). The PRM party leader, Corneliu Vadim Tudor, would later claim to have founded the party at the request of the faithful RRM readership, which according to his own descriptions embodied the oppressed people who ‘demanded’ that Tudor establish his party (Soare, 2010: 105). It is noteworthy that the RRM has not been the sole media project under the patronage of the PRM and its leader<sup>35</sup>; however, Tudor has continued to employ the weekly RRM as the main vehicle for disseminating his political message and by mid-2000s the RRM had a readership of around 400,000, or about 60,000 copies per week, a figure unrivalled by any other party-affiliated newspaper in Romania (Gallagher, 2005: 274; Stewart, 2008: 414). Towards the end of the decade, the RRM was still a significant actor in the Romanian printed media landscape, with a self-reported circulation of approximately 46,000 copies per week (Stewart, 2008: 412).

The RRM has represented, according to Gabriel Andreescu, a ‘textbook example of hate speech’ that targeted equally the ‘usual culprits: Hungarians, “Gypsies” [Romani], and Jews’, and those ‘political or cultural groups that advocated a democratic regime’ (Andreescu, 2005: 187). Even more so, reflecting the fact that most Romanian mainstream media has been actively scrutinising and at times even boycotting the PRM and its leader, the RRM has always published verbatim Tudor’s speeches delivered in the Romanian Parliament and his statements issued at the PRM’s regular Friday press conferences (Gallagher, 2005: 289). Generally, the RRM has been dominated by minute coverage of Tudor’s speeches, reporting extensively on his engagements at home and abroad (Gallagher, 2005: 295). As such, the collected editorials reflect Tudor’s direct, unmediated and unaltered discursive articulations of the radical right populist ideology from his position as unchallenged leader of the PRM.

## 5.2 ROMANIA IS A FAMILY ON THE BRINK OF DISASTER

As mentioned earlier, the November 2000 Parliamentary and Presidential elections represented a sign of maturity for the Romanian political system (cf. Gallagher, 2005; Popescu, 2003). The then governing coalition grouped a wide array of political parties: a centre-right conservative party – the Christian-Democratic National Peasants’ Party (*Partidul Național Țărănesc Creștin*

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35 In March 2007 Tudor launched another newspaper (*Tricolorul*) that was thought to complement the RRM. However, neither newspaper appealed to a larger audience via the Internet until rather late, perhaps a sign of Tudor’s preference for a tangible media product and for an already faithful following.

*Democrat*, PNȚ–CD); a liberal party – the National Liberal Party (*Partidul Național Liberal*, PNL); two centre–left parties claiming different traditions – the Democratic Party (*Partidul Democrat*, PD), a break–away branch from the party built on the ruins of the Romanian Communist Party (at that time the main opposition party), and the Romanian Social Democratic Party (*Partidul Social Democrat Român*, PSDR) that claimed to be the continuation of the interwar Romanian social–democrats; and the UDMR/RMDSZ representing the Hungarian minority. The main opposition force, the Social Democratic Pole (*Polul Social Democrat*), reunited the Party of Social Democracy in Romania (*Partidul Democrației Sociale în România*, PDSR) – the main successor of the defunct Romanian Communist Party – and the smaller Romanian Humanist Party (*Partidul Umanist Român*, PUR).

In the given political context, the PRM under Tudor’s leadership chose to contest the elections on a platform that apparently lacked a clear programme, characterised by nationalist and anti–systemic appeals. Shrewdly capitalising on the general discontent of Romanian citizens with the performance of the political system, Tudor presented himself in the analysed editorials as a strong leader in the Christian tradition of Romanian people. In a similar vein, the PRM appeared as an option outside the political establishment, thereby in a unique position to bring about political change, economic prosperity, and justice (Gallagher, 2005: 253–254; Pop–Eleches, 2001: 163–164; Popescu, 2003: 327–328). The much discussed change was to be achieved, to judge from Tudor’s editorials in the RRM, by radical means: immediate confiscation of illicitly–acquired fortunes, public trials and executions in football stadiums, governing by the machine–gun and purging the motherland of its traitors – with a special focus on the Hungarian minority and Jewish presence in Romania. Illustratively, attempting to present his party’s radical right populist agenda as a benign manifestation in Romanian politics, Tudor dismissed the accusations of radicalism and nationalism voiced by his political adversaries, and chose to present nationalism as a constitutive quality of the Romanian national construct. He retaliated by emphasising the allegedly constructive aspect of Romanian nationalist zeal:

Romanian nationalism has never been aggressive, as it has never been directed *against* someone, but it has manifested *in support of* something, namely of independence and national unity, of identity, of dignity and self–awareness. [...] We are not obstinate, neither anachronistic – we are, as simple as it may sound, the way we are and if something needs changing or modernising in Romanian mentality, then this cannot be nationalism, for without it we are anything else but Romanians.

(RRM 523, 2000: 14) (*Italics in original*)

In the same editorial, Tudor strove to cement the idea of perennial nationalist fervour among the ‘Romanian People’ on the basis of an alleged ‘preservation of

its purity, ethnically speaking' for the past half a millennium. Even more so, Tudor added yet another layer, one that astutely overlapped Romanian national kinship with belonging to Orthodox Christianity. To enforce this image, the Romanians were deemed to be undoubtedly a saintly folk, since their 'martyrdom had no limits' (*RRM* 523, 2000: 14). It is noteworthy that Tudor signalled his allegiance to the nationalist cause not only in terms of describing the genealogy of Romanian nation in heroic terms, but also utilising capital letters when referring to the 'Romanian People' and 'Romanian Nation' (which appear to be completely synonymous), the 'Romanian mentality' and 'Romanians' (easily apparent in the quotation above) as a manner to distinguish Romanianness among other such 'national' characteristics and elevate it to a privileged and revered position.

### 5.2.1 ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY AND THE ROMANIAN NATIONAL FAMILY

From the perspective of the Lakoffian description of the NATION IS A FAMILY conceptual metaphor (Lakoff, 2002: 85–100), in the studied empirical material, Tudor indicated schematically the boundaries of intelligibility of the Romanian national family, evidencing its moral wholeness understood in terms of ethnic 'purity' and Orthodox Christianity as a birthright<sup>36</sup>. The allegedly inborn Orthodox Christianity of the national family in this context plays a dual role. The assertion that the Romanian *people* was *born* Christian has been often used in Romanian historiography to underline the Roman filiation – Romanians as the easternmost outpost of Latin–Europe – and the nationalist claim of continuous inhabitation of the lands that would later become Romania by the Romanian *people* (Boia, 2001: 63; Dobrescu, 2003: 395; Leustean, 2007: 729–730; Stan & Turcescu, 2007: 44–46). It is worth noting that the relationship between the Romanian state and Romanian Orthodox Church has a rather tortuous history. However, being the religious institution for the largest part of the Romanian ethnic majority, and being autocephalous – it is governed by a national synod, and appoints its own patriarch – has enabled the Romanian Orthodox Church to claim to be the national church, despite the nominally secular character of the Romanian state (cf. Leustean, 2007; Stan & Turcescu, 2007). This notwithstanding, Tudor's claim that Romanian *people* are born into Orthodox Christianity seems to indicate their moral superiority, thereby naturalising a hierarchy of ethnic belonging and worthiness crowned by the figure of ethnic Romanians – claims which appear strengthened with the help of nouns that were capitalised. The national minorities were, in turn, named using non-capitalised nouns, in accordance with the common grammatical rules of Romanian language. Such a stance was further

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36 In contrast, the Hungarian minority can 'only' claim baptism to Catholic Christianity by Saint Stephen/István sometime during the tenth century, while the Romani (Rroma) have no attestation of their Christianity – a consequence of their centuries-long status as slaves in the Romanian Danubian principalities.

emphasised in a subsequent editorial in which Tudor attributed to the people of that 'part of Europe' a certain naïvety or even childish innocence 'because they have a genetic heritage similar to that of the first Christians – selflessly helping others – but certainly not suicidal and not inclined to love out of interest' (*RRM* 528, 2000: 14).

In the 2000 Parliamentary and Presidential elections, the PRM and Tudor proved to be major adversaries to the political establishment. Participating actively in the Romanian political arena – marked by authoritarianism and electoral competitors more interested in protecting and expanding their personal interests, rather than democratic pluralism and serving the public good (Miroiu, 2004: 222) – the PRM and its leader finished the election as the second largest political force, behind the centre–left Social Democratic Pole of presidential candidate Ion Iliescu. The PRM polled 19.5 percent of the votes for the Chamber of Deputies (84 seats), and 21 percent for the Romanian Senate (37 seats), becoming the main opposition party. Equally astonishing was Tudor's qualification for the presidential run–off with 28.3 percent of the votes, second only to Iliescu who received 36.4 percent (Andreescu, 2005: 188; Chen, 2003: 169; Mungiu–Pippidi, 2001: 230; Pop–Eleches, 2001: 156; Popescu, 2003: 331–332; Sum, 2010: 19). His strong electoral support notwithstanding, Tudor lost to Iliescu in the run–off. The elections were a very tense moment that witnessed a rallying of the centre–right supporters behind the centre–left candidate as the sole way of preventing Tudor from acceding to power. This was nevertheless interpreted as a rather ominous sign as Iliescu appeared to embody the 'father figure' preferred by the Romanian electorate, despite criticism concerning his tainted past as a member of the Romanian nomenclatura (Chen, 2003: 173–174; Gallagher, 2005: 267–268).

Nonetheless, Orthodox Christianity was subsequently reified as a distinguishing feature of the common Romanians, as it was the case in one editorial published on the eve of 2004 Parliamentary and Presidential elections. Indeed, the Romanian national family was not only depicted as 'devoured' by its love for Jesus Christ by Tudor, but also steadfastly conservative, in the sense of piously following and obeying uncritically the Church hierarchy that was revered as holy in itself:

I always look in awe at the crowds of simple people that sweep with their knees the church floors; that stand still on the dusty roads, transfigured by a devouring love for our Saviour Jesus Christ; and that lay their meagre garments at the feet of priests, abbots, bishops and metropolitan bishops for these holy men to brush against the clothes and to transfer onto the garments a piece of their holiness.

*(RRM 737, 2004: 12)*

Elevating the said hierarchy of moral worthiness, which distinguished between 'pure' ethnic Romanians and 'other' ethnicities inhabiting the 'Country', Tudor

indicated the symbolic boundaries of the national family. Importantly, such boundaries were used to define not only the ‘essence’ of Romanianness, but also to mark the difference between the ‘strong’, ‘healthy’ and ‘normal’, on the one hand, and the ‘weak’, ‘diseased’ and even ‘abnormal’, on the other. A case in point was Tudor’s vehement opposition to the decriminalisation of homosexuality<sup>37</sup> in 2000, a year which was mystically referred to as ‘the very year when we celebrate two thousand years from the birth of Our Lord Jesus’. Tudor then saluted in his editorial the Romanian Orthodox Church’s appeal through its highest prelate Patriarch Teoctist to boycott the new law. He attempted to exploit this occasion politically, noting deridingly that the governing coalition – reuniting the aforesaid centre–right, liberal, and centre–left parties – that had ‘the unimaginable irresponsibility’ to pass the aforementioned law, was ‘in itself an alliance against natural laws’ (*RRM* 521, 2000: 14). Opposing such ‘unnatural’ political solutions, which threatened to push through ‘irresponsible’ policies, Tudor subsequently appealed to an idealised, naïve and uncorrupted Romanian nation. The Romanian national family was depicted as obeying the ‘natural laws’ of compulsory heteronormativity – denoted by opposition to decriminalising homosexuality; abstention from raping defenceless women, thereby performing their (reproductive) sexuality exclusively within the family’s private enclosure; and over-potent masculinity – marked by the pious submission to the exclusively male organisation of the national Orthodox Church (cf. *RRM* 528, 2000: 14; *RRM* 737, 2004: 12). This underlined further the pivotal role the national Orthodox Church played in defining Romanianness, thereby superseding regional specificities and uniting coreligionists, in an ever closer collaboration with the Romanian state power – and strongly reminiscent of the interplay between Orthodoxy and ethnocracy of the interwar period (Leustean, 2007: 720–721; Livezeanu, 2000: 303–304; Stan & Turcescu, 2007: 44).

The 2004 Parliamentary and Presidential elections witnessed the crystallisation of several electoral alliances, and a clearer profiling on the left–right ideological cleavage. As such, the incumbent Social Democratic Party (*Partidul Social Democrat*, PSD) – the result of a merger between the two main centre–left parties, the PDSR and PSDR – entered the elections on their allegedly satisfactory governmental record: significant economic growth (a GDP increase with 8 percent), accession to the NATO/OTAN, and progress on the path towards EU–membership. The PSD renewed its previous alliance with the PUR, forming the National Union (*Uniunea Națională*) electoral alliance. Their main competitors, the ‘Justice and Truth Alliance’ (*Alianța Dreptate și Adevăr*) –

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37 Article 200 of the 1968 Basic Penal Code defined homosexual relationships as criminal; prior to 1989 it had been applied with the purpose to persecute and to force collaboration with the Ceaușescu’s secret police. In the post–dictatorship context, the article was often employed discretionarily by the police and had drawn harsh criticism from the human rights organisations and from the Council of Europe (Turcescu & Stan, 2005: 291–292). Article 200 was eventually repealed in June 2001, by the centre–left Năstase government.

reuniting the PD and PNL – focused on the imperative of reining in institutionalised corruption, which they associated with the political and economic oligarchy crystallised around the PSD. In turn, the PRM entered an electoral alliance with a trade union block (Downs & Miller, 2006: 412; Ieţcu–Fairclough, 2008: 373). Under these circumstances, Tudor emphasised the PRM's righteousness in a renewed attempt to make use of religious arguments for electoral purposes. He described the PRM as 'the party that does not change allies' – indicative of moral uprightness and steadfastness – and that 'has the decency not to participate' in 'dishonouring trade-offs'. In conclusion, he maintained, 'the PRM is the sole Christian and moral force' in Romanian politics (*RRM* 754, 2004: 12–13). The PRM and Tudor lost some of their political appeal, despite Tudor's promise to improve on the results of the previous elections. Indeed, the PRM's support decreased in the 2004 Parliamentary elections, polling 13.0 percent for the Chamber of Deputies, and 13.65 percent for the Romanian Senate (Downs & Miller, 2006: 413–414).

Another illustrative example of policing the borders of the nation was Tudor's own interpretation of the wider European anti-Islam attitudes in the aftermath of the 11 September 2001 suicide attacks in the USA, and its adaptation to the Romanian specificities. The translation into Romanian politics was a gradual process, at first noticeable in 2004 and becoming most vicious on the eve of the 2009 European Parliamentary elections. In this changed political context, criticising a Turkish-owned TV channel for unveiling a case of corruption among the Orthodox high prelates, Tudor maintained this was a matter for 'the Romanian Orthodox Church's Holy Synod to decide, not the business of newly arrived Muslims'. He subsequently warned that 'Muslims should not touch the Romanian Orthodox Church; otherwise they will have to put up with me! Romania is not a village without watchdogs!' (*RRM* 982, 2009: 13). The suspicion of terrorism was easily connected to religious difference – especially with the Islamic faith – Tudor making reference to a deeper, 'immutable difference' that could be used to deny the Muslim population the rights and legal protection guaranteed to his own folk (Glick Schiller, 2005: 529). The radicalisation of Tudor's use of conceptual metaphors might be explained by several factors. The PRM did not manage to maintain its grip on its faithful electorate with its old nationalist litany directed against the Hungarian minority; the fact that the UDMR/RMDSZ had supported the various governmental coalitions in the past decade convinced the Romanian majority of their democratic commitment to the Romanian state. In addition, a significant percentage of the population had emigrated after Romania's accession to the EU, which might also help explaining the decrease in nationalist fervour. In the context of an altered electoral law on the eve of the 2008 Parliamentary elections, which were for the first time decoupled from the Presidential elections, with a higher national electoral threshold of 5 percent and a significantly altered structure of the electoral districts, the PRM failed to gain parliamentary representation for the first time in its history. The PRM polled only

3.2 percent of the vote for the Chamber of Deputies, and 3.6 percent for the Romanian Senate, being the biggest loser of that electoral cycle (Marian & King, 2010: 13; Stan & Vancea, 2009: 51). Tudor has apparently succeeded in maintaining a loyal base, the PRM receiving 8.6 percent of the votes in the 2009 European Parliament elections, thereby sending three parliamentarians out of a total of 33 Romanian MEPs (Sum, 2010: 21).

In this respect, Tudor's anti-Islamism appears in many ways similar to his xenophobic attitude against all those not narrowly defined as belonging to the Romanian national family; Muslims were thus portrayed as the menacing religious Others. Indeed, he claimed that Romanian youth was dangerously 'lured into the most embarrassing sub-culture, [...] of Oriental-Gypsy dances, of immoral parties, of rapes, of street language that disfigures our sweet language, and finally, of drugs, of prostitution [...].' The Romanian nation was thus depicted as on the brink of self-destruction, and Tudor urged the Romanians to 'open the eyes and minds of the young generation to the glory of God – the sole source of true beauty, truth, and wisdom.' (*RRM* 736, 2004: 13) The cultural and religious regression was manifested through the adoption of 'Oriental-Gypsy dances' – with Gypsy here in the sense of *Țigan* Other (Woodcock, 2007: 494) – and social gatherings that could lead to young Romanian women being raped by those engaging in such actions – hyper-masculine Others symbolically reuniting the most threatening presences: that of the 'uncivilized' Romani ('*Țigan*') and of 'Oriental' Muslim. These expressed Tudor's paternalist preoccupation with the danger of pollution and of the irremediable degeneration of the Romanian national fabric. Consequently, the return to a patriarchal morale enforced by Romanian Orthodox Christianity was to ensure, in his view, a safe return to 'true beauty, truth, and wisdom'. Tudor's usage of the *NATION IS A FAMILY* conceptual metaphor thereby extended the metaphorical cluster towards portraying the Romanian ethnic majority as facing an imminent disaster and the identification of those that endangered its existence.

### 5.2.2 THE ROMANIAN NATIONAL FAMILY AND ITS DEPENDANTS

Preparing for the 2000 Parliamentary and Presidential elections, in the analysed editorials, Tudor described Romania as a country reduced to being 'a crossroad of beggars', a 'toxic dump', and 'a brothel' (*RRM* 521, 2000: 14). He exploited the dual function of the family as a fundamental principle of the organisation of social life and as an ideological construction that 'naturalises' hierarchies of gender, ethnicity, sexuality, and social class (Collins, 1998: 63–64), portraying Romania as a national family on the verge of social collapse:

Mothers kill their newborn infants because they cannot afford to care for them. Elderly couples throw themselves, hand in hand, from the rooftops of

high-rise apartment buildings [...]. Unemployed, and more recently even those living in rented homes, are setting themselves alight turning into living torches.

*(RRM 526, 2000: 15)*

The apocalyptic description above makes reference to a dehumanised folk. Women, that are commonly portrayed in the radical right populist discourses as merely ‘retaining the traces of putatively historical, quasi-organic community within the modern state’ (Cusak, 2000: 543), cannot afford the costs of family’s perpetuation, and thus fail in their collective role as mothers of the Romanian nation. The other ‘dependants’ – the elderly and the socially vulnerable – are forced to commit suicide as a result of similarly dire economies. Tudor continued this line of reasoning in his later editorials, problematising the difficulty of a population living below poverty levels, an image rather uncomfortably familiar to the great majority of Romanians. Appealing to the religious devotion of his fellow citizens, he described a tragic situation in which the elderly were forced ‘to steal the oil from oil lamps across the country’s cemeteries, to be able to fry a meagre portion of potatoes’ and to use the crumbled ‘antidoron [blessed bread in Orthodox liturgy] over a cut tomato to appease their hunger’ (*RRM 529, 2000: 14*).

The description of the national family’s dependents as extremely vulnerable and in need of special attention was then cemented through a series of media campaigns that focused on Tudor’s visits across the country that targeted hospitals, retirement homes, orphanages, and canteens for the poor. Such visits built on the previous charitable actions of the PRM’s women’s organisation – whose actions effectively strengthened the women-charity-maternity axis specific to nationalist inspired radical right populism (Miroiu, 2004: 227). On this matter, Vladimir Pasti (2003) has observed that Tudor adopted in these campaigns a paternalist attitude, heavily reliant on a hegemonic masculinity embodied in the figure of the ‘political hero’: more often than not making a donation to the visited establishments and entertaining a colloquial discussion with the hosts. Importantly, he needed not to be involved in the caretaking process itself; it sufficed that he, as a family father, indicated his willingness to contribute financially to the dependants’ wellbeing (Pasti, 2003: 226). Such a move only cements the idea of a hierarchical structuring of the NATION IS A FAMILY conceptual cluster, whereby women are portrayed as ‘the natural’ caregivers of other dependents in the family – the elderly and children, the sick, and (even) the poor – and men are confirmed in their position of leadership as ‘political’ entities and family breadwinners.

Closer to the election date, Tudor radicalised the tone of his editorials. Even more problematic, according to Tudor, was the treatment of children, understood here as the promise of continuation for the Romanian family into the new

millennium. Indeed, Romanian mothers were portrayed as unable to provide for the most basic needs of their children. '[H]aving lost their sanity because of poverty they live in' they agree to the 'most barbaric aggression against the biological fibre of the Romanian People', a 'truly Satanist attack against Christianity' – selling their children for the organs:

The *REAL* Country is the belly of the woman that has commenced to sell her babies, even before they are being born, as if she were a breeding dog with its puppies pledged two months in advance of delivery – at least those puppies are alive and well, whilst the children sold this way await an inescapable death, supplies for the organ banks of the world's richest. [...] Romania has thus become the largest exporter of hearts, livers, eyes, spinal cord, skin, blood, of hands and feet in the whole Europe.

*(RRM 534, 2000: 14) (Emphasis in original)*

The *NATION IS A FAMILY* conceptual metaphor was extended in this context to describe a country about to be completely annihilated, transformed into a cheap producer of organs. Women appear to have lost their quality as 'mothers of the nation', and have been transformed into mere reproductive devices responsive to the demands of a global market. The explanation for such a development resided in the fact that the Romanian mothers have lost their sanity, an extreme consequence of the outrageous poverty that the 'REAL Country' was living in. Although not directly indicated, Tudor pointed an accusing finger at the incumbent government and its attempts to modernise the country by way of massive privatisations and indiscriminate adoption of 'Western' standards in economy and society at large. Nonetheless, because of the weak and divided governing coalition, manifest in the absence of a strong leader, Tudor added, 'everyone can come whenever they want, can steal whatever they wish, can rape children and women, desecrate holy places' with no consequences (*RRM 527, 2000: 15*).

Under these extreme circumstances, the PRM participation in the Parliamentary elections, which was coupled with Tudor's presidential candidacy, was envisaged to put an end to the foreigners' impunity for acts of assault and domination of the nation's dependants – women and children – narrated as acts of pollution of the nation. It is noteworthy that pollution was presented as having extended beyond the limits of physicality – rape of defenceless people – into the transcendental; manifested in the desecration of the country's 'holy places'.

Even more so, in true populist tradition, Tudor recreated a plebiscitary atmosphere, imagining a ceremony for the restitution of sovereignty to the Romanian nation, in which people 'from all corners of the country' would gather and collectively reject the political establishment and acclaim 'Vadim President!' (*RRM 743, 2004: 12*). According to Tudor, what led the people to support the PRM and its leader was '*HUNGER*, the best electoral agent' (*Emphasis in original*)

– as he argued in one of his 2009 texts (*RRM* 977, 2009: 12). A definitive end to hunger required the coming to power of his party, since the PRM was ‘the only political force not in Power, because it has been prevented from acceding to Power, for it would have switched off the machinery of plunder’ (*RRM* 977, 2009: 12).

In sum, it appears that Tudor has portrayed the Romanian national family as on a road to self–destruction, resorting to exaggerations depicting a dehumanised folk. Indeed, the dependants of the national family seem to be on the verge of catastrophe. Women have been portrayed as having lost their motherly instincts – killing their offspring or selling their infants to organ traffickers. The elderly, in turn, have been described as experiencing absolute poverty, and being forced by famine to disrespect the national family’s century–old Orthodox Christian traditions. Under these circumstances, the PRM and its leader have been presented as the nation’s providential saviours.

### 5.2.3 WOMEN, POLITICS, AND THE ROMANIAN NATIONAL FAMILY

Considering Tudor’s insistence on viewing the Romanian nation as a family, it is perhaps surprising that in the examined empirical material he makes only rather sporadic and indirect references to women in politics. Indeed, women were often depicted as mothers or as defenceless beings, together with other ‘dependents’ – the elderly and children – thereby denied autonomy and positioned as subordinated subjects, either in relation to their husbands or to Romanian (male) political leaders. In Romanian politics, the consecrated model has been that of the omnipotent heroic man who is uncontested leader of *his* (political) *clan* – thereby appealing to the structuring of the political sphere according to a logic of political kinship. This brings forth the idea of political competition between political families commanded by father–like leaders. This has resulted in the rigid vertical structuring of politics, and relegated women to a position of ‘tolerated’ participants in the political field (Băluță, 2006: 155; Iancu, 2006: 61; Miroiu, 2004: 219–225; Pasti, 2003: 223–224). In this light, Tudor has portrayed the ideal Romanian woman as the embodiment of his own mother. She incarnated an ideal of subordinate femininity – a selfless mother and a devoted wife (Kandiyoti, 1991: 434) – often being described in her position of a nurturing mother, who initiated Tudor into fanatic nationalism (*RRM* 524, 2000: 14). Limiting her role to that of a mother (of a man’s offspring), Tudor enforced the heteronormative structuring of Romania as a national family, following closely the traditional family ideal, which underpinned child–bearing and child–rearing as measures of national well–being (Collins, 1998: 66).

Few women have taken part in Romanian politics and even fewer have drawn Tudor’s attention. Those that have include Zoe Petre, the president’s chief of staff from 1996 until the 2000 Presidential elections, and Madeleine Albright, the US

Secretary of State of that time. Zoe Petre challenged the deep-seated Romanian prejudices against women playing a visible and active role in politics. Women have often been associated with the ‘monstrous’, as ‘Communist-feminists’, in a genealogical line that included Ana Pauker, the first woman Minister of Foreign Affairs in Romania (1947–1952) and of Jewish origin; and Elena Ceaușescu, wife of the Romanian leader and the second most influential political person during Ceaușescu’s dictatorship. Given the context, Petre has been a disquieting presence in politics, and the RRM has been particularly active in portraying the incumbent president as a tool in the hands of Petre. Even more so, Petre’s employing her own son in a subordinate position in the presidential entourage was regarded as a confirmation of her domineering attitude in relation to the men around her (Gallagher, 2005: 147–148; Miroiu & Popescu, 2004: 305). In Tudor’s editorials, Petre was elevated to the position of absolute leader of the country, a position shared solely with the president’s wife, thereby indicating not only the incumbent president’s emasculation but the unmanliness of the whole political establishment Tudor opposed (*RRM* 527, 2000: 15).

Petre was subsequently portrayed by Tudor as a ‘real commissar-woman’ who deserved to ‘wear a beard’ (*RRM* 534, 2000: 15). She appears to have transgressed the heteronormative rules of intelligibility, which preserve public life and politics as the exclusive domain of masculine competition, and reduce women to mere trophies and vessels for nation’s reproduction. Her ‘wearing a beard’ underlined her unnaturalness, on the one hand, and confirmed politics as a domain exclusively masculine and masculinising, on the other. Dealing with her was deemed extremely difficult, and Tudor concluded in a later editorial that such ‘an impossible woman’, the puppeteer of Romanian politics from behind the scenes, was to be left to the will of Rex, the dog of the infamous Târgoviște military regiment – remembered for its role in the Ceaușescus’ execution in December 1989 (*RRM* 536, 2000: 15). In other words, in the metaphorical construction of Romanian nation as a family, women’s roles were strictly constrained to that of devoted mothers, while men were depicted as protectors of their subordinated wives and offspring. Any attempt to transcend their status was suggested as deserving of an exemplary punishment: public execution.

Madeleine Albright was also criticised by Tudor<sup>38</sup> for her decisive role in the Bosnian and Kosovo wars in neighbouring former-Yugoslavia. Tudor attacked Albright characterising her as a superficial outsider, referring to her alleged unfamiliarity with the Serbian nationalist ‘rights’ in former Yugoslavia, and accusing her of hypocrisy and of being a woman, which was seen as a major handicap; more concerned with embellishing her appearance with broaches than

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38 Internationally, Tudor has cultivated the friendship of Jean-Marie Le Pen, then leader of the French FN, and Slobodan Milošević, the late Serbian president whose presidency marked the breakup of Yugoslavia and the savage wars that followed. Tudor has also had close relations with several leaders in the Arab world, including Saddam Hussein and Muammar Gaddafi (Andreescu, 2005: 189; Gallagher, 2005: 303; Mungiu-Pippidi, 2001: 235).

preventing the killing of innocent people. He asked rhetorically if one: '[should rely] on what a boisterous alphabetic, who adorns herself with a cowboy hat and lots of golden broaches, with no Country, and no God, by her name the Jewish Madeleine Albright, who, without doubt, is the greatest serial killer in history?' (*RRM* 528, 2000: 15) Very much like Petre, Albright was considered by Tudor to be unable to transcend her position as a woman – more preoccupied with accessorizing her outfits rather than saving lives, thereby politically incompetent (cf. Pasti, 2003; Ștefan, 2006). Albright was also found guilty of mimicking patriotism and religious attachment – 'with no Country, and no God', an intimation of her personal history as a Czech émigré to the USA. The disclosure of Albright being a converted Jew was built on a deep-seated stereotype about the maleficence of Jews in the Central and Eastern European context (cf. Livezeanu, 2000; Oișteanu, 2001; Shafir, 2008).

Such portrayal of women active in politics, in my view, seems to cement the naturalisation of women's containment to the private enclosure of their homes and maternity as the most suitable form of 'serving' the national family (Parker *et al.*, 1992: 7). Those few women that have ventured outside the domestic sphere appear portrayed by Tudor as incomplete (*less-than-men*) politicians, unable to transcend their position of women. This is taken to the extreme, I argue, as Tudor threatens these women with physical extermination, should they not comply with reverting to their traditional roles as caretakers of the national family.

#### 5.2.4 THE ROMANIAN NATIONAL FAMILY AND ITS OTHERS

In the analysed empirical material, Tudor's attempts to separate Romanians from *less-than*-Romanian ethnic minorities were arguably founded on his understanding of Romania as a national family, 'the people-as-one', and the elevation of Romanian language to a liturgical status (Tismaneanu, 1998: 68). On a closer look, the PRM's political existence was attributed by Tudor to the stringency of counteracting the plans of 'chauvinistic Hungarians' to 'federalise Romania' (*RRM* 525, 2000: 15); Tudor translated the federal project into a direct danger to Romania as a tightly knit family: the threat of territorial separation thus became the danger of severance of family connections. Tudor even advocated for a new form of citizenship, similar to that of France and Greece, thereby transcending ethnic belonging and proclaiming that all those born in Romania were to be solely seen as Romanians, regardless of them being 'Hungarians, and Țigani [Romani], and Armenians, and Jewish, and all other ethnic minorities that came here uninvited' (*RRM* 523, 2000: 14).

Those particularly targeted were the ethnic Hungarians and their 'whining to all international forums' for their collective ethnic rights; the 'Țigani' (the Romani – that are always referred to disparagingly in Tudor's texts) who needed to 'come to their senses and work honestly', and the Jews personifying international

finance (*RRM* 523, 2000: 14). On this matter, it is noteworthy that the much detested Hungarian minority has been ascribed somewhat ambiguous masculine attributes: financially endowed, saboteurs of Romanian statehood and spies for the Hungarian state, thereby instilled with a sense of mischievous masculine potency. At the same time, the Hungarian minority and the UDMR/RMDSZ appeared unable to stand their ground, resorting to such unmanly acts as ‘whining’ for their collective rights to ‘international forums’ (*RRM* 523, 2000: 14), treason – ‘Trojan horses’ for the ‘New World Order, and its stillborn child, the European Union’ (*RRM* 527, 2000: 14) –, and ‘meaningless gossiping’ (*RRM* 983, 2009: 13).

Another problematic aspect, identified by Tudor in the 2000 editorials, pertained to the ‘serious threat’ posed by the ‘alarming fertility of the Țigani [Romani], who no longer can be assimilated; they will soon assimilate us in turn’ (*RRM* 523, 2000: 14). The Romani men were portrayed as menacing hyper-sexual Others, roaming the country in ‘packs’ – like wolves – terrorising the Romanian majority population (*RRM* 526, 2000: 15); and ‘raping, torturing, and even killing Romanian young girls’ (*RRM* 529, 2000: 15). Put differently, he painted an apocalyptic scenario – echoing the ‘demographic race’ discourse (Yuval–Davis, 1997: 26–27). Romanians were depicted being in danger of turning from ‘assimilators’ of ethnic Others – through their implied civilisation (Romanians’ ‘honest work’ and individuality, as opposed Romani’s gathering like predators in ‘packs’) – to being ‘assimilated’ – through corruption of their genetic heritage, a consequence of ‘the alarming fertility of Țigani [Romani]’. Such a stance reveals that the radical right populist fear of the uncontrollable reproductive sexuality of the Other is strongly interlinked to fear of degeneracy, of being numerically and genetically overwhelmed.

At a deeper level of analysis, Tudor arguably operated a more radical extension of the NATION IS A FAMILY metaphorical cluster. He made a distinction between ethnically/‘racially’ civilised and, thereby, worthy Romanian women and the uncivilized ‘Țigani’ [Romani] women who threatened to undermine the ethnic/‘racial’ balance in the country with their uncontrollable fertility. In Tudor’s heteronormative hierarchy, Romanian women were depicted as inherently better than the Others’ women, but necessarily preoccupied with reproduction of Romanianness – thus subordinated to their Romanian men. His stance on the matter became even more clearly articulated in his 2004 campaign when he conflated the poor housing conditions the majority of ‘Țigani’ [Romani] has been forced to live in, with homes where prostitution and drug trafficking were an undeniable aspect of the daily life (*RRM* 731, 2004: 12). As such, the Romani women were not only devoid of agency, simply embodying fecund vessels at the disposal of a hyper-masculine undesired Other, they were even lacking in maternal instinct, manifesting a state of promiscuity that was perceived as a direct threat to the purity and health of the Romanian ethnic majority. Within the

ethno–patriarchal social order envisioned by Tudor, Romani women were thereby subject to a double process of degradation, at the intersection of ethnicity/‘race’ and gender (Magyari–Vincze, 2005: 224; Woodcock, 2007: 515).

Perhaps the most easily recognizable Other in Tudor’s writings is the ‘imaginary Jew’ (Oişteanu, 2001), employed whenever anti–Semitism proved to be a winning card. In 2000, Tudor denounced the ‘mercenary with no country, and no God, aggressive, swaggering’ Jew who threatened him for his announced presidential candidacy, saying ‘Israel can resort not only to financial means to control Romania, but also to political ones’. Subsequently, Tudor made use of the whole anti–Semitic lexicon to describe his Jewish interlocutor: ‘a dangling beech–mast filled boar–head, a narrow forehead, a double, trembling chin, big ears, rapacious claw–like hands’ (*RRM* 524, 2000: 14) – in short, a non–hegemonic racialised masculinity. Under these circumstances, the national family was threatened – though financial manipulation – with exploitation by, and subordination to a type of masculinity *sine qua non* non–dominant. Surprisingly, this did not prevent Tudor from eventually employing an Israeli consultant for his presidential campaign in 2004, only to return to his anti–Semitic discourse ‘as a central feature of party mass–appeal once that EU–eyeing recipe proved inefficient at the polls’ (Shafir, 2008: 156).

As tentatively discussed in the section regarding the connection between Orthodox Christianity and Romanianness, Tudor employed the NATION IS A FAMILY conceptual metaphor to depict Romania as a staunchly heteronormative family that did not accommodate ‘deviancy’. In so doing, he identified an Other that endangered the national construct from within, failing to submit to the rules of heterosexual reproduction and patriarchal family structuring. In equating normalcy with heterosexuality, Tudor simply regarded heterosexual relations as ‘innocently moral, consistent with nature and health’ (Warner, 1999: 5), thereby further expanding the metaphorical cluster to incorporate the health and purity aspects of the said conceptual metaphor. Tellingly, opposing the abrogation of the infamous Article 200 of Romanian Penal Code, Tudor wore the mantle of public outcry:

We are offended by the daring attitude of these sick individuals, who call their fetid stinking mud love. [...] We use this occasion to remind everyone that the Romanian People are Christian and have healthy morals. And we also want to remind you that it is among the homosexuals that the killer paedophiles are recruited from [...]. To set free and encourage these behavioural extravagances represents a deathly danger to the Country’s youth. [...] When] one is on all fours and uses his mouth and other orifices for disgusting means, one has no moral right to lecture others.

(*RRM* 521, 2000: 14)

Romanians were thereby praised for their ‘healthy morals’, and their normalcy was contrasted with that of the homosexual ‘killer paedophiles’, who are to be rejected, refused membership of the heteronormative national family. Tudor voiced his fear of degeneration, of deadly danger for Romanian youth once homosexuality was decriminalized. It is noteworthy that his focus was on male homosexuality. He underlined the heteronormative masculinity’s violent opposition to the ‘receptive pleasure of the anus’ (Connell, 1995: 219), which in such a view renders homosexual men inferior, emasculated and reduced to a feminine subordinated position, thereby morally inappropriate and foreign to the Romanian family. The EU Parliament’s vote supporting same-sex marriages in 2009 prompted Tudor to publicly condemn those Romanian MEPs that ‘had agreed to a disqualifiable attack against the Family and Christian Church’. He then wondered if this was what Romania needed, ‘legalizing the marriage between homosexuals, and probably followed by legalizing their adoption of children?’ These ‘twelve horsemen of Apocalypse’ who voted in favour were to be eternally remembered as unworthy representatives of the Romanian family, he concluded (*RRM* 984, 2009: 13).

In other words, developing the *NATION IS A FAMILY* metaphorical cluster, Tudor, in my opinion, has constantly explicated the borders of the Romanian national family. In so doing, he has pointed at both the outside Others – be they Hungarians, Romani, or Jews – and internal Others – those that failed, in his view, to meet the heteronormative expectations of the national family.

### 5.3 CORNELIU VADIM TUDOR EMBODYING THE *TRIBUNE* AS A STRICT FATHER

Several researchers have compellingly argued that the intricate relationship among various political parties active in Romanian politics, but also between these parties and their electoral supporters is defined by inherently masculine patriarchal attributes (cf. Marinescu, 2010; Miroiu, 2004; Pasti, 2003; Soare, 2010). Especially the leaders of political parties embody a specific heroic masculinity, displaying certain characteristics that remind the electorate of the military hero, of the man as head of his *clan* – understood both in political terms, and as a community of blood. He demands absolute submission from his clansmen. This has led to an articulation of politics in terms of a war-like competition: political figures become leaders of faithful clans that act like armies, engaging in combat with the armies of opposing politicians (Miroiu, 2004: 22; Pasti, 2003: 223–224).

One important aspect of Tudor’s use of the *NATION IS A FAMILY* conceptual metaphor has been to present Romania as in search of a representative leader – a generic *pater familias* – or a strict father able to rise to the challenge of leading

Romania into a prosperous future. Indeed, in Tudor's writings in the RRM, the radical right populist leader embodies the conceptual metaphor of the STRICT FATHER – a typology of masculinity of a providential nature, of modest yet distinguished origins, entrusted with a Messianic task to build a new moral order, and to establish an unsullied society, a closer copy of the primordial world. The PRM leader has cemented in this context an image founded on a genealogy that takes the medieval prince Vlad the Impaler, the interwar pro–Nazi Marshal Ion Antonescu; and the nationalist communist dictator Nicolae Ceaușescu as its forefathers (Tismaneanu & Kligman, 2001: 83).

Tudor has become known in the Romanian public sphere after his nickname 'the Tribune' (Soare, 2010). The appellation makes reference to the *tribuni plebis* (political representatives of the common people in the Roman Republic of Antiquity) thereby recycling the alleged Latin descent of the Romanian nation, and concurrently emphasising the supposed masculine righteousness of the aforementioned political ancestors<sup>39</sup>. Preparing for the 2000 Parliamentary and Presidential elections, Tudor positioned himself in stark contrast to his political opponents. According to some researchers, the constant feuding within the centre–right governing quintet had a negative impact on the perception of Romanian parliamentarism, boosting the electoral appeal of those candidates that embodied the image of strong leaders (the opposition PDSR leader – Ion Iliescu, and the PRM leader – Tudor) (Gallagher, 2005: 243; Mungiu–Pippidi, 2001: 231; Pasti, 2003: 224–225).

Tudor wrote extensively about the type of politician he represents, and oftentimes placed his image as at odds with the rest of Romanian political establishment. In one illustrative example from 2000, he declared from the title of his editorial that he was 'inapt for politics', since – he detailed later in the body of the article – he was incapable of theft, deception, and betrayal (*RRM* 524, 2000: 1). The Romanian political establishment was painted as the STRICT FATHER's Manichean opponent, 'the corrupt elite' (Mudde, 2004: 543) characterized by such attributes as a propensity to steal, lie, and lack any morality. Indeed, Tudor claimed to embody the providential man that would defend a folk polluted by the intrusion of other men's semen in the national body, and the loss of its religious reference points; a truly incorruptible leader:

I can declare, from the bottom of my heart, with a thundering voice: yes, I am incorruptible! Neither my religion allows me, nor my austere education. From the height of the position I have acquired (through renunciations, sacrifices, a fierce inner battle [...]), I can fight both the internal and external Mafia. While living in a time of 'gold rush', I am waving from the battlements the flag of primordial honesty.

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<sup>39</sup> There is also a clearly populist aspect to it, which has been shown in other political contexts as well, especially when it concerns the populist leader's claim to both be part of, and represent the 'true voice' of the people (Stanley, 2008: 105).

(RRM 525, 2000: 14)

At a closer reading of the text above, it appears that his political opponents were not only portrayed as his antagonists but as unworthy members of the national family. Their masculinity was derided, and their leadership abilities were questioned and ridiculed. Their political stances were unveiled as being motivated by greed – the mirage of quick gains of the ‘gold rush’ – serving a selected few, and nefarious foreign interests. The Manichean opposition between ‘good’ and ‘evil’, researchers have noted, ‘nurtures and is nurtured by, simply but highly effective rhetorics of wounded national pride; an injury which goes to the heart of ideals of “heroic manhood”.’ (Zalewski & Parpart, 2008: 5)

The STRICT FATHER conceptual metaphor, which Tudor asserted to represent, becomes the result of an ‘austere education’, of consecutive renunciations, of sacrifices and inner battles. Steadfastness proves to be a necessary element for crafting such a strong leader. The ability to hold ‘the flag of primordial honesty’ was traced back to his close family, his cultivated and fervently nationalist mother, but above all Tudor’s own father; who he was portrayed as a war veteran who had fought for defending the borders of interwar Romania, the Greater Romania that the very name of Tudor’s party makes reference to (RRM 524, 2000: 14). The patriarch’s figure was completed by descriptions of his Christian erudition: he ‘was reading enormously, but only one book: the BIBLE, on which he used to make annotations like a Benedictine monk’ (*Emphasis* in original) (RRM 522, 2000: 14). Nevertheless, his father not being Orthodox but member of a Baptist church is rather perplexing considering Tudor’s parading of Orthodox beliefs. Potential criticism is nonetheless silenced by directing the attention to his solitary study of the Bible. In this light, Tudor posited himself as the continuator in Abrahamic tradition of a strict gender differentiation manifest in ritual practices that ‘comprise a form of cultural labour in which only males can approach what is culturally designated as sacred’ (Condren, 2009: 363)

Tudor’s claim to embody an uncommon masculinity was underlined in the texts by his constant commitment to fight evil in its various disguises, be it temptations and evil thoughts he himself experienced, or evil in the world, warning that humanity lived in an ‘Era under the sign of Satan’ (RRM 526, 2000: 1). In this, I argue that Tudor embodies the masculine logic that conceptualizes ‘courage, rationality, and discipline as different aspects or gradations of masculinity, that is to say, as having in common as well as being hierarchically differentiated’ (Hutchings, 2008: 30). Surprisingly, being a providential figure the STRICT FATHER actually thrived in this war-ridden environment, and Tudor portrayed himself gathering his forces for the coming presidential battle:

Fighting evil is, paradoxically, beneficial to my wellbeing. The fight keeps me alive. The eruption of this volcano of misfortunes is nearing its end. It is time to move from speech to act. I have, now, an excellent corridor towards

[Romanian presidency] and I assure you that no force in this world will stop me. 'The Vadim Epoch' will be a time of peace, plenitude, and national dignity. Be afraid, wrongdoers! Be happy, Romanians! I will rid you, very soon, of the paedophiles and necrophiles that brought you on the verge of despair!

(RRM 526, 2000: 15)

It is noteworthy that he not only established himself as 'the Tribune' of modern Romanian politics in the public consciousness, but he became a figure of great familiarity becoming the only politician known to other politicians and the common citizens alike by his forename – Vadim. From this perspective, the anticipated 'Vadim Epoch' is an attempt to construct a heroic and distinguished genealogy, in a rather familiar manner, in line with the 'Epochs' of great Romanian 'forefathers', like Stephen 'the Great', or Michael 'the Brave' – those who are seen as having in the past built a unified Romanianness (Leustean, 2007: 720; Livezeanu, 2000: 7). To highlight the unique position he claimed to occupy in Romanian politics – father/political man – Tudor reduced his political opponents to being a gathering of 'paedophiles' and 'necrophiles'; thus he actively exiled them at the peripheries of morality and reduced them to an essentialist representation of their corrupt and evil nature. Their dichotomous positions made any compromise impossible as this would, in turn, corrupt the purity of people and their leader (Mudde, 2004: 544).

Tudor has constantly attempted to cast doubt on the ability of other presidential candidates to lead Romania. In the context of the 2000 elections, the incumbent president Constantinescu was dismissively labelled 'a political corpse' (RRM 524, 2000: 15); Iliescu, the centre-left candidate, was considered too old and sterile – being in his seventies and in a childless marriage (cf. RRM 530, 2000: 14; RRM 739, 2004: 12). In turn, Mugur Isărescu – the 'technocratic' candidate who had served multiple times as governor of the Romanian National Bank – was considered to be 'too sensible and modest intellectually to rule a Country'; adding insult to injury, Tudor added in the same text that Isărescu lacked 'blood in his penis' (RRM 524, 2000: 15). In the same register, the PNL candidate Theodor Stolojan was deemed to be so 'charismatic, that he would surely decrease Romania's fertility rate, since pregnant women would undergo spontaneous abortion at the sight of him' (RRM 527, 2000: 15). The discursive strategy at work in these cases can be easily identified to be one aimed to undermine the masculinity of Tudor's political opponents, since masculinity 'is permeated with metaphors of prowess (in all areas of human endeavour) that are essentially sexual, metaphors of maintaining an erection and producing seminal fluid [...].' (Haste, 1994: 169) Despite his calls for a new 'Epoch' of 'national dignity' and his surprising qualification for the presidential run-off, Tudor nonetheless lost to Iliescu, as previously mentioned.

The 2004 Parliamentary and Presidential elections witnessed the redrawing of the political map. President Iliescu could no longer seek election for another mandate, thereby opening the presidential race to a wide array of contenders. Among them, Tudor chose a rather unambiguous attitude: the entire electoral campaign was centred on Christian values; he conspicuously wore only white garments resembling the patriarch's white-only vestments, thereby implying religious devotion, purity, honesty and correctness; he concluded each debate, demonstration and political declaration with the chanting that he would be 'the first Christian president in Romania's history' (Stan & Turcescu, 2007: 143). During the campaign, Tudor argued that the reason for his presence in politics was 'the misery in hospitals, in schools, in elderly homes, in orphanages' (*RRM* 731, 2004: 12), in other words picturing the appalling situation of the 'forgotten people', of vulnerable 'dependants' neglected by an elite who have become a Mafia-like cartel that 'clings, desperately, to all possible means to prevent the people from finding out the truth about it, and stops from the coming to Power a patriotic and incorruptible squad [Tudor and his party] that would put the country in order' (*RRM* 735, 2004: 13). The solution was a sweeping 'moral reformation', which became central to Tudor's presidential bid. His attacks focused on the government's failings to tackle corruption (Downs & Miller, 2006: 411). He portrayed himself as the leader whose aim was to open the path for a much needed moral awakening:

Only I can exterminate the Mafia that suffocates Romania. Only I can instate the New Moral Order in our beloved Country, an order founded on honour, social justice, national solidarity and fervent love of Christ. You do not vote for me – you vote for yourselves! Romanians, vote for the great, true change! You shall shoot me if this does not turn right!

*(RRM 749, 2004: 1)*

The metaphorical cluster at work in this text – the STRICT FATHER as a source of authority, justice, and moral strength – performs, I argue, a symbolic restitution of the leader in the eyes of his followers. More clearly, their votes would not be to his own personal gain, but they would benefit them all, highlighting yet again the manly bond developed between the leader and his followers in this community of fate. There is also a certain air of Christian martyrdom, as Tudor declared to be ready to be sacrificed by his fellows if he fails to improve their situation. There is, I maintain, a class aspect present in Tudor's editorials from 2004, a reflection of his temporary alliance with a branch of the Romanian trade unions. Detailing further the figure of his father, Tudor added a new descriptive layer, which emphasised his 'natural' connection with the working class:

As a worker's son, I will remain, till my death, together with the workers, and regardless of what may happen in the future, I will sweep the grounds

with the profiteers, barons and Taliban. This is the sole reason for my being labelled an extremist – in comparison to the cowardice of the political class, among which many do not have a backbone, I was and still am a man of courage,; upright and who calls things by their real name.

*(RRM 741, 2004: 13)*

Time and again, Tudor exploited the dyadic opposition between a ‘spineless’ elite described as a gathering of ‘profiteers’, ‘barons’, and even ‘Taliban’, and an upright and courageous working folk, from which he claimed his patrilineal genealogy. This allowed Tudor to envisage an electoral battle in which he would ‘sweep the grounds’ with his political opponents and ‘call things by their real name’, confirming his fearless masculinity. In the context given, I understand the ‘Taliban’ appellation to symbolise a backward masculinity, characterized by exploitation – through its proximity to ‘profiteers’, and ‘barons’ – and intrinsic commitment to political extremism. In contrast to that, embodying the divine will and displaying positive warrior-like attributes, Tudor portrayed a new masculine typology of political leader, dynamic and capable of stimulating his brother citizens to fight against injustice.

Nonetheless, the main danger identified by Tudor was Romania’s rapid depopulation since approximately ‘two million Romanians had taken their lives into their own hands, working abroad and sending money back to their families at home’; most worrisome, he added, it was ‘the youth and university graduates’ who left the country never to return (*RRM 740, 2004: 12*). This reflected the new social reality Romania had experienced – increased and accelerated immigration to the EU and USA. The Romania described by Tudor was a family neglecting its members most in need, deserted by those envisaged as ensuring its survival as a nation – its youth and future intellectual elite. More clearly, he warned of a distressing demographic decline coupled with a significant brain-drain, which risked leaving the country vulnerable to the whims of internal Others and concomitantly deprive the national family of its intellectual energies. In this apocalyptic tableau, the only ones prospering were the political establishment, presented as ‘triumphant primitives, illiterates, and professional criminals’ (*RRM 743, 2004: 12*).

The difference between his various competitors was at best one of nuance. Criticising Adrian Năstase, the PSD presidential counter-candidate, Tudor argued Năstase was Iliescu’s ‘immature’ protégé. Tudor then commented that ‘one does not rule a country through never-ending scandals, indecisions’ – with reference to Năstase’s on-going premierships. He continued disparagingly comparing Năstase to ‘a spoiled child, who threatens to take his toys and run to mummy when something is not to his liking’ (*RRM 731, 2004: 12*). In a more personal register, Tudor attacked Năstase for his alleged homosexuality. Dividing his time between actions of ‘frantic populism’, and countless cultural events under his patronage,

Năstase was depicted as eagerly awaited by the association of hunters and fishermen whom he presided over in order ‘to fool around together’ (*RRM* 742, 2004: 12). These unsubstantiated accusations positioned Năstase as representing an inferior typology of masculinity with regard to Tudor’s; alleging Năstase’s passivity in the homosexual act, he marginalized his opponent in the realm of inferior beings, among ‘effeminate men’, the ‘feminine’, and subordinated Others (Peterson, 1999: 38).

In contrast to that, Traian Băseșcu, the presidential candidate of the opposition centre–right coalition, was portrayed as a primitive and vindictive political ‘pirate’, an allusion to his former career as a seas captain (*RRM* 745, 2004: 13). In relation to this, it is noteworthy that hegemonic forms of masculinity proclaim the superiority of reason over brute force (Connell, 1995: 164); I thereby argue that Tudor simply used the aforesaid metaphorical construction – political ‘pirate’ – to present his adversary as embodying an undesirable, aggressive, and inferior masculinity. Some researchers have claimed that a certain populist rhetorical affinity unites Tudor and Băseșcu (Downs & Miller, 2006: 412; Iețcu–Fairclough, 2008: 374–375; King & Marian, 2011: 40–43; Mișcoiu, 2010: 38; Shafir, 2012: 418–420). In their view, Băseșcu appears to have learned a valuable political lesson from Tudor’s electoral success in the 2000 Presidential elections. In 2004, Băseșcu successfully exploited the vulnerability of the Romanian electorate to anti–systemic, anti–establishment rhetoric, over which Tudor previously had a near–monopoly. This helped Băseșcu secure his victory in the 2004 presidential election, and his subsequent re–election in 2009. Under these circumstances, it appears that the figure of the STRICT FATHER was preferred by the majority of Romanians, who nonetheless opted for a more mainstream presence at the helm of the country.

Somehow acknowledging this, Tudor remarked in 2009 that Băseșcu was characterized by an ‘animal instinct’ of ‘political survival’ (*RRM* 975, 2009: 12; *RRM* 976, 2009: 12). This did not preclude Tudor from announcing his plan to participate in the coming Romanian Presidential elections, and to draw a quick sketch of his opposing candidates – while still campaigning for the 2009 European Parliamentary elections: ‘Who would have the courage and moral right to face the furious crowds? That impostor, [Radu] Duda – a professional son–in–law? Effeminate Crin [Antonescu] – nicknamed Mireille Mathieu [...]? Or perhaps [Traian] Băseșcu – with his uncivilised laughter and offensive jokes?’ (*RRM* 979, 2009: 12) His potential adversaries were thus at once portrayed as unworthy of election. Through scathing one–liners, Radu Duda, the husband of Princess Margareta of the Romanian royal family and an independent candidate for the presidency, was dismissed as ‘a professional son–in–law’, alleging his self–interest and inability to attain social and political visibility on his own merits. Crin Antonescu, the PNL candidate, was portrayed as an effeminate presence, alluded to by his nickname ‘Mireille Mathieu’ that made reference to Antonescu’s hair–

style. Bănescu, who stood for re-election on behalf of the conservative centre-right PDL, was depicted as inferior and brutalized, making 'offensive jokes' and having an 'uncivilised laughter'. In so doing, I argue, Tudor forcefully indicated that the NATION IS A FAMILY whose leader, or better said FATHER, must embody a domineering heteronormative masculinity, characterised by 'courage', endowed with a 'moral right' to represent the Romanian nation, and thus untarnished by either cowardice and effeminacy, or brutish, barbaric features.

In conclusion, in the context of confrontational and masculinised Romanian politics the masculinity performative that Tudor depicts for himself circumscribes, in my view, the ideal of *pater familias*, confirming the presence of the STRICT FATHER conceptual metaphor as part of the wider NATION IS A FAMILY metaphorical cluster in the Romanian context. In contrast to this, and in spite of the proven political superiority of his adversaries, these are often presented as imperfect, and incomplete in their masculinity performatives – at either one of the extremes of hyper-masculine violence or of emasculated effeminacy. Embodying what he considered a distinguished lineage of righteous people, Tudor has claimed to be able of understanding the Romanian *people*, and to defend the family folk and their religious beliefs against the threats of dissolution and degeneration: the embodiment of a true guardian of the national family.

#### 5.4 THE USE OF GENDERED CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS IN ROMANIAN RADICAL RIGHT POPULISM

From the analysis of the genealogical articulations of the NATION IS A FAMILY metaphorical cluster in Tudor's editorials in the RRM, a first conclusion that can be drawn concerns the moral wholeness of the Romanian national family. In Tudor's writings, the national family is characterised by the juxtaposition between putative ethnic 'purity' and Orthodox Christianity as quintessential values. This confirms the Romanian national family's moral supremacy, which naturalises a hierarchy with the figure of (male) ethnic Romanians at the top. The analysis of Tudor's editorials published in the RRM appears to strengthen what researchers in the field have previously shown in their analyses: the institutionalisation of masculinity in politics in general, and the aggressive and violent nature of political discourses in particular, has been a consequence of men's unchallenged domination of the public sphere. The few women participating actively in the Romanian public sphere have been forced to adopt a masculine model of behaviour, and as such to deny their own femininity or a feminine manner when present in the political sphere; they have morphed into mothers (thereby ensuring the patrilineal descent), administrators, owners, and politicians. In short, when entering politics they had been compelled to turn into men, since the ability to be

political agents has been reified as a masculine attribute (cf. Băluță, 2006; Chiva, 2005a; Miroiu, 2004; Pasti, 2003).

Put differently, in Tudor's texts the *NATION IS A FAMILY* underpinned by deeply patriarchal values, which consolidate the distinction between men's public visibility and their unhindered participation in politics and women's containment in the domestic sphere of maternity and their *less-than-men* position in politics. The metaphorical cluster thereby developed in a direction that portrayed women as 'natural' caregivers of other dependants – the offspring of their Romanian men, the elderly, the sick, and those socially disadvantaged – and confirmed Romanian men in their position of social hegemony as the epitome of political agency and financial supporters of their extended families. In the genealogical expansion of the *NATION IS A FAMILY* metaphorical cluster, Tudor made direct reference to those failing the conditions of being part of the Romanian national family, in the form of outside Others – the Jews, Hungarians, and Romani – and those not fulfilling the heteronormative expectations, the internal Other – the homosexuals, with particular attention being given to male homosexuality as a mark of effeminacy and degeneracy. Furthermore, the *NATION IS A FAMILY* metaphorical cluster was developed in the direction of depicting the Romanian national family as in need of immediate help. In such uncertain times, the future could only be safeguarded under the condition that Romanians were willing to subject themselves to his leadership, since he presented himself as the true embodiment of the *STRICT FATHER* conceptual metaphor.

In the given context, Tudor's political opponents were subject to a process of transformation into *less-than-perfect* Romanians, becoming some menacing internal Others usurping the upper echelons of the Romanian national construct. More importantly, despite their eventual political superiority, the other political actors were presented as failing to fulfil the *pater familias* ideal: they were either hyper-masculinised – unreliable and violent – or emasculated – effeminate and thereby unworthy of the *people's* trust. Among such politicians, imperfect and incomplete in their masculinities, Tudor appeared as the providential *STRICT FATHER* with the messianic task of enforcing a new moral order because he was the incarnation of rightful masculine leadership. He embodied a distinguished genealogy of simple and righteous people, understanding the common citizens and truly representing their needs. He was able to defend the family folk and their century-old Christian Orthodox beliefs against the threat of dissolution and degeneration, posited by ethnic, religious and sexual Others. Indeed, the heteronormative matrix was kept in place and proved flexible enough to allow for ever more coordinates of exclusion.

## 6 WHEN THE FUTURE ALREADY HAPPENED<sup>40</sup>. THE COMMON SWEDE RECLAIMING THE *FOLKHEM* (2005–2010)

In this chapter I analyse the discursive manifestations of radical right populist ideology in the Swedish context. I begin by presenting the specificities of the established democratic multi-party regime in Sweden, indicating the particularity of the Swedish constitutional monarchy system of government. I then introduce the main parties in national politics. Under these circumstances, I focus on the political importance of the concept of *folkhem* (the home/house of [Swedish] people) – taken to materialise the NATION IS A FAMILY conceptual metaphor in Sweden – from its conservative origins to the social-democratic emancipatory interpretations as the epitome of Swedish welfare model. On this matter, I show the construction of the *folkhem* with the aid of the allegedly Swedish values of solidarity and gender equality, which disguise according to researchers, an updated version of gendered heteronormative hierarchy. I then discuss the increasing ethnic diversity of those building and inhabiting the Swedish home, and show the growing opposition in radical right populist quarters to transforming the *folkhem* into an open construct. In so doing, I juxtapose the naturalisation of a modernised family-centred patriarchy represented by the *folkhem* with the parallel processes of reinterpreting gender equality ideals, redefining the boundaries of the welfare state, and an emerging nationalism. Consequently, I introduce the main radical right populist force in Swedish politics, its leader, and the party newspaper.

Investigating the genealogical articulations of the NATION IS A FAMILY conceptual metaphor in Sweden, I analyse at first the alleged moral wholeness of the *folkhem*. I then show the centrality afforded to Lutheran Christianity in consecrating the inherent Swedishness of the *folkhem* and how this generates the moral superiority of the Swedish national family. This facilitates the subsequent analysis of the various positions within the Swedish national family afforded to its members: the place of family dependants, the role of women in the life of the national family, the threat posited by the family's Others (be them persons with migrant background or members of the LGBTQI community), and the position of the Swedish man in this context. In so doing, I analyse the discursive effects of constantly reinterpreting the NATION IS A FAMILY conceptual metaphor, and the specific conceptual metaphor depicting the masculinity performative of the Swedish radical right populist leader in the metaphorical cluster created in this manner. I then conclude the chapter emphasising the particularities of radical right populist discursive articulations in Sweden.

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<sup>40</sup> The title is a direct translation from Swedish of a book by Jenny Andersson (2009b), in which she has investigated the Swedish social-democracy's dilemmas in the wake of globalization, and the longing after a 'lost future', the future so tangibly embodied by the *folkhem* at its zenith.

## 6.1 PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY IN SWEDEN THROUGH A FEMINIST LENS

Generally heralded as the epitome of a welfare society, Sweden faced at the beginning of the 1990s a series of challenges that were reverberations, to a certain extent, of the dramatic regime changes in Central and Eastern Europe, and the ensuing economic recession that swept across the whole Europe. The following decades witnessed the full effects of ‘the shift to the right’, an ideological repositioning marked by a vociferous contestation of the previously unchallenged position of social–democracy at the core of Swedish democracy, and the ‘normalisation’ of ‘the free market’ and ‘free choice’ as forms of conservatism in neoliberal clothes (Agius, 2007: 589–590; Andersson, 2009a: 239; Boréus, 1994). These changes were reflected in the Swedish political landscape as well, with the emergence of new political entities with strong populist appeals (cf. Dahlström & Esaiasson, 2013; Hannerz, 2006; Rydgren, 2002; 2006; Widfeldt, 2000; 2008).

Part of a wider democratisation process, the implementation of the Instrument of Government of 1974 had sanctioned constitutional monarchy as the form of government in Sweden. As a consequence, the Swedish monarchy was stripped of all executive authority – which was in turn vested in the Prime Minister (PM) and his/her Government (*Regeringen*) – morphing into little more than a ‘constitutional curlicue’ (Åse, 2009: 50). The transformation of the Swedish monarchy into a ceremonial institution, Cecilia Åse has persuasively argued, enforced nevertheless the idea that the monarch symbolises the totality of Swedish nation (Åse, 2008; 2009). The monarchy became elevated to a position ‘beyond and above’ politics. This has cemented the linkage between the concepts of royal family, heredity and reproduction, and that of the Swedish nation, seen in terms of harmonious unity, thereby silencing issues of democratic representativeness, conflicting party politics, and competing ideologies (Åse, 2009: 107–108). The monarchy’s transformation into a unifying national symbol moved all political conflict into the democratic political arena with the ideological battle between the parties in the Swedish Parliament.

The Parliament of Sweden (*Sveriges riksdag/Riksdagen*), a unicameral national legislative body, has 349 members (MPs) elected every four years; Swedish Parliamentary elections are based on the principle of proportionality. The parliamentary political landscape in Sweden has been particularly stable, characterised by the virtually unchallenged position of the Social Democratic Party (*Sveriges socialdemokratiska arbetareparti*, SAP) that has been at the helm of government since 1945, with the exception of some brief periods in 1976, 1982, 1991, and since 2006 being the main opposition force. More to the left on the political spectrum, the Left Party (*Vänsterpartiet*, V) has supported SAP minority governments. For the 2006 Parliamentary elections, the SAP entered a coalition with the V, and Swedish Green Party (*Miljöpartiet de Gröna*, MP). The ‘red–green

block' would be reconfirmed as an electoral block in the eve of 2010 Parliamentary elections.

Swedish politics have traditionally been more fragmented on the right. The main opposition to the SAP has long been the agrarian–liberal Centre Party (*Centerpartiet*, C), more recently replaced by the centre–conservative Moderate (Coalition) Party (*Moderata samlingspartiet*, M). Also right of centre there have been the Liberal People's Party (*Folkpartiet liberalerna*, FP) and the Christian Democrats (*Kristdemokraterna*, KD). Preparing for the 2006 Parliamentary elections, the centre–right parties constituted an electoral coalition titled the Alliance (for Sweden) (*Allians för Sverige/Alliansen*), uniting the C, FP and KD under the leadership of the M and its newly elected party leader Fredrik Reinfeldt. Reinfeldt declared to be largely in favour of the Swedish welfare model, toned down some of the M's more drastic demands to cut taxes, and generally cultivated an image as a consensual and reasonable party leader (Wendt, 2012: 52–56, 110–113; Widfeldt, 2007: 820). All parties described above have had a major impact on the key concepts that have been employed in political debate in Sweden; they have been duly identified as the 'political establishment' by the various radical right populist parties that have attempted to gain parliamentary representation.

Swedish parties have not solely contested parliamentary elections. Since 1930, membership to church councils of parishes belonging to the Swedish Lutheran Church has been open for electoral competition amongst both Swedish parties and apolitical, non–aligned organisations. This has mirrored both the democratisation efforts within the 'people's church', as the national church has often been named, and the inherent process of the politicisation of church structures that accompanied the hegemonic position of state–church, a position that the Swedish Lutheran Church enjoyed until 2000 (Gustafsson, 2003: 55–68). Despite a steady decline in numbers over the years, as of 2011 approximately 69 percent of the Swedish population was nominally registered as belonging to the church. Consequently, the Swedish Lutheran Church has opted to continue styling itself as 'one of Sweden's largest popular movements'<sup>41</sup> – although no longer a state–church – thereby emphasising the religious communion of the Swedish *people* and, in so doing, strengthening the saliency of the concept of *people* or, said better, of *folk* in the Swedish context.

As previously discussed, the national family construct has been expressed through the concept of the *folkhem*<sup>42</sup>(the home of [Swedish] people), which is

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41 The data presented above has been obtained from the Swedish Lutheran Church's official website (<http://www.svenskakyrkan.se/>). However, the numbers above do not reflect accurately the numbers of church–goers, which has always been significantly lower (Gustafsson, 2003). This confirms in a sense the general opinion that Sweden is one of the world's most secularised societies.

42 The concept is strikingly similar to the German *heimat* in that it synthesizes references to both the home and homeland. Not only that the two concepts share the difficulty of a precise and comprehensive translation in English, but they both have been very productive, each in their own way, at the contact point between the religious and secular. And to achieve this, the *heimat*, too,

deeply seated in Swedish political discourse and makes an implicit reference to the Swedish people and their inherent Swedishness – in the sense of specific cultural markers which distinguish them from the country's Other inhabitants. The *folkhem* has marked the construction of Swedish nation around the idea of a (unified and homogeneous) Swedish *people* gathered together under the roof of their familial home, in a way reifying the idea of a non-nationalist Swedish national project (Andersson, 2009b: 218–220; Hall, 2008: 146–148; Hellström, 2010: 95; Trägårdh, 2002: 131; Wendt, 2012: 61–64).

Initially, in the nineteenth century, the *folkhem* embodied the harmonious relationship between the king and *his* people, similar to the portrayal of a bourgeois family under the careful authority of its patriarch/housemaster, thereby emphasizing the ideals of organic conservatism<sup>43</sup>. In this conservative interpretation, the *folkhem's* core values were orderliness, national cohesion and naturalised patriarchal hierarchical structuring (Götz, 2001: 104–105; Hall, 2000: 261). However, the national home metaphorical construct became a part of the SAP's modernisation discourse in the early twentieth century, epitomising its efforts to construct a society based on equality, solidarity and confidence in progress, in which the emphasis was put on the figure of the unionised (male) worker as symbol and measure of 'the common folk' (Hall, 2000: 260; Hellström, 2010: 97). From early on, however, the *folkhem* was characterised by a certain ambiguity: it made reference to a patriarchal model of authority that structured the family according to a father–mother–children hierarchy; concomitantly, it strengthened the principle of equity between siblings and the idea of social contract (Götz, 2001: 109; Möller, 2011: 98). The interplay between these two features has been crucial to its success. The concept's religious aspect had, in turn, a less visible trajectory across time. The *folkhem*, in its social–democratic interpretation, did not involve a radical rupture from the past and a profound secularisation of its content. The religious values that previously underpinned the construction of Swedish *people* – especially the Lutheran–Calvinist puritanical ethos, emphasising the value of work and individual responsibility, and the belief in future prosperity as a sign of blessing and redemption – have simply been reinterpreted in a secularised way and mobilised for the achievement of the social–democratic *folkhem* (Johansson, 2001: 206; Stråth, 2002: 127).

The decades that witnessed the almost uninterrupted presence of the SAP in government<sup>44</sup> epitomised 'the *folkhem's* period' (approximately between 1930s

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has been employed in a deeply patriarchal, gendered way of making sense of the world (Blickle, 2002: 1–24).

43 The concept had been heralded by Rudolf Kjellén – political scientist and influential conservative politician at the beginning of twentieth century – as a catalyst for bringing to life a vision of the future that was intimately connected to an essentialised past and epitomised by Swedish nationalist ideology (Götz, 2001: 105; Stråth, 2001: 166).

44 The SAP's unchallenged position in Sweden was acknowledged through the coining of a specific concept that referred to the SAP's presence at all levels of Swedish political, social and economic life: *statsbärandeparti* (in a free translation, understood as a party bearer of the national interests;

and 1980s). The 1950s and 1960s have generally been considered the apex of that period – seen as incarnating the Swedish belief in a prosperous future achieved through carefully planned social engineering seconded by rational modernisation (Agius, 2007: 588; Andersson, 2009a: 231–232; Hall, 2000: 283; Linderborg, 2001: 97). In this sense, the *folkhem* has been intimately tied to the idea of an original model of ‘strong state’ that manoeuvred between monolithic collectivistic ideals – embodied to a certain extent by the dictatorial communist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe – and those of atomised consumerist individualities – specific to the liberal capitalist regimes in the USA and so-called Western Europe – thereby crafting a specific type of individual responsive to the social contexts she was a part of (Agius, 2007: 589; Stråth, 2002: 139–142).

Notwithstanding its universalistic claims, the *folkhem* had a restrictive and disciplining nature, drawing clear demarcation lines between those included in the community and their duties, and those who were not deemed worthy of it (Andersson, 2009b: 114–115; Hall, 2000: 262–265). This was translated along the years into social engineering, forced sterilisations and overall tight social control: the subjects of forced sterilisations were not only those considered genetically unfit – a consequence of their physical or psychological disability – but also those undesirable elements, such as ethnic minority members – especially Romani and Sámi – and women who did not fulfil the traditional patriarchal ideal (cf. Broberg & Tydén, 2005; Hirdman, 1995; Runcis, 1998). The *folkhem* project thereby emphasised a definition of the ‘healthy’ and ‘authentic’ citizenry that was in a sense contiguous with the boundaries of Swedish nation, but without making use of racist terminology, instead emphasising the idea of ‘productive quality’ of its people (Spektorowski & Ireni–Saban, 2011: 179–183). Of a more recent time are the social democratic attempts to modernise and enlarge the metaphor, to include a multicultural aspect and become environmentally conscious, while proclaiming the concept’s indisputable Swedishness (Andersson, 2009a: 237; 2010: 145; Götz, 2001: 113; Hall, 2000: 285; Hellström, Nilsson & Stoltz, 2012: 195–196). This has nonetheless given rise to a nostalgic mood, a longing ‘for a future lost, a nostalgia which might quite simply be called [the *folkhem*] nostalgia’ (Andersson, 2009a: 238).

However, several feminist scholars have convincingly argued that the Swedish national family metaphor was from inception had a deeply gendered structure, underpinned by men’s superposition and control over women’s bodies (cf. Eduards, 2007; Hirdman, 1995; Lennerhed, 2002). It posited men as protectors, as gentlemen defending dependant women and children, as guardians of their wives and daughters, as visionary and rightful statesmen and experts that secured the well-functioning of Swedish society (Eduards, 2007: 21). A case in point is the widely used linguistic metaphor of ‘the man working at the Volvo car factory’ and

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in English, scholarship simplistically refers to it as an example of a one-dominant party system) (Agius, 2007: 592; Therborn, 2000: 5).

‘the woman working in the healthcare’ that ‘are fighting together for their salaried rights’, which has been shown to contain an inherent gendered heteronormative hierarchy that serves a twofold purpose (Gottzén & Jonsson, 2012: 7–14; Jansson, Wendt & Åse, 2010: 141–145; Nordberg, 2006: 216–219; Wendt & Eduards, 2010: 38–40). It reflects, on the one hand, the fact that Sweden has a labour market characterised by an extreme polarisation; certain labour branches are dominated by men – such as the private sector, and those occupations perceived as traditionally ‘manly’ – while some others register an overrepresentation of women – such as the public sector, especially healthcare, childcare and service occupations (Nordberg, 2006: 213–214; Wendt & Eduards, 2010: 23–24). It naturalises men as (political) *doers* and women as (objectified) *beings* – men on industrial platforms, as active agents; women as unselfish providers of care services, whose main agency rests in giving voice to the needs of dependants through a proxy who is the politically active agent.

It offers, on the other hand, the impression of a genuine commitment to gender equality in Sweden – men and women fighting together for the common goal of a fair compensation for their work – reifying the Swedish self-image as a gender equal welfare society<sup>45</sup>. Such a stance has been reinforced further by the implicit distinction between gender equal Swedes, both women and men, and those immediate (migrant) Others, generally understood as men, that did not fulfil the criteria for gender equality and individualism (Gottzén & Jonsson, 2012: 12–14; Hübinette & Lundström, 2010: 48–49; Mulinari, 2003: 111–118; Mulinari & Neergaard, 2012: 16–17). Put differently, gender equality has become an ethnic marker. It has served as a means to silencing the violence (of men) occurring within Swedish families, the purchase of sex by Swedish men, and the generally claimed but rarely assumed gender equality practice coupled with a tacit reinforcement of patriarchy by Swedish men. At the same time, it has posited the ethnically different Others, men and women alike, as in need of emancipation from *their* traditional family constructions (Jansson, Wendt & Åse, 2011: 131; Mulinari, 2003: 115–116).

The issue of building the *folkhem* around the allegedly Swedish values of solidarity and gender equality proves its saliency when looking closer at the country’s inhabitants. Notwithstanding the high levels of ethnic homogeneity that characterised Sweden in the first half of twentieth century, the translation into the reality of the social democratic project of modernisation, in other words the very

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45 Sweden is not a singular case; together with the other Nordic countries (especially Denmark, Finland, and Norway), it has come to embody what feminist researchers have labelled as a ‘women-friendly welfare state’ or ‘state feminism’. This discourse once hegemonic has proved nonetheless problematic for addressing such issues as gendered violence within the ethnic majority community in each country, or the continued gender-based discrimination in the labour market, especially because gender equality has been considered a *fait accompli* (cf. Borchorst *et al*, 2012; Dahlerup, 2011; Freidenvall, Dahlerup & Skjeie, 2006; Holli, 2003; Kantola, 2006).

construction of the *folkhem*, has been undertaken with the help of migrants<sup>46</sup>. Consequently, the overall makeup of Sweden's population has diversified greatly – around 20 per cent of its population is of foreign origin (naturalised) and second-generation Swedes; of these, according to some scholars, around half are from non-European backgrounds (SCB, 2010: 20, 24; Schierup & Ålund, 2011: 46). Several researchers have shown the presence of a two-fold process – identification with the *real* Swede, accompanied by distancing from what does not meet the criteria of such naming – at the intersection of gender, class, ethnicity/'race' and religious affiliation, and sexuality (Gottzén & Jonsson, 2012; Hübinette & Lundström, 2010; Jansson, Wendt & Åse, 2011; Mulinari, 2003; Mulinari & Neergaard, 2012). The process has also become an arena of contestation for radical right populist parties. Making use of the *folkhem's* saliency, these political forces have depicted it as besieged and vehemently demanded a return to the patriarchal homogeneous home of (only) Swedish *people* (Andersson, 2009a: 240).

The SD has not been the only radical right populist party in Swedish politics; New Democracy (*Ny Demokrati*, NyD) was a short-lived populist political entity that emerged in the early 1990s amid the painful restructuring of the welfare state. The NyD capitalised on popular dissatisfaction and gained parliamentary representation in the 1991 Parliamentary elections, only to disappear just as abruptly from mainstream politics in 1994 (cf. Hannerz, 2006; Rydgren, 2006). Until recently, the SD has been treated by researchers as a failed case among the other European radical right populist parties (cf. Rydgren, 2002; 2006; Widfeldt, 2000; Zaslove, 2009). Ideologically, it has been argued that what the SD and other European radical right populist parties have in common are an exaggeration and distortion of dormant notions of insecurity about national identity. In relation to this, the SD's position to the right becomes apparent especially with regard to social and cultural issues. The SD not only has proposed a restrictive approach to immigration and citizenship but also 'a staunchly conservative or even authoritarian outlook on issues such as law and order (tougher punishment) and the family (advocating traditional gender roles and renouncing feminism).' (Rydgren, 2006: 11) The SD has also displayed what several researchers have labelled 'welfare chauvinism' (cf. Mudde, 2000; 2007; Rydgren, 2006). Indeed, the SD has been blaming the increasing constraints on the welfare state, such as lower pensions, higher social expenses and long queues for medical services, on immigration. From this perspective, I argue that the SD's take on egalitarianism has been to enforce uniformity, which most often 'intersects with experiences of

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46 Traditionally, a significant number of these migrants have come from neighbouring Finland. In a sense, this has rendered the bulk of newcomers to a status of invisibility, since Finns have generally fitted into the stereotypical description of Nordic 'whiteness', and they have been expected to assimilate into the Swedish majority, having in mind the two countries' common history and the fact that a significant percentage of the Finnish migrants had Swedish as their mother tongue (Hedberg & Kepsu, 2003: 70; Korkiasaari & Söderling, 2003: 3–6).

status and economic insecurity to fuel hostility towards non-majority group immigration, towards programs that support multiculturalism, [...and] towards gays and lesbians' (Laycock, 2005: 134).

Nevertheless, the SD has undergone a series of transformations, from being founded as the successor of several neo-Nazi and nationalist fringe parties in 1988 to electing a succession of party leaders who toned down the SD's radicalism and gave it a more mainstream appeal (cf. Hellström, 2010; Larsson & Ekman, 2001; Mattsson, 2009). As such, in the latter half of the 1990s party leader Mikael Jansson banned uniforms at party rallies, and deleted provocative paragraphs from the party manifesto – such as calling for capital punishment, banning of abortions, and stopping non-European adoptions (Mattsson, 2009: 19; Rydgren, 2006: 108). In 2005 Jimmie Åkesson was elected chairman on a mandate to lead a more combative party, and create a new image for the allegedly cleansed party (Hellström, 2010: 48; Mattsson, 2009: 23). Arguably, the concept the SD has employed to give coherence to its political platform and unify its exclusionary and welfare chauvinist stances is that of the *folkhem* (cf. Hellström, 2010; Mulinari & Neergaard, 2010).

The position of the party's official bimonthly magazine, the SD-Courier (*SD-Kuriren*, henceforth SD-K) in the wider media landscape is telling of the party's own place as a radical right outlier in the Swedish political context. According to Jens Rydgren, the SD has not only been subject to an avoidance strategy by the mainstream parties, which have successfully erected a *cordon sanitaire* around the SD and its anti-immigration rhetoric, but has also been actively boycotted by most of mainstream Swedish media; these two concerted strategies playing a decisive role in the party's low level of support among Swedish voters (Rydgren, 2006: 106–108). In those few exceptional cases in which the SD has been given attention, the Swedish media has taken a very critical stance against the party, leading the SD to complain of being treated unfairly in comparison to the other parties (Lodenius & Wingborg, 2010: 20). However, after Åkesson's election as chair, the SD has witnessed an ascending trajectory in terms of electoral support, from the 2005 Swedish Lutheran Church elections when it polled some 1.7 percent of the votes, then the 2006 Swedish Parliamentary elections (2.9 percent), followed by the Church elections (2.8 percent) and the European Parliamentary elections (3.3 percent) in 2009, to its breakthrough in the 2010 Swedish Parliamentary elections, when the party received 5.7 percent of the total electoral support. The Swedish Lutheran Church elections have been of particular importance for the SD, both ideologically and strategically. Ideologically, the SD positioned itself among the Christian-conservative political actors; strategically, the SD tested its political ambitions and this allowed it to maintain its supporters mobilised in between the parliamentary electoral cycles (Mattsson, 2009: 35).

Given the circumstances, the SD-K has been one of the very few mediums available to the party and its chair, Jimmie Åkesson, to explain and defend the

socio–political construct they envision. It is worth noting that the SD–K has printed a fluctuating number of copies for each of its issues, if one is to rely on the magazine’s self–reported numbers, ranging from 28,000 copies in 2005 (SD–K, issue 64) to a maximum of 100,000 copies in 2007 (special issue 74 dedicated to immigration) and even 600,000 in 2009 (special campaign issue), then returning to a more modest level: 25,000 copies in late 2009 (issue 84) and 30,000 copies in 2010 (post–elections issue 88). Nevertheless, for some time, until the hacker attack against the SD official webpage in the aftermath of 2010 Parliamentary elections, SD–K issues could be accessed freely by the site’s visitors. The SD–K has also closely reflected Åkesson’s declared agenda to lead a more competitive party, and most importantly to create a new image for the SD, with the purpose of taking the party into the *Riksdagen* (Mattsson, 2009: 23); his blog entries on the party’s official website have been reproduced verbatim in the SD–K, and ample space has been reserved in each issue for his interviews or comments on topical political issues. Subsequently, the research material is analysed in depth, evidencing Åkesson’s use of the NATION IS A FAMILY conceptual metaphor to depict the SD as the political incarnation of a conceptual metaphor of contesting conservative masculinity. This sheds light on the metaphorical articulations of masculinity, family and heteronormativity in the Swedish context; the concluding part provides with an overview of the findings.

## 6.2 THE BESIEGED *FOLKHEM*: THE HOME OF SWEDISH FAMILY REINTERPRETED

Once elected party chair, in the examined empirical material, Åkesson drew a clear distinction between the elites and the Swedish *people*, in what may be regarded as a classically populist move. Referring to the existing political context in Sweden, this was translated into a political elite – more clearly all the parliamentary parties, with no ideological distinction, were generically labelled ‘those seven in *Riksdagen*’ (SD–K 70, 2006: 1). He argued that they did little more than preserve their monopoly over the opinions allowed to gain prominence in the public sphere. Their ‘true’ opponents, on the other hand, were represented by the SD, which in his view incarnated the Swedish *people* and represent their political will. The SD, ‘the party of and for common people’ (SD–K 66, 2005: 2), in this context was also situated in contrast to those ‘newly founded populist parties’ – namely the Feminist Initiative (*Feministiskt initiativ*, FI), established in 2005, and the ephemeral Eurosceptic June List (*Junilistan*, JL), founded in 2004, which were portrayed as mere political instruments in the hands of wealthy representatives of the Swedish establishment. Åkesson called them ‘populists’ in the sense of that they were manipulative forces against the ‘true’ will of the *people*. These ‘power hungry populists’ had, following Åkesson’s argument, only one

reason to exist; that is to divert the *people's* attention from their true representatives, the SD, which aimed to reactivate the original democratic popular movement (*SD–K 66, 2005: 2*).

Announcing the SD's political agenda for the coming elections – 'to breathe new life into the Swedish democratic popular movement' – Åkesson depicted his party as a legitimate, natural branch of the genealogical tree of a highly revered popular movement that has played a crucial role in the establishment of the Swedish welfare. By so doing, he placed the SD closest to the common citizens, the 'true' inhabitants of the Swedish *folkhem*. In Åkesson's usage of the concept, the emphasis on the sense of (national) community morphed into exclusively underlining those elements that separated and individualised that community from those falling 'outside the home's enclosure' (Hellström, 2010: 106). Even more so, the conceptual metaphor was developed across time in Åkesson's contributions to the SD–K according to a line of argumentation that integrated biological and hierarchical principles specific to the metaphorical use of the family concept (Ringmar, 2008: 60). Indeed, in Åkesson's writings were expressed nostalgic welfare chauvinism and a staunchly conservative attitude, tinted with an unapologetic xenophobic stance. More clearly, the idealised *folkhem* was portrayed as on the brink of collapse at the hands of outside intruders, of norm-disrupting social forces; in other words, under threat from a foreign Other. In so doing, the conceptual metaphor was assimilated into a logic subjected to the laws of nature, naturalising the portrayal of a common home that the Swedish people are set to cherish:

The reasons for the collapse of the Swedish welfare [system] are not difficult to identify. [...] The pursued policy of mass immigration sits against the Swedish welfare model on at least two levels. First, it is extremely costly, and those funds could have been used for other areas of society. Second, it marked the death of internal solidarity which is a crucial fundament for a common welfare state model. It is obvious that we must choose: multiculturalism or welfare? For us the choice is easy!

(*SD–K 65, 2005: 2*)

Presented as a mass movement of people, immigration was thereby deemed to be the single responsible force for the demise of the Swedish welfare system, 'extremely costly' and bringing about 'the death of internal solidarity'; the presence of the migrant Other in the *folkhem* was thus presented as an economic burden and dissolving force. Nonetheless, because the threat of 'mass migration' was only reluctantly acknowledged by the ruling political elite, the SD found a justification for its existence and for its insistence on turning immigration into a key political issue in the coming elections. The suggested 'total ban on asylum and family-reunification migration' was motivated by the 'failed integration policy', which endangered the very existence of the *folkhem*, and was presented to the

Swedish electorate in an overly simplistic manner: multiculturalism was opposed to (the Swedish people's) welfare (*SD–K* 68, 2006: 4). More clearly, diversity was threatening the wholeness (in terms of morality, purity, solidarity, and welfare) of the NATION IS A FAMILY conceptual metaphor. Nonetheless, Åkesson's criticism was not only directed at the undesirable 'newcomers'. It also targeted the political force that could claim ownership of the *folkhem* in its modern shape – the SAP. Åkesson criticized the SAP and its leadership – in government at that time – for leniency and mismanagement of the national fortunes and particularly for its attempt to alter the exclusionary meaning of the *folkhem*, demanding fiercely that the SAP should 'give us back Sweden!' – a demand that would become the party's slogan for the coming electoral confrontations (cf. *SD–K* 75, 2008: 16; *SD–K* 81, 2009: 11).

Despite Åkesson's efforts immigration did not become a major issue on the mainstream political agenda in the 2006 Parliamentary elections. The elections witnessed instead the narrow defeat of the SAP and the red–green block it led, which collectively received 46 percent of the votes. The SAP's performance was under its usual level of support (35 percent), followed by the V (5.8 percent) and MP (5.2 percent). The elections victors, the centre–right Alliance, in turn got 48.2 percent of the votes; the M received most votes (26.2 percent), followed by the C (7.9 percent), FP (7.5 percent), and KD (6.6 percent) (Widfeldt, 2007: 822). However, some 5.7 percent of the votes were given to parties that did not pass the 4 percent parliamentary threshold; among them, the SD received 2.9 percent of popular support, more than doubling their vote share compared to the previous elections (Agius, 2007: 586; Widfeldt, 2007: 823–823). The electoral support was interpreted by Åkesson to be indicative not only of the demand for a 'Swedish–friendly politics in the *Riksdag*' to reassess the misguided policy of 'mass migration' (*SD–K* 74, 2007: 1). It also marked the need for a clearer definition of the *folkhem*'s constitutive values, and a more explicit reference to their inherent Swedishness (Andersson, 2009a: 240; Hellström, 2010: 99–100).

Essential to Swedishness, 'Swedish culture' was subsequently defined by Åkesson as a product of processes that have taken place within the Swedish borders, in a sense detached from outside influences. In this regard, the 'basic norms and values, social codes, symbols, traditions, customs, language, art [...], but also such things as collective memories, behaviours and beliefs' were deemed to be 'unique to Sweden', thereby conveying a sense of unifying solidarity – a 'banal nationalism' (Billig, 2004) – around such issues as shared conceptual constructs, typically, the *folkhem* – for the whole Swedish national family (*SD–K* 77, 2008: 4). In reclaiming the *folkhem*, Åkesson contrasted the concept's idyllic picture with the contemporary situation, depicted in terms of a divided society, with ever growing frictions between the native Swedes and migrant Others, experiencing increased insecurity and uncertainty and a disconnection of the elites from the needs of common people:

Despite its many shortcomings the Swedish *folkhem* was for quite a while a society characterized by confidence in a better future, security and community. This time, however, is past and Sweden has become a colder and distant place to live in. The social elite have become ever more alienated from us the citizens. The frictions between different [social] groups, the escalation of criminality, the dismantling of the welfare system and the ever more blurred morality have created a widespread sense of insecurity and uncertainty.

(*SD–K Kampanj, 2009: 3*) (*Italics – mine*)

In the 2010 Parliamentary elections, the quadripartite centre–right Alliance increased their total share of the vote – with the lion’s share seized by the M (30.1 percent), which nonetheless did not equal the support received by the SAP (30.7 percent). The other Alliance parties, however, suffered serious setbacks; the FP (7.1 percent) being followed by the C (6.6 percent), and KD (5.6 percent – very close to the 4 percent electoral threshold). Among the parties of the red–green block, although the SAP registered a setback in electoral support, the MP has improved its electoral score (7.3 percent), followed by the V (5.6 percent). Consequently, the Alliance has won a plurality of 173 seats in *Riksdagen*, falling short of the 175–seat majority. These elections also witnessed the SD’s parliamentary breakthrough (5.7 percent – translated into 20 parliamentary seats). This has placed the SD in the position of ‘kingmakers’ – being able to tip the political balance in favour of one political coalition or the other. However, both the Alliance, and red–green block have rejected negotiations with the SD for building up a majority; as a result of that, Reinfeldt has continued to govern with a minority government (Widfeldt, 2011: 586–587).

It is important to underline in this context that the SD and Åkesson have exploited the ambiguity around the ideological positioning of radical right populism in becoming such significant players on the Swedish political stage. Indeed, in his utilisation of the NATION IS A FAMILY metaphorical construct, Åkesson made use of the inherent equivocalness of the concept of *folk*. On the one hand, he drew a line between the disenchanting common citizenry, the *folkhem*’s ‘true’ inhabitants, and the remote and unresponsive elite. He then positioned himself and the SD in opposition to ‘those seven in *Riksdagen*’. On the other hand, Åkesson defined the *folkhem*’s righteous inhabitants along cultural lines, and in so doing emphasised the importance of ‘traditions’ and ‘beliefs’ that needed to be strengthened and safeguarded if Swedes were to preserve and further their ‘stability and prosperity’ (*SD–K 77, 2008: 4*). This allowed him to present the SD as a protector of the genuine values of Swedishness and to show the position of Lutheran Christianity as constitutive of the original *folkhem*; this aspect is detailed in the section below.

### 6.2.1 THE PLACE OF LUTHERANISM IN DEFINING THE SWEDISH NATIONAL FAMILY

As discussed earlier, the application of the NATION IS A FAMILY conceptual metaphor in Sweden has been less direct, with emphasis being put on the coming together of the Swedish national family under the *folkhem*'s common roof. The concept had initial specifically right–conservative attributes that centred on issues of a tradition of shared religious denomination, a commitment to preserve the Swedish way of life, and generally safeguard Swedish society from radical structural changes. It is precisely this right–conservative tradition that Åkesson appealed to in his attempts to present Lutheran Christianity as key to understanding the Swedish national family. In the analysed empirical material, Åkesson has constantly claimed that Lutheranism – and by extrapolation Christianity – was an important reference point in these ‘tumultuous insecure times’ for understanding Swedish identity – in a sense, constructing a religious identity without explicit religiosity (cf. Storm, 2011). Nonetheless, his move positioned the SD in direct political competition with the KD, which coalesces the political interests of religious right–conservatives from the various Christian denominations in Sweden. Preparing for the 2005 Church elections, Åkesson accused both the ‘socialists’ – more clearly the SAP in government at the time – and the ‘liberals’ – in this case stripping both the KD, and M of their conservative credentials and amalgamating them with the C, and FP under the same disparaging label – of transforming the ‘church of our fathers’ ‘beyond recognition’. He decried the degradation of Swedish Lutheran Church from its status of state church to a position of parity with such unfamiliar ‘religious communities’ as the Islam or Scientology. Under these circumstances, ‘those seven in the *Riksdagen*’ were collectively portrayed as the SD’s malevolent opponents and their push for a clearly secularised state decoupled from the Lutheran state–church was judged to be an act of aggression against Swedishness:

For me, the Swedish Church is much more than just faith in God and prayers. [...] The church has played a crucial role in the development of the society we live in, and for the values we carry with us. [...] I am obviously deeply concerned that the church of our fathers suddenly becomes a religious community among all the others and now it can be equated with Islam or Scientology. In these tumultuous and insecure times, we need a fixed point in life to fall back on. Here the Swedish Church has an important role to play.

(SD–K 64, 2005: 2)

On closer reading of the quote reproduced above, I maintain that Åkesson has operated a contraction of the official appellative, erasing the reference to the specificity of the Swedish Christian denomination – Lutheranism – and in turn

presenting it simply as the ‘Swedish church’ – thereby enforcing the *folkhem*’s Christian genealogy. He has concurrently constructed an entire hierarchy of religious respectability, with Swedish Lutheranism at the top and Islam demoted to the same level with a controversial sect – Scientology. This may be regarded as an act of symbolic restitution, since the Swedish Lutheran Church had been recently ‘dethroned’ from its status of official state–church. There is, I argue further, another aspect to the contraction. The ‘Swedish church’ discursive construction comes to embody not only the specificity of traditional religious convictions in the Swedish *folkhem*, but also the allegedly universal values of Christian tolerance characteristic to Swedes, which Åkesson opposed to those of the Muslim Others. As such, in the context of Muhammad cartoons controversy<sup>47</sup>, Åkesson attempted to present the Muslim community in Sweden as intolerant and foreign to the *folkhem*. In one of his editorials in September 2006, Åkesson contrasted the vehement reactions across the Muslim world caused by the publication of the cartoons depicting Muhammad in irreverent situations with the reactions generated by the *Ecce Homo* exhibition<sup>48</sup>, in which ‘Jesus was presented as a transvestite’, when there were ‘no embassies being burned, and no people being killed’. Framing the circumstances as illustrative for ‘the Swedish freedom of expression’ he expressed further his doubts that the Muslim Others would ever reach such a stage of tolerance to allow their religious symbols to be called into question by artists (*SD–K* 69, 2006: 5). His opposition to the Islam became in time more vehement; later the same year, he protested against policies that accommodated Muslim religious practices in Sweden, and opposed the introduction of holidays other than those associated with traditional, Christian celebrations arguing that such a move would fall ‘on its own absurdity’:

The Christian tradition is an indispensable part of the Swedish culture and identity, and those who intend to live here permanently must simply accept it. The request that all ethnic and religious groups should have their own school holidays falls on its own absurdity and I see no reason that why Muslims should be treated differently. [...] we demand that the school breaks linked to religious holidays must be limited to traditional Christian holidays.

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47 The 12 cartoons, printed in *Jylands Posten*’s on 30 September 2005, were apparently thought to problematise such issues as the freedom of speech in the Western societies with a Muslim community that was dismissive of secularism, the oversensitivity of these societies towards Muslim religiosity, and the increase of self–censorship on these matters. Their publication caused uproar in the Muslim world resulting in hundreds of deaths and burnt embassies, but received the vocal support of radical right populist parties in both Denmark and Sweden (Lindekilde, Mouritsen & Zapata–Barrero, 2009).

48 The exhibition had a highly polarising effect, being accused of blasphemy. It consisted of 12 photo installations, in which classical Christian motifs were invested with new meaning by making direct reference to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender–related (LGBTQI) topics (homophobic attacks, AIDS–epidemic, gay counterculture, etc.). The photos emphasised the similarity between the marginality experienced by the biblical characters and the situation of the LGBTQI community in modern times (Cherry, 2008: 48–50).

(SD–K 70, 2006: 10)

Åkesson's constant appeals to Christian conservatism as the party's core value need to be understood, however, in a wider context. These enabled Åkesson to portray the SD as yet another rightist party in direct competition with the KD for Christian–conservative votes. Illustratively, in 2009 Åkesson dismissed the KD's attempts 'to present themselves as the representatives of conservative values and talk about themselves as "real people"' as empty rhetoric. Interestingly, as Åkesson aptly noted in the same interview, the claim to be and to represent 'real *people*' was a slogan first introduced in the Swedish political arena by the short-lived NyD, which used it as a means to oppose the political establishment (Hellström, 2010: 150–151). However, Åkesson stripped his opponent of legitimacy, accusing the KD leader Göran Hägglund of being a member of the very political elite that Hägglund claimed to be against, and thereby unrightfully laying claim to be 'the interpreter of the people's will'. Åkesson claimed that, rather, the common Swedes 'often think as we [the SD] do' (SD–K 84, 2009: 10). The reference to the 'realness' of Swedish *people* was eventually appropriated by Åkesson on the eve of 2010 Parliamentary elections, though this time spelt it with capital letters – 'Real *people*' (cf. SD–K 85, 2010: 3; SD–K 86, 2010: 3) (*Italics – mine*), which in this context appears to strengthen further the bond that he alleged to exist between the SD and Swedish *people*.

## 6.2.2 THE SWEDISH NATIONAL FAMILY AND ITS DEPENDANTS

Extending the NATION IS A FAMILY conceptual metaphor, in the analysed empirical material, Åkesson details across time whom he deems to be the 'real' Swedish people and described them in a position of dependency on the SD, portrayed as the genuine embodiment of their sovereign will. Illustrative of such a genealogical process, I argue, are his comments with regard to the decision to pursue in court the complaint of a man of Islamic faith by the Discrimination Ombudsperson (*Diskrimineringsombudsmannen*, DO) The DO's legal support lent to 'a Muslim fundamentalist' that refused to adapt to the 'norms', on which the 'Swedish social construct is built upon' – another indirect reference to the physicality of the *folkhem* – was compared to the DO's active opposition to 'Swedish traditions' – namely Advent candlesticks in public institutions and graduation ceremonies performed in church. Åkesson concluded that the institution should be closed down (cf. SD–K 85, 2010: 4; SD–K 86, 2010a: 6). The common people were depicted as at the mercy of a state institution (DO), which forgot about its responsibility towards Swedish society – insisting on decoupling the state and church – but in turn opted to enforce 'multiculturalism' against people's will – defending the Other against the Swedish norms.

These aspects notwithstanding, the claimed discrimination against common people – understood in ethnic/‘racial’ terms to be solely comprised of Swedes – at the hands of the political and bureaucratic establishment – portrayed as forces enforcing multiculturalism at any cost – was further extended to the areas of private economy and employment. Liberalisation of labour-based migration was labelled by Åkesson as a ‘betrayal of Swedish workers’ both by the SAP and other parliamentary parties. He depicted the idea as an omen for the Swedish proletariat: increased unemployment among the Swedish workers, a weakened safety-net for the unemployed, and ‘worsening cultural clashes’ between the Swedish majority and migrant Others. The available solution was electoral support for the SD, which would allow his party to prevent such policies from being implemented (cf. *SD-K* 68 2006: 5; *SD-K* 73, 2007: 12). The situations presented above exemplify Åkesson’s discursive strategy of portraying the ‘normal’ Swedes as victims of the whims of the political establishment and state institutions, preoccupied with protecting various minority groups. They also enabled him to present the SD as the people’s defenders in what he labelled the party’s ‘Sweden-friendly politics’.

With regard to the portrayal of the Swedish working class in the analysed empirical material, a closer analysis uncovers the deeply gendered terms which structure the *folkhem* that Åkesson has attempted to describe to his readers. A case in point is Åkesson’s emphasis on his party’s growing support among the male-dominated trade unions from the metal and paper industries at the expense of the SAP (*SD-K* 75, 2008: 4). This is a reinterpretation, I argue, of the previously discussed linguistic metaphor that portrays men working in industry and women in healthcare. Åkesson ignores women to enable a restoration of a deeply stereotypical masculinised view of the working class, in a similar manner to earlier representations of the *folkhem* (cf. Hirdman, 1995). Consequently, Åkesson appears to have overlooked the reality of the significant numbers of Swedish women in poorly paid positions, and immigrant women and men limited by precarious temporary contracts. By so doing, he has emphasised the importance of men’s *agency* in the political process – in this case as voters and possible SD-supporters – and has concomitantly reiterated women’s *lack* of such agency in political matters. The *folkhem* depicted by Åkesson thereby unveils a longing for ‘social cohesion’ understood in terms of the supremacy of Swedish patriarchal norms, underpinned by the essentialised roles for men as breadwinners and women as (almost) invisible Others – ever contained to the private sphere of their homes, or at best out of sight in caring occupations. Swedish heteronormative masculinities have thereby been positioned at the heart of the NATION IS A FAMILY conceptual metaphor; such a nostalgic restoration of patriarchy led Åkesson to conclude emphatically in 2009 that ‘[there] is no coincidence that the SAP is taking our successes so seriously. We are the only real threat to a pure left-wing government in 2010’ (*SD-K* 80, 2009: 1, 5).

This brings the analysis to explore another category among the dependants of NATION IS A FAMILY: Swedish women. Examining closer the empirical material, Åkesson's claims to safeguard the *folkhem* appear centred on the issues of reinstalling Swedish white masculinity at the head of national family, and of controlling women's bodies for the reproduction of the right kind of offspring. Swedish women are assigned in this context a compulsory heteronormative sexuality and domesticity; forced into a merely decorative position as sexual objects for masculine heterosexual competition and reward as subservient wives and dedicated mothers to their Swedish offspring (Hübinette & Lundström, 2010: 49; Mulinari & Neergaard, 2010: 56–57). Åkesson reiterates in a heteronormative gender key the topic of discrimination and hostility that the Swedish majority has allegedly been the subject of arising from multiculturalism. He portrays Swedish women as victims of physical violence and rape at the hands of immigrant (male) Others. The intention appears to be twofold; on the one hand, it was alleged that Swedish women fall victim to such incidents because of their sexual emancipation and disregard of patriarchal structures that would provide them with a (Swedish male) guardian. On the other hand, he maintains that the immigrant male Others, especially those from 'Africa and the Middle East' belong to a 'culture' incompatible with the Swedish values of gender equality, and are consequently incapable of seeing in the emancipated women of the 'majority population' anything but 'Swedish whores' (cf. *SD-K* 78, 2008: 8; *SD-K* 81, 2009: 9).

Åkesson's intention to control Swedish women and their sexuality extended past the depiction of intermixing with the masculine Other via rape. More clearly, reproductive patriarchal heteronormativity was praised as the desired ideal for the Swedish national family. This becomes more clearly articulated on the eve of the 2010 Parliamentary elections, when Åkesson proclaimed the social importance of the (Swedish) 'nuclear family'; tellingly, the party's prioritised policy areas concerned immigration (anti-immigration policies), addressing criminality and law enforcement (law and order policies), and last but not least welfare (cf. *SD-K* Kampanj, 2009: 3; *SD-K* 86, 2010: 1). Referring in gender neutral terms to the parents' right to stay at home with their children – which may be regarded as a thinly veiled reference to women's alleged natural place in the private sphere – Åkesson condemned the alternative childcare options – a direct counterattack to the on-going debate about increasing men's role in the upbringing of children and the terms of paternity leave schemes, which were dismissed as 'ideologically motivated' and thereby unnatural:

The SD views with concern the societal changes that have occurred in the past decades, during which the importance of the traditional family and the value of family life have been continuously challenged and belittled. Parents that choose to stay at home with their children are discriminated against on ideological grounds in favour of other childcare options and the state has increasingly taken over the parents' role in the childrearing. An increasingly

strong questioning of the traditional family and every children's right to a mother and a father risks to deepen the feelings of insecurity and rootlessness among many of our children.

(*SD–K Kampanj, 2009: 3*)

To sum up, in his attempt to define and categorise the national family's dependants, Åkesson has actively opposed the *people* – depicted as the innocent and real inhabitants of the *folkhem* – to the remote and detached elite – portrayed as mercilessly promoting a multiculturalist agenda against the common will – but also to the menacing migrant Others – presented as the main beneficiaries of that multiculturalist push. Such categorisations are nonetheless deeply gendered. The genuine character of the *people* has been unveiled to be closely associated with heteronormative patriarchy, and the common Swedes have been rendered in need of a political entity to enforce 'Sweden-friendly politics' understood to be a return to an idealised conservative reinterpretation of the *folkhem's* golden decades.

### 6.2.3 WOMEN, POLITICS, AND THE SWEDISH NATIONAL FAMILY

Notwithstanding Sweden's self-description as the epitome of a 'women-friendly welfare state', particularly with regard to the relatively high percentage of women elected in the Riksdag (from a maximum of 47.3 percent women MPs as a result of the 2006 Parliamentary elections to a relative decline of 45 percent women MPs as a consequence of the 2010 elections<sup>49</sup>), several feminist researchers have denounced the perpetuation of gender inequalities that have so far precluded any woman from being elected as prime minister (cf. Dahlerup, 2011; Freidenvall, 2006; Hammarlin & Jarlbro, 2012; Wendt, 2012). On this matter, Maria Wendt (2012) has noted that even in the Swedish political context, under at least a nominal discourse of gender equality, men are often still portrayed as 'natural' leaders, being referred to simply as 'politicians'. At the same time, women are depicted as a tolerated abnormality, shown by their constant characterisation as '*female* politicians'. Under these circumstances, the gendered attribute – 'female' – is setting women in a sense 'next to', but also somewhat 'under the protection of

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49 The percentage of women present in the *Riksdag* has continuously increased since the introduction of universal suffrage in 1919/1921, with two notable exceptions; the first dip occurred as a result of the 1991 Parliamentary elections, which witnessed the NyD accession into the *Riksdag* with only 12 percent women among their MPs (3 out of 25) (cf. Dahlerup, 2011: 68; Freidenvall, 2006: 129). The second came as a result of the 2010 Parliamentary elections, when the SD entered the *Riksdag* with only 15 percent of its MPs being women (3 of an initial 20). According to Åkesson, responsibility for women's underrepresentation in the SD was not the party's own 'view on the gender concept' repelling women, as some opponents had alleged, but the fact that activists 'throw stones at us when we try to reach out with our message' (*SD–K 73, 2007: 4*).

(male) politicians, both in terms of trajectory of their political career and their ability to act as full-fledged political subjects (Wendt, 2012: 76–98).

Against this background, Åkesson's contributions to the SD–K have been centred on several women active in the mainstream Swedish politics. Among them, there are two women with different ideological convictions that together synthesise the defects of 'Swedish state feminism' and support for multiculturalism pushed to the extreme. By far the most contested has been Mona Sahlin, a key figure in the SAP with extensive political experience as an elected MP and minister in several cabinets. Long seen as possible SAP leader and even a potential PM, her political career suffered a serious setback with the 'Toblerone affair' in mid 1990s, when she was accused of the alleged misuse of the tax payers' money, though later cleared of all charges (Hammarlin & Jarlbro, 2012: 120–123). After a timeout, Sahlin returned to national politics. In the aftermath of the honour killing of Fadime Sahindal and the intensive integration debate that followed, Sahlin presented the *folkhem* as an open social construct that welcomed people of diverse ethnic backgrounds. She downplayed the importance of traditional Swedish culture – calling midsummer's eve celebrations 'silly' – whilst mentioning the richness of 'cultures' and 'identities' that characterised the migrant Others (Aksakal, 2002: 10–15). Sahlin's remarks were met with outrage in radical right populist quarters, for which she was accused of political 'radicalism' in favour of multiculturalism. When Sahlin was elected the SAP chair in 2007 – in an effort to address the loss in the 2006 Parliamentary elections in favour of the centre-right Alliance –, Åkesson called her election a betrayal of the party's original social-democratic ideals. Sahlin's leadership signalled the dawn of a period of 'cultural radicalism', understood in terms of exacerbated 'multiculturalism' and 'social division', marred by social convulsions as a consequence of her 'extreme stance on immigration and on integration issues'. Sahlin's efforts to query hegemonic Swedishness and position it within a wider multicultural discourse were dismissed by Åkesson as 'contempt for Swedish cultural heritage':

With Mona Sahlin instead of Göran Persson at its helm, the SAP will no longer be able to play on an image of false traditionalism, rusticity and nostalgia for the *folkhem*. The fact that the SAP has become a culturally radical, multiculturalist and socially divisive party would finally be obvious to the whole electorate [...] Sahlin's extreme stance on immigration and integration issues [...] coupled with her publicly acknowledged contempt for Swedish cultural heritage would only intensify the voters' flight from the SAP [towards the SD].

(SD–K 72, 2007: 12) (*Italics – mine*)

At a closer look, it appears that Åkesson opposed Sahlin's attempts to open up the *folkhem* to a tolerant accommodation between the Swedish majority and

migrant minority groups – and the subsequent reinterpretation of the concept's key values. He concomitantly resisted her feminist endeavour to break the aforesaid masculinist power monopoly and become the first woman to chair the SAP, and thereby be a serious challenger for the supreme position in Swedish politics. The two combined – promoting multiculturalism and being a woman in politics – were depicted, in my view, as sources of dissolution of moral standards – which threatened to dismantle the simplistic binary of order, authority and manliness versus chaos, submission and femininity that fuel the conceptual metaphors articulated in radical right ideology (cf. Carney, 2008; Haste, 1994; Lakoff, 2002). Time and again, Åkesson underlined how Sahlin's alleged 'extremism' had an estranging effect on a large portion of the electorate. The motivation for such reaction was readily provided: Sahlin 'hates everything genuinely typical Swedish', she 'enters the mosque with a scarf on her head' and 'considers that Muhammad should get a job ahead of Kalle' (*SD-K 72, 2007: 2*). Put differently, Sahlin was depicted as embodying the 'extreme' politician – a *female* politician at that – belonging to the mainstream elite who 'hated' those genuine elements of the *folkhem*, whilst indiscriminately submitting to the Islamic prescriptions – wearing a headscarf. Even more so, she was committed to 'discriminate against the Swedish (men)'; considering the employment opportunities for the symbolic masculine Other (Muhammad) more important than those of the generic Swedish man (Kalle).

It is worth noting that the other women politicians Åkesson mentioned in his subsequent editorials were also criticised, albeit not as aggressively as Sahlin. For instance, Maud Olofsson, the C chairperson and deputy prime minister (2006–2010), was belittled as a politician by Åkesson for not being rational, and thereby lacking *real* (manly) political stature. More clearly, Olofsson was criticised for 'being lost in the world of fairy tales' – disconnected from the reality of common Swedes and incapable of critically assessing their situation. In relation to this, Åkesson described her 'inability' to 'take a position' concerning the alleged danger of Islamism in Sweden and the imperious need to come to 'the defence of Western values' that define the *folkhem*. Even more so, her attempt to acknowledge the contribution of the different waves of immigrants to the *folkhem*'s construction was dismissed as 'lacking credibility' (*SD-K 84, 2009: 5*).

In this regard, Åkesson described both Mona Sahlin and Maud Olofsson in a manner strikingly similar to what Suvi Keskinen (2011; 2012) has shown in her research as the common means used by Finnish radical right populist politicians to portray their political opponents: women in positions of power (high-ranked politicians or bureaucrats) that are the main promoters of multiculturalism and who are alleged to be blinded in their political judgment by their commitment to help the immigrant (male) Other (cf. Keskinen, 2011: 117–120; 2012: 269–270; Mulinari & Neergaard, 2012: 14). Put differently, the women active in Swedish politics were criticised by Åkesson for being *less-than-men*, thereby unfit for

politics: governed by feelings (such as irrational hate for genuine Swedishness), lacking reason (and living in a world of fairy tales), and unable of having reasonable and balanced opinions (thus displaying extremist attitudes) (cf. *SD–K* 72, 2007: 2; *SD–K* 84, 2009: 5; *SD–K* 85, 2010: 5). They were concurrently accused of abandoning the traditional role assigned to women within the *NATION IS A FAMILY*: devoted wives and daughters of their Swedish men and mothers of their men's offspring. The women's striving for emancipation was perceived as a direct threat to the masculine dominance within the *folkhem*. Their protection of the masculine Other to the detriment of their Swedish men engendered a symbolic denaturation of their motherly instincts, and thereby a direct threat to the future of Swedish family.

#### 6.2.4 THE SWEDISH NATIONAL FAMILY AND ITS OTHERS

Notwithstanding the constant focus on the (re)definition of the *folkhem's* rightful inhabitants, the figure of the Other has been a sustained presence. As such, it is worth turning the present investigation to unveiling the means employed by Åkesson of defining those falling outside the national family – both in terms of ethnic belonging, religious affiliation, and submission to heteronormative ideals. On this matter, the fact of *not–being* Swedish, and often relegated to the status of being a migrant, in Åkesson's discourse appears to be problematic when intersected with a different religious affiliation (particularly the Islamic faith), and a different ethnicity. This borders on a thinly veiled racism, I argue, as the Others' different skin colour is often regarded as a cue for *not–being* Swedish, though generally draped in the more palatable formulations indicating a specific geographical origin: 'the Middle East', 'Africa'. In the given context, the *not–being* Swedish is completed with references to a specific cultural background, which is often presented as morally stained, primitive and violent, traditionally patriarchal and oppressive; in sum, *not–being* Swedish is equal to *inferiority* (cf. *SD–K* 65, 2005: 2; *SD–K* 70, 2006: 10; *SD–K* Kampanj, 2009: 3).

The migrant Other has been continuously referred to as the single direct cause for the upheaval in the Swedish welfare state. For example, in 2007 Åkesson identified several domains negatively impacted by 'mass immigration': education – the immigrant offspring were described as intellectually inferior and 'unable to keep pace with their Swedish peers'; law and order – the non–autochthonous immigrant population was held responsible for the 'import' of violent crimes into Sweden and their 'significant overrepresentation in the crime statistics'; labour market – the immigrant Others required special employment schemes although they had never contributed financially to the common welfare system; and healthcare – the immigrant Others not only entailed an unnecessary strain on the healthcare services, but they were even singled out as potential bearers of such 'epidemic plagues as TB and HIV' (*SD–K* 72, 2007b: 12). In a subsequent

editorial<sup>50</sup>, Åkesson decried the changes that Sweden had undergone in the past couple of decades and singled out the Muslim migrant population as the embodiment of a menacing Other (*SD-K* 84, 2009: 3). In my view, Åkesson's insistence on the different religious affiliation of the foreign Other overlaps with racial boundaries that are at times camouflaged under the appellation of 'cultural differences' and which makes direct reference to an alleged 'clash of civilizations' (Huntington, 2002). This enforces the equation of Swedishness with a specific superior understanding of gender equality; concurrently, the Other – often seen as a masculine presence – becomes the representative of a homogenous group, characterised by a steadfastly traditionalist patriarchal attitude (cf. Bredström, 2003; Keskinen, 2011; 2012; Mulinari, 2003). The migrant families are thereby considered problematic: either they are strictly traditional – in which polygamous patriarchy is depicted as an inherent danger for the supposedly liberated Swedish heteronormative family constellation – or they are absent – and as such constitute a source for anxiety for the natives, as the Swedish women could fall prey to the migrant men's hyper-sexuality (Eriksen, 2002: 60). Such a stance becomes apparent in Åkesson's intervention from 2009:

It may be because more and more people have begun to notice – what the SD already did a while ago – that mass immigration and multiculturalism not only bring new foodstuff, but also honour killings, segregation, opposition, rootlessness, gang-building, rapes, robberies, and the questioning of Swedish traditions and symbols, unemployment, lower grades and knowledge levels in schools, religious fundamentalism, genital mutilation, oppression of women, forced marriage, increased social costs and reduced welfare?

*(SD-K 84, 2009: 5)*

Åkesson attempted in this context to uncover what he alleged to be the dangers of multiculturalism. The migrant Other did not only introduce 'new foodstuff' into the *folkhem*; more worryingly *he* – because the Other was resolutely masculinised besides being assimilated to a certain race under the guise of a specific religious belonging and cultural tradition – came accompanied by 'honour killings', 'gang-building', 'rapes', and opened up the door to 'religious fundamentalism' – from which 'genital mutilation', 'oppression of women', and 'forced marriage' were understood to originate. Nonetheless, the depiction of a threatening racialised Other underpins the intricacies of constructing autochthonous heteronormative masculinities and femininities (Hübinette & Lundström, 2011: 48–49; Keskinen, 2011: 118; 2012: 271–272). The indirect implication to the portrayal of the foreign

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<sup>50</sup> In the eve of 2010 elections, Åkesson had the opportunity to publish an extended opinion piece in the *Aftonbladet* daily, marking the end of the SD's boycott by mainstream media (*Aftonbladet*, 19.10.2009: 22–23). The piece was then published verbatim as an extended editorial in the *SD-K* shortly thereafter.

Other as a hyper–sexual, hyper–violent, patriarchal masculine presence was that the indigenous Swedish masculinity found comfort in its negation (cf. *SD–K* 78, 2008: 8; *SD–K* 81, 2009: 9). Native masculinity is thereby reconfirmed in its unquestioned heteronormative whiteness and superior position as civilized defender of the ‘vulnerable’ – a category wide enough to include indigenous and immigrant women and their children, the old, the sick, and the defenceless (Eduards, 2007: 69; Mulinari, 2003: 114–115).

Additionally, there is yet another instance of describing the Other; in this case the Other as *less–than–perfect* Swedish, representing the failure to fulfil the heteronormative ideal of structuring the national family: the LGBTQI community. Non–heteronormative sexualities appear especially problematic for radical right populist conceptions of the *folkhem*, as they in fact undermine the metaphorical foundation of the nation by challenging the ‘natural order’ reasoning, which posits heteronormativity as the solely intelligible moral standard (Eriksen, 2002: 61–62; Lakoff, 2002: 225–228). Unlike other members of the SD leadership, Åkesson has nonetheless been less vocal against non–heteronormative sexualities. In turn, he has narrowly defined the criteria of intelligibility of the Swedish family members, thereby indirectly confirming the exclusion of those *less–than–perfect* Swedes from the national family construct (cf. Rankin, 2000). A case in point, in the 2009 campaign issue of *SD–K* Åkesson underlined ‘every child’s right to a mother and a father’ within the protective walls of traditional ‘family life’, and dismissed the alternatives to such patriarchal structuring as mere ideological manoeuvring (*SD–K* Kampanj, 2009: 3). Under these circumstances, same–sex couples’ strivings for equal marriage rights and the appeal for equal rights in the adoption of children were presented, I argue, as direct threats to traditional patriarchal morality and heteronormative monogamous families. These efforts were marked as threatening to the traditional *folkhem*, in a manner similar to polygamy – which I interpret here as a disguised reference to the family of the migrant (Muslim) Other. This solidifies the conception that the NATION IS A FAMILY underpinned by Christian morality and patriarchal heteronormativity.

### 6.3 JIMMIE ÅKESSON INCARNATING THE COMMON SWEDISH MAN

Keeping in mind the criticism of feminist scholars mentioned previously with regard to the lasting presence of gender inequalities in Swedish politics, the assiduously cultivated image among the mainstream political parties has been one of equal opportunities for ‘politicians’ and ‘*female* politicians’ alike – in which the general neutral denomination appears to have internalised the idea of masculine hegemony. Men’s natural position as active agents in politics has been further strengthened, according to Wendt, when their role as family fathers has

overlapped that of political leadership. In this regard, men's professional respectability seems to be fortified by their public performance of fatherhood, regardless of whether this entails a serious commitment to childrearing or not. In comparison to that, motherhood appears to be a political handicap, women being expected to choose between being 'like-men', politically active, or retreating into the safety of their domestic enclosure to raise their men's offspring (Wendt, 2012: 101–110).

Åkesson, as party chair, has repeatedly indicated that the SD has reached political 'maturity', thus leaving behind a period of alleged adolescent confusion and turbulence – perhaps with reference to its previous Nazi sympathies – becoming 'a true challenger party' (cf. *SD-K 68*, 2006: 2; *SD-K 75*, 2008: 3; *SD-K 81*, 2009: 8–9). In turn, the Swedish political establishment has constantly been described as a reunion of 'old parties' protecting their privileges (cf. *SD-K 75*, 2008: 3; *SD-K 78*, 2008: 3). It is worth noting that a recurring strategy in Åkesson's discourse has been to fuse his political presence and that of the SD into a collective totality, through such expressions as 'we, the SD' (cf. *SD-K 65*, 2005: 2; *SD-K 70*, 2006: 11; *SD-K 73*, 2007: 12; *SD-K 75*, 2008: 3; *SD-K 78*, 2008: 3). The SD appears in this context to be identified not only with the figure of the youthful outsider that challenges the pre-existing political hierarchy dominated by 'those seven in the *Riksdagen*', but also with that of an underdog that survives all political vicissitudes against all odds: 'the old parties have not yet understood that the SD is here to stay. Everything is pointing towards further success in the coming elections.' (*SD-K 75*, 2008: 3)

The whole metaphorical cluster structured around the right-conservative man – that Åkesson has attempted to embody – gains conceptual clarity when considering the critique he directed against the SAP leadership, which was depicted in terms of a lenient and mismanaging NURTURANT PARENT. In a sense acknowledging the long-lasting impact that the SAP had on the construction of the *folkhem*, Göran Persson – the former SAP chair and second longest continuously serving Swedish PM, between 1996 and 2006 – has been described by Åkesson with the term *landsfader* (father of the country/nation – reminiscent of the founding myths of nation states) (*SD-K 75*, 2008: 3). In my view, such an appellation recognises Persson's efforts to re-articulate Swedish national identity through rediscovering the *folkhem*'s social-democratic values (such as equality, solidarity, and redistribution), emphasising a strengthened work ethic, and praising frugality and economy (Andersson, 2009a: 237; 2010: 56–61)

Åkesson nonetheless reacted negatively to Persson's efforts to modernise and open up the *folkhem* to gender equality and multiculturalism, and reassess the welfare system in the context of globalisation processes (Agius, 2007: 591–593; Andersson, 2009a: 237–240). He has oftentimes criticised Persson for what he considered to be a false image of 'traditionalism, rusticity and nostalgia for the *folkhem*' (*SD-K 72*, 2007a: 12). Åkesson's attacks against the SAP have become

more vehement with the election of Mona Sahlin to its helm, in the aftermath of the 2006 Parliamentary elections and the victory of the centre–right quadripartite Alliance, as detailed in the section concerning the presence of women in Swedish politics. I maintain that Åkesson's acceptance of a fatherly presence as the head of the Swedish national family fits within the patriarchal understanding of the NATION IS A FAMILY metaphorical cluster. Such a parental figure becomes nonetheless problematic once the political personalities assigned such a role act counter to the logic of radical right populist ideology – Persson's preoccupation with reforming the *folkhem*, and Sahlin's commitment to gender equality and multiculturalism are the failed image of parenthood, preoccupied with the nurturing of all those inhabiting the *folkhem*, and not being exclusively concerned with the wellbeing of those narrowly defined as belonging to the Swedish national family.

The leaders of the other parties that crafted the red–green block (the MP and V) in the years preceding the 2010 Parliamentary elections, in turn, have been only seldom mentioned. The MP spokespersons, Maria Wetterstrand and Peter Eriksson, have been most commonly criticised for ideological inconsistency and political opportunism (cf. *SD–K 76*, 2008: 10; *SD–K 78*, 2008: 4; *SD–K 80*, 2009: 4). According to Åkesson, the MP's two spokespersons were willing to sacrifice their green ideological convictions, and even partake in an alliance with Lars Ohly, the 'nostalgic communist' and 'Stalinist' leader of the left–wing V for the sake of a promised governmental position if the red–greens would have won. He then commented on the MP's refusal to cooperate with the SD concluding rhetorically: 'OK, now we know it! Stalinists are good, but not the friends of Sweden...' (*SD–K 80*, 2009: 4). At the same time, the MP and V leaders' attitude towards a general amnesty of illegal immigrants to Sweden has been dismissed as 'deeply irresponsible' (*SD–K 78*, 2008: 4).

In contrast to that, Åkesson's masculinity appears to be generally defined in a negative way, through what the leaders of the red–green block apparently failed to be, and as such symbolically positioning the SD in relation to the said coalition of parties according to a masculine versus feminine heteronormative binary. More clearly, the metaphoric cluster defining Åkesson (and *in extenso*, the SD) embodied masculine traditionalism, underpinned by staunch criticism of multiculturalism and cultural relativism, a longing for 'social cohesion' understood in terms of supremacy of Swedish patriarchal norms, and reliance on a strict enforcement of law and order. Put simply, Åkesson's masculinity embodied a different type of (political) man, representing a steadfast and morally upright masculinity preoccupied with the *folkhem's* wellbeing: a heterosexual Swedish man opposing the incarnations of radical right populist demonology – 'feminists', 'advocates of multiculturalism', 'environmentalists', 'advocates of affirmative action' (cf. Lakoff, 2002: 170–173).

The leaders of quadripartite centre–right Alliance have also been heavily criticised by Åkesson for their alleged symbiosis with the mainstream media, and

disconnection from the lives of common Swedes. However, this occurred only on the eve of 2010 Parliamentary elections, when the Alliance was contesting the elections for a second term in government. Furthermore, Åkesson did not pay equal attention to all party leaders; instead, he concentrated his criticism on Olofsson – the C chairperson – and Hägglund – the KD leader – as already discussed in the previous sections. At this point, it is sufficient to underline that Åkesson denied the aforesaid party leaders any political legitimacy, maintaining that Olofsson was ‘lost in the world of fairy tales’, despite her being a deputy prime minister and her proven political ability as the mastermind of the quadripartite Alliance, whilst Hägglund was dismissed for being a liar and political coward, a creation of the mainstream media, and never having the courage to confront Åkesson in a public debate (cf. *SD–K 78*, 2008: 4; *SD–K 84*, 2009: 5; *SD–K 85*, 2010: 5; *SD–K 86*, 2010b: 6). In turn, Lars Leijonborg and Jan Björklund, the two FP leaders during the analysed timeframe, have not been mentioned once. Somewhat surprisingly, Fredrik Reinfeldt – the M leader and prime minister from 2006 to 2010, and again for another term after the 2010 Parliamentary elections – has been rarely mentioned directly by Åkesson. Reinfeldt has only been acknowledged in his position as prime minister, condemned for his support of ‘Islamic ritual slaughter’ and for his unflattering description of Swedishness as ‘barbarism’ (*SD–K 84*, 2009: 14).

The upright and morally conservative masculinity metaphor the SD wishes to embody has been further developed by Åkesson, alleging to the process of ‘purification’ of the SD rank and file, which has been in a sense confirmed by his election to the position of party chair. In his view, while the other parties ‘allow themselves to be represented by fiddlers, violent criminals, and extremists’ he and the SD can ‘beat ourselves on the chest and claim that our sanitation works. We have nothing to be ashamed of. We are better than the others, also in this respect!’ (*SD–K 75*, 2008: 10). Furthermore, in 2009 Åkesson decried the consolidation of two antagonistic political blocks, and argued that this would hinder new political initiatives leading to an increase of disenfranchised citizens. However, he expressed his confidence that the 2010 Parliamentary elections would officially confirm the SD’s pivotal position in Swedish politics. Making use of this position as kingmakers, continued Åkesson, the SD would finally be able to influence the mainstream political agenda (*SD–K 80*, 2009: 4).

Time and again, in the examined empirical material, Åkesson invested in himself and his party with the masculine ability to discern and pursue innovative paths, along with such attributes as dynamism and courage to oppose what he argued to be a worsening of the Swedish political climate. The courage to criticise the political establishment, in other words ‘to stand up to evil’ was imbued by Åkesson with the masculine attributes of strength, conceptualised as ‘moral fibre’ or as ‘a backbone to resist evil’ (Lakoff, 2002: 184–185). This involves, I maintain, a reference to embodied physicality, which requires a masculine overcoming of

fear, and resistance to hardships. Such references to masculine steadfastness have further been emphasised by Åkesson's acknowledged favourite quote. Taken from the film *Rocky Balboa*, it makes direct reference to masculine resoluteness and commitment to overcome obstacles, while striving for victory: 'But it ain't how hard you hit; it's about how hard you can get hit, and keep moving forward. How much you can take, and keep moving forward. That's how winning is done.' (*Rocky Balboa*, 2006)

Åkesson's performative of radical right populist masculinity in the Swedish political context does not strictly follow the STRICT FATHER conceptual metaphor construct. Based on the analysis detailed above, I argue that in Åkesson's writings the *folkhem* appears to be under the guardianship of a NURTURANT PARENT whom Åkesson implicitly opposes. However, Åkesson's continuous emphasis on his and SD's youthful (masculine) energy indicate a more elaborate relationship between his performative of masculinity and that assigned to his political opponents than the established STRICT FATHER versus NURTURANT PARENT dyad. Rather, the political competition appears to be taking place between unequal opponents – Åkesson and the SD embodying a promising young underdog, whilst the political establishment represents different facets of an aged parental figure that mismanages the *folkhem*. The typology of masculinity Åkesson performs in the context of Swedish politics seems to be subscribing to a somewhat different conceptual metaphor, for which I suggest the label of CONSERVATIVE SON.

## 6.4 THE USE OF GENDERED CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS IN SWEDISH RADICAL RIGHT POPULISM

In the analysis of Åkesson's (re)interpretations of the *folkhem* – taken to represent the NATION IS A FAMILY conceptual metaphor in the Swedish context – I have argued that his discourse is underpinned by welfare chauvinism interpreted in a nostalgic key and a strictly conservative heteronormative stance, which thinly disguises a xenophobic attitude. Under these circumstances, Åkesson has used the complexity and ambiguity of the concept of folk understood as a national collective, on which the NATION IS A FAMILY conceptual metaphor rests. Identifying the *folkhem*'s allegedly true inhabitants with the disenfranchised citizenry among the Swedish ethnic majority, he claimed to embody their frustration in the face of the perceived imminent dissolution of Swedish society and the political establishment's disconnectedness from the burden of common people.

Indeed, the common Swedes have been depicted at the mercy of 'those seven in the *Riksdagen*' that pursued an aggressive multiculturalist agenda, thereby neglecting their initial responsibility towards Swedes by accommodating the presence of the Other at the expense of safeguarding national purity and solidarity within the *folkhem*. In relation to this, the SD has been presented as standard–

bearers of ‘a Swedish-friendly politics’, which incorporates both an ethnic and a class aspect. From this perspective, the *NATION IS A FAMILY* conceptual metaphor has been developed across time to detail an image of the *folkhem*’s true inhabitants in contrast to the figure of alterity. As such, alterity has been defined as either representing the *not-being* Swedish migrant Other, or the *less-than-perfect* Swedish members of the LGBTQI community. The Swedish national family has thereby been constructed along an exclusionary heteronormative logic – incorporating an ideal of patriarchal family structuring – in which women active in politics have been criticised by Åkesson for being *less-than-men* (misgoverned by feelings, and incapable of rational thinking), and failing in their expected position as devoted mothers of Swedish offspring. In this context, Swedish women in general have been assigned a compulsory heteronormative sexuality and domesticity, being relegated to a position of sexual objects to reward the heterosexual competition among Swedish men, and being treated as devoted mothers within the *folkhem*’s protective confines. Their striving for emancipation from the tutelage of Swedish men has been in turn portrayed as potentially dangerous, exposing them to the hyper-sexuality of the masculine migrant Other.

Under these circumstances, Åkesson’s claims that both himself and the SD have reached ‘maturity’, his demarcation from the ‘aged’ political establishment, and his emphasis on political dynamism indicate, in my view, the elaboration of a metaphorical construct centred on an ideal of masculinity underpinned by combative political participation, youthfulness, and preoccupation with an idealised past. This metaphorical cluster, which I label the *CONSERVATIVE SON*, has thereby been employed to portray Åkesson and his party in masculine terms, such as steadfast and protective, energetic and robust, in short, a challenger in the 2010 Parliamentary elections; however it departs significantly from that of the *STRICT FATHER* employed by other European radical right populist parties and understood to surmount the national family construct. In sum, the analysis has revealed that the demand for heteronormative hegemonic structuring rested on the idea of nuclear coupling as an explanation for the reproduction of life and Swedish culture and values, which was underpinned by the deeply entrenched fear of strangers and migrant Others (xenophobia), coupled with the fear of miscegenation (which includes any illegitimate couplings) and the fear of the sexually diverse Others (homophobia).

## 7 THE NATIONAL FAMILY SHELTERED UNDER THE PROTECTIVE ROOF OF THE PEOPLE'S HOME

'The Family', painted by Wolfgang Willrich, has survived to these days only as a print of the original work. The solution for the soul-searching quest of a *people* in times of crisis, which Willrich depicted in that work, was ideologically grounded in the belief in a return to an idyllic past of the national construct along the traditional family lines – fertile, uncorrupted, and pure – under the careful tutelage of a man/father/leader. Under these circumstances, the *people's* family home appeared to offer a sanctuary from the vicissitudes of its exposed surroundings. The conceptual structure described above seems to have fared better than the painting itself. At present, some five years after the onset of the 2008 'global financial meltdown' – a crisis so severe it is often compared to the 1930s 'Great Depression' that swept across Europe and saw the emergence of national socialist ideology in mainstream politics – one witnesses a similar process of political soul-searching (Calhoun, 2011: 9–12; Norocel, 2009: 237–240). Among the diverse options put forward by various parties, is the return to the safety and certainty afforded by the narrowly defined traditional family construct. The normative position that prescribes family life as to be consumed within a (legally sanctioned) monogamous union between a man and a woman that has led to the procreation of a numerous offspring, has apparently been welcomed by growing numbers of disenchanting citizens around Europe. This is seen in the increasing visibility, acceptance, and even promotion of radical right populist ideology in the form of rising electoral support for parties espousing such an ideology across Europe.

Under these circumstances, the present investigation has aimed to answer several interrelated research questions. The most important research question concerned how does radical right populist ideology work through discourse to give specific expression to the hierarchical gender binary? Aware that the NATION IS A FAMILY conceptual metaphor facilitates the appropriation of the heteronormative family construct to that of the *people* in radical right populist discourses, the second research question asked how do leaders of radical right populist parties in Romania, and in Sweden use the aforementioned conceptual metaphor to construe the hierarchical gender binary, and with what effects? Concentrating then more closely on the successive discursive articulations of the selected conceptual metaphor, the final research question asked how do the two party leaders construe their masculinity performatives with the help of conceptual metaphors – of interest here being the place of the STRICT FATHER conceptual metaphor in the wider NATION IS A FAMILY metaphorical cluster.

This concluding chapter opens with a reflexive section that delves into the specificities of feminist scholarship on radical right populism, and discusses the opportunities offered by a genealogical approach to the critical analysis of

conceptual metaphors from a feminist perspective. It addresses the opportunities, challenges, and shortcomings that such a methodology has afforded. It has been structured to reflect, on the one hand, the inherent logic that has guided the research questions, presented above, but in a somewhat reversed order. Put differently, the chapter first synthesises the answers to the more specific research questions, undertaken in the two cases. Taking then a step towards a more theoretical level, the answers to the more general research question are presented, and connected to the wider scholarship of radical right populism.

On the other hand, the structure has been designed to mirror the internal logic of radical right populist ideology, which constructs with the help of discourse a concept of reference – the monolithic *people* – according to a heteronormative logic of family relations. The acknowledged ambition has been, in other words, to bring gender into the study of radical right populist ideology. As such, the key findings from the analysis of the Romanian case are corroborated with those from the analysis of the Swedish case in order to put forward a synthetic model for the critical evaluation of the researched conceptual structures. The section thereby focuses on the ideological depiction of the national family as an endangered entity, which productively enables the consolidation of support around a collective inner force – religious identity. Within the family construct, I detail in the subsequent sections the specific positions to which women and other dependants alike are relegated to, and show the role of Others in crafting a collective identity of the *people* as one national family.

The following section then discusses the centrality of certain masculinity performatives (in their various guises, either as a strict father figure, or a youthful challenger) in that construct. These masculinity performatives detail the corresponding part of the gender dyad, which completes the prescribed femininity performatives presented earlier – the hierarchical gender binary that is ideologically sanctioned as desirable within radical right populist ideology. More clearly, I show the various positions the political man may take in the national family context, which are supported by rigidly patriarchal interpretations of the national construct. I acknowledge nevertheless the particularities that accompany the investigated metaphorical cluster when comparing the ideological manifestations through the discourse of the chosen radical right populist parties. In the final section of the present chapter, I take a more theoretical perspective on the matter of gendered conceptual metaphors. I thereby sketch out possible avenues of extending research that pertain to the structuring of the national construct along traditional family lines.

## 7.1 THE GENEALOGY OF CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS: FOR A FEMINIST SCHOLARSHIP OF RADICAL RIGHT POPULIST IDEOLOGY

Importantly, the present study departs from the highly problematic theorising of radical right populism, which takes no notice of the importance of gender in constructing the ideological apparatus that underpins radical right populist manifestations. Questioning the validity of classifying radical right populist parties into a specific ‘party family’ in a manner devoid of any awareness of gender (cf. Ignazi, 2003; Mair & Mudde, 1998; Mudde, 2000, 2007; Rydgren 2005), I have called to attention the privileged position the family is afforded in radical right populist discourses, as both a conceptual construct and as a political institution (cf. Butler, 1990, 2004; Jackson, 2006; Rich, 1980; Tuori, 2009). As such, I suggest a contemporary syncretic feminist approach that confronts ideological conceptions at the intersection of gender, ethnicity/‘race’, social class, and sexuality. In this light, my contribution to the radical right populist scholarship is to show the exclusionary process at work in crafting the homogeneous *people* community – the keystone of radical right populist ideology – work undertaken *on and through* the bodies of the *people’s* women, which become battlefields for the preservation of the collective purity, by their guardian men.

In so doing, equipped with the theoretical tools provided by feminist scholarship, I have analysed the *people* concept at the intersection of gender, class, ethnicity/‘race’, religion, and sexuality. My starting point has been that the connection between gender, ideology, and language, as manifest at the level of discourse, that may be examined through the *conceptual metaphors* inferred from the analysis of selected empirical material. Equally significant has been the disentangling of *conceptual metaphor* from mere *metaphorical expressions*, and the former’s discursive articulations manifest in the form of *metaphorical clusters*, which represent cohesive system of metaphorical concepts. In addition, the *genealogical perspective* I have employed shows conceptual metaphors and their adjoining clusters as contingent, emergent, and open to (re)interpretation (cf. Cameron *et al*, 2009: 67).

First, it is worth noting that by posing the research questions to the empirical material, I have chosen to take a rather well-trodden approach in conceptual metaphor theory, enunciating the conceptual metaphors to be examined in the research questions. I have opted for such an approach instead of a more general inventorying of *all* possible conceptual metaphors, and their possible discursive manifestations through metaphorical expressions, because the present project has been from the inception preoccupied with the interplay between gender, ideology, and discourse. In the given context, the dual position occupied by the family construct, both for its means to sanction the power relations at work in the hierarchical gender binary, and its ability to function as a mobilising concept for

such an abstract community as the *people* of radical right populist ideology, has elicited itself as a legitimate subject for this scholarly undertaking. With these aspects in mind, I have indicated that the analysis is to be closely structured according to a top–down logic of investigation, serving as a deductive chain of arguments (cf. Lakoff & Johnson, 2003; Steen, 2007).

In my opinion, a bottom–up logic of investigation, that would initiate the study of gathered empirical material presumptively ignorant of it containing certain conceptual metaphors, while being rewarding for mapping out all conceptual metaphors that may be present in the empirical material, would have removed the focus from the matter at stake, as described above. Even more so, I maintain that such an approach would have prevented the analysis from unbinding itself from too narrow a reading of the cues presented by metaphorical expressions at the lexical level – lexical artefacts – and engage in a productive investigation of the manifestation of conceptual metaphors at the discursive level – as presented in Figure 2 in chapter four. In this, I follow in the footsteps of scholars of critical conceptual metaphor that have argued for a more nuanced understanding of conceptual metaphors in discourse, in the sense that such conceptual structures may be expressed *also* indirectly – not only explicitly in established lexical formations – emerging from the specific topic that the analysed discourse is embedded in (Cameron *et al*, 2009: 71; Hart, 2010: 129; Howe, 2006: 64; Lazar, 2009: 211–212; Steen, 2007: 270). More clearly, my contribution to critical metaphor theory has been to analyse the manifestations of conceptual structures not only at the lexical level – but also on a more abstract plane, at the level of discourse – and thereby monitor the ideological manifestations in the interplay between conceptual structures, lexical artefacts, and discursive constructions.

Second, in designing the research method – which I presented at length in chapter four – I have been able to monitor closely the *genealogy* of chosen conceptual metaphors. Developing the genealogical approach I have resolved the challenges that scholars of conceptual metaphors usually have been confronted with, namely crafting an appropriate methodology to avoid circular argumentation. I have thereby aimed to study the genealogical development of various manifestations of radical right populist ideology, with a specific analytical interest in the discursive manifestations of ideology among radical right populist parties in two countries, Romania and Sweden. At a first sight, the two countries appeared to have followed a different historical, socio–economic and political path. The family and national community ideals in these contexts seemed, on the surface, to have taken different interpretations of the hierarchical gender binary. In the analysis, I have treated language as a means for the circulation of ideology within a specific political setting, acknowledging that language is the fundamental environment for the formation of gendered political identities, and enforcing certain ideological representations of men and women as reasonable ‘natural truths’ (cf. Bucholtz & Hall, 2004: 492; Cameron, 2006: 148; Lazar, 2005: 11–14).

The two principal metaphorical concepts – the *NATION IS A FAMILY* and the *STRICT FATHER* – need to be understood precisely this way – articulating the metaphorical cluster that provides ideological consistency to the examined radical right populist discourses. From a feminist perspective, the metaphorical cluster thus indicated seems to engender a containment within a compulsory patriarchal heteronormativity of both women and men, relegating women to a position of normative motherhood and men as guardians of the ‘natural order’ and family guardians.

Consequently, the present study did not aim to cement a specific normative approach to the analysis of ideology and its manifestations across Europe. At most, it may be considered an examination of certain political contexts, whereby emphasis has been put on showing the ideological underpinnings that conceptual metaphors and adjoining metaphorical clusters afford. As such the endeavour has been to expand the study of the conceptual structures under scrutiny from a feminist perspective, detailing the ideological construction of gendered identities with the help of conceptual metaphors in two specific contexts – radical right populist manifestations in Romania and Sweden.

## 7.2 THE NATIONAL HOME UNDER SIEGE: THE NATIONAL FAMILY ENDANGERED

The main conclusion that emerges from the analysis of the empirical materials in the two cases – as detailed in chapter five section 5.2, and chapter six section 6.2 – is that the two party leaders have discursively utilised the ambiguity pertaining to the ideological positioning of radical right populism on the left–right political continuum in order to achieve a position of parliamentary representation in the two countries. On this matter, key has been the genealogical usage of the inherent equivocalness of the *people* construct afforded by the *NATION IS A FAMILY* conceptual metaphor and adjoining metaphorical cluster. A first move has been to discursively circumscribe the real *people* – those rightfully entitled to inhabit the family home – to overlap with the disenfranchised mass of common citizens to form a monolithic entity, thereby individualising the political establishment as separate from the *people’s* body, remote, and (even) outright parasitical. It is in this context of antagonism, I argue, that one needs to understand the *people’s* identification with the working class – as the epitome of a disadvantaged and exploited position. In fact, superimposing the *people* onto the proletariat, radical right populism does not regard class as an inherently antagonistic conception. It does not promise class emancipation (by means of, for instance, continuous education, just distribution, promotion of equality and equity, and collective decision making). Rather, it simply conceives of class as a means of stratification, and relegates the *people* to a situation of vulnerability and unintelligibility – unable to transcend

their status, and incapable of articulating their grievances politically. Consequently, the radical right populist parties emerge as the *people's* true representatives, and their voice in the political arena. A second move has been to identify the nationalist manifestations of the ethnic majority – be it Romanian, or Swedish – as inherently benign, and integrate them into a genealogy of traditions, and beliefs that crystallised the solidarity of national family members along ethnic-cultural lines.

In this vein, the common *people* have been depicted in a position of dangerous vulnerability, at the mercy of the aforementioned political establishment. Concretely, in the Romanian case, it seems that the PRM leader has exploited the growingly negative perception among Romanian voters of democratic parliamentary politics, describing mainstream political parties and their representatives as a corrupt clique building political alliances against the 'laws of nature' – overriding all possible ideological constraints, and as a result transforming parliamentary democracy into nothing less than a crime syndicate (*RRM* 521, 2000: 14; *RRM* 741, 2004: 13). Exploiting the specificity of Romanian politics as a war-like competition among various political clans, Tudor's own political force has been depicted as a disciplined army under his careful leadership prepared to make the voice of Romanian *people* heard in the Parliament (*RRM* 754, 2004: 12–13).

In the Swedish case, it appears that Åkesson has accused the political elites – 'those seven in the *Riksdagen*' (*SD-K* 70, 2006: 1) – of pursuing an aggressive multiculturalist agenda, and as such neglecting their primary responsibility to safeguard national purity, and solidarity under the *folkhem's* protective roof. In contrast to the mainstream political forces, which have formed two opposing political blocks; coalescing the political parties on the left and right sides of the political spectrum – Åkesson has opted to present the SD as the righteous legion defending 'Swedish-friendly politics', thereby transcending the left-right divide under the imperative of safeguarding Swedish national interest (cf. *SD-K* 65, 2005: 2; *SD-K* 66, 2005: 2; *SD-K* 74, 2007: 1; *SD-K* 81, 2009: 11).

While somewhat different in the depiction of their political opponents – the vilified detached, and irresponsible establishment – the discourses of radical right populist leaders in Romania and Sweden, in my opinion, seem to consecrate a unitary view of the *people* (and their national *home*): a monolithic citizenry disillusioned with the political establishment and in need of the political guardianship only radical right populism can afford. The depiction of the national family incorporates the image of a silent majority, which, in my view, is invested with feminine passivity and defencelessness, thereby relegating the complementary militant masculinity to the radical right populist leader and his party, which appear as the majority's only cogent and engaged component – an imperative for the survival of the national community.

### 7.2.1 THE RELIGION OF THE NATIONAL FAMILY: BETWEEN INNER FORCE AND EXCLUSIONARY TOOL

On closer examination, it appears that the *NATION IS A FAMILY* metaphorical cluster rests on appeals to a common religious identity, which develop genealogically and are adapted to the particular manifestations of radical right populist ideology in each researched case. The claim for one unifying religious identity for all members of the national family strengthens, I argue, the radical right populist understanding of the *people* as a solid monolith. It also serves as a key principle of distinction between those rightfully belonging to the national family community, and those who do not qualify as part of it.

In the Romanian radical right populist discourse – as analysed at length in section 5.2.1 – Orthodox Christianity seems to be collapsed into Romanian identity, and thereby appears as a birthright of the Romanian *people*. Even more so, Christianity seems inscribed into the genetic heritage of the Romanian national family, enabling the distinction between Romanian *people* and their Others (cf. *RRM* 528, 2000: 14; *RRM* 736, 2004: 13). This allows Tudor, I argue, to naturalise a hierarchy of worthiness, in which religious identity is key. In contrast to the Romanian *people* – whom are considered to be *born* Christian Orthodox, hence superior – the Hungarian minority, or the Romani (Rroma) minority for that matter, trace their religious identity to a historical moment of *baptism* into the Christian faith – and are thereby inferior. This becomes even more clearly apparent when the Christianity of the Romanian national family is employed by Tudor as a principle for exclusion of those of Jewish or Islamic faith that are then relegated to a position of external Others (*RRM* 982, 2009: 13). In my view, such appeals to an exclusive religious identity emphasise the radical right populist preoccupation with the danger of the degeneration that the national fabric may suffer in the case of opening up the national family to different religious (or cultural) influences. Concomitantly, the religious identity of the Romanian *people* allowed for the reification of the national family as a heteronormative construct that orbits around a sacerdotal performative of masculinity, in the sense that the pious submission of Romanian *people* to the religious and moral domination of the national Orthodox Church seems to incorporate the radical right populist leader as well (cf. *RRM* 528, 2000: 14; *RRM* 737, 2004: 12).

In contrast, the Swedish case appears to be an example of religious identity without explicit religiosity – as detailed in section 6.2.1. In this regard, secular modernity rests on a more or less implicit reference to the commonly shared Christian heritage – here, Lutheran Christianity (*SD-K* 64, 2005: 2). This becomes most obvious when parliamentary democracy and secular modernity are posited by Åkesson in direct opposition to the religious denomination of the migrant Other, oftentimes understood to refer to the non-Christian faith (in this case Islam) (cf. Spinner-Halev, 2005: 44–46; Storm, 2011: 76). Consequently, it

affords a position of emancipated religious identity for the Swedish ethnic majority, in strong opposition to the alleged conservative religiousness of the migrant Other – thereby collapsing oppressive patriarchal traditions into the faith of the migrant Other (*SD-K 69*, 2006: 5). Bringing the alleged particularities of patriarchal structures that underpin the Islamic faith under scrutiny, focus is removed from interrogating the Swedish national family constructed by the radical right populist discourse in Sweden. Such a move, I argue further, appears to obscure the conservative heteronormative understanding of the Swedish national family and the use of religious identity in this context to confirm it as natural in the Swedish *folkhem* (cf. *SD-K 85*, 2010: 3; *SD-K 86*, 2010: 3).

I conclude this section by underlining that, in the discursive usage of the NATION IS A FAMILY metaphorical cluster, Christianity – even when sublimated into state-brokered secularism to entail specific traditions and national customs – has served a dual function, both as a binding force for the homogenous *people*, and a means to separate the true *people* from the (migrant) Other. When referred to as a unifying force, I argue further, Christian religious identity has been used instrumentally to underline the claims of radical right populist parties to be solidly anchored in the political life of the national family, and to embody the guardians of the *people's* ancestral traditions, in a way which allowed these parties to depict their presence in mainstream politics as uncontroversial. When serving as a division line, the religious identity of the ethnic majority has then been employed to underline the *people* as separate from, and superior to the Other.

### 7.2.2 THE NATIONAL FAMILY AND ITS DEPENDANTS: DRAWING DIVISION LINES AMONG THOSE IN NEED

Another conceptual dimension of the NATION IS A FAMILY metaphorical cluster pertains to the depiction of the national family members in a position of defencelessness. As noted above, the *people* are understood to be situated in a position of disadvantage and exploitation at the hands of the political and economic establishment, and malevolent Others. This notwithstanding, there are some specific categories described in the analysed discourses in positions of extreme vulnerability: the *people's* women – understood as valuable reproductive vessels for the *people's* offspring – and the national family's children, and the elderly. What the *people* as a whole have in common, as I have already mentioned, is that they are portrayed as dependent on the benevolence and willingness of the radical right populist leader to translate the needs arising from their position of precariousness into political action.

In the Romanian case – as discussed in section 5.2.2 – the focus on Tudor's visits to hospitals, retirement homes, orphanages, and canteens for the poor across the country has emphasised him in the role of 'national hero' and cemented the depiction of the national family in a situation of social and economic

vulnerability (cf. *RRM* 521, 2000: 14; *RRM* 529, 2000: 14; *RRM* 731, 2004: 12). Under these circumstances, his role has been one of a careful listener to the needs of those members of the national family in need, and of generous financial benefactor to those welfare institutions, but not of actual involvement in the caretaking process itself. This confirmed Tudor and the PRM to the position of masculine leadership and family breadwinners, thereby relegating women to a position of normative motherhood – natural caregivers of the national family’s dependants (cf. Mosse, 1997; Petö, 2006; 2010; Taylor, 1997). Another aspect concerns the radical right populist preoccupation with the purity of *people’s* offspring. In this case, women are depicted as precious carriers of the future generations of the national family (*RRM* 524, 2000: 14). Women appear as passive family members that require special protection from the unrestrained sexuality of a menacing Other, that may either rape the *people’s* women, or even use women’s reproductive ability for their own roguish ends (*RRM* 527, 2000: 15). Important in this context, I maintain, is the particularly bleak picture of Romanian society – a toxic wasteland, a brothel, and a place of immense poverty at the hands of the corrupt elites – in a sense strengthening the radical right populist appeal to restore *people’s* dignity and sovereignty – electing the PRM leader as president (cf. *RRM* 534, 2000: 14; *RRM* 754, 2004: 12–13).

Somewhat different to the Romanian case, in which the working class identification of the national family is referred to obliquely, in the Swedish case the reference about the *people* belonging to the proletariat appears to be more clearly enunciated – as shown in section 6.2.2. However, Åkesson’s discourse seems to articulate a specific understanding of the *people* inhabiting the *folkhem*. At the centre lies the figure of male breadwinners active in traditionally male-dominated branches of economy, such as heavy industry, while the ambition of restoring the *folkhem’s* social cohesion demotes women to a position of near-invisibility in branches of economy generally associated with their natural attributes of caregiving and rearing of the national family (cf. *SD–K* 80, 2009: 1, 5; *SD–K* 75, 2008: 4). Despite these differences, Åkesson’s discourse appears to share with that of his Romanian counterpart the preoccupation with the *people’s* women and their ability to mother the future generations of the national family. The issue of discrimination of, and hostility towards the ethnic majority in Sweden is reiterated in a heteronormative gendered key: Swedish women are depicted as victims of rape at the hands of hyper-sexual migrant (male) Others. The aim, in my view, is both to question Swedish women’s sexual emancipation from the patriarchal tutelage of Swedish men, and to emphasise the inability of migrant male Others to accommodate to the ‘Swedish values’ of gender equality, and break free from the patriarchal mentality of their native culture (cf. *SD–K* 78, 2008: 8; *SD–K* 81, 2009: 9; *SD–K* Kampanj, 2009: 3).

Summing up, I argue that in the two countries the radical right populist discourses define their *people* as belonging to the proletariat – though in the Romanian case such references are often indirectly articulated. What the two

cases have in common, however, is the depiction of their respective national families in positions of vulnerability at the hands of a remote and detached elite – in the Romanian case engaged in economic corruption, while in the Swedish one pushing for a globalisation-friendly, and a multiculturalist agenda. More clearly, the *people* – as portrayed in the radical right populist discourses in the two countries – embody precisely that part of the proletariat that appears most precariously exposed to the contemporary processes of unrestrained globalisation of capital – accompanied by deindustrialisation, mass unemployment, capital flight, and even corruption (cf. Banks & Gingrich, 2006; Meret & Siim, 2013). The two national families are unveiled as deeply gendered constructions, resting on idealised images of local heteronormative patriarchal models: men as idealised working class breadwinners, whilst women are relegated to position of normative motherhood, or reduced to merely decorative positions of sexual objects for the masculine heterosexual competition and reward for the *people's* men and their (male) Others.

### 7.2.3 WOMEN, POLITICS, AND THE PRESERVATION OF THE NATIONAL FAMILY: EMANCIPATION AND EQUALITY AS FACETS OF ALIENATION

The relegation of women to a subordinate position of not much more than simple reproductive entities within the NATION IS A FAMILY metaphorical cluster gains conceptual clarity when examining how women active in politics are described in the selected radical right populist discourses. In feminist scholarship, the women's presence in politics marks their transcendence of the objectified position as the *people's* women and confirmation of their individualised subjectivity as political actors. Their presence in politics appears to be highly problematic and is often described in negative terms in the analysed discourses, showing the central role that the hierarchical gender binary is afforded in radical right populist ideology.

Similar to other extensions of the analysed metaphorical cluster, the radical right populist discourse in Romania seems to be sensibly more vehement on the issue of women's political participation – analysed in detail in section 5.2.3. On this matter, I argue, Tudor has taken advantage of the specificities of Romanian politics, which are structured according to a logic of political confrontation among political families under the uncontested authority of father-like leaders. In the few instances when women's presence in politics is acknowledged by the Romanian radical right populist discourse, they appear to have infringed on the heteronormative rules of intelligibility – impinging on the role that was naturally theirs in the national family – and encroaching upon the exclusive domain of masculine competition, represented by politics. Tudor has been unambiguous about the fate that awaits such women: either to *become* men, or to expect public *execution*. In both cases, I claim further, the hierarchical gender binary is restored

by threatening women's very physical existence, and denying them a voice in the life of the Romanian national family (cf. *RRM* 534, 2000: 15; *RRM* 536, 2000: 15).

In turn, I maintain, the radical right populist discourse in Sweden does not appear to diverge significantly from the one in Romania, but only in a matter of nuance. This has to do with the acceptance, at least formally, of a women-friendly welfare state, as discussed at length in section 6.2.3. This aside, women's presence in politics appears to be a deeply problematic issue in the radical right populist discourse, especially when women attain key positions in the internal hierarchies of various parties across the Swedish political spectrum. A case in point, having a woman at the helm of Swedish social-democracy and leading the red-green opposition block has been portrayed as problematic by Åkesson, particularly for her assumed efforts to create a more inclusive and diverse national family construct. The combination of the two – being woman in one of the most influential positions in Swedish politics, and promoting a multiculturalist vision of the *folkhem* – has been considered a source of imminent moral dissolution (*SD-K* 72, 2007: 2). But Åkesson has dismissed women in politics in general for not being able to reign in their feelings – particularly what he deemed to be hatred towards the national family's cherished values; for being irrational – not being able to discern fantasy from reality; and as generally incapable of reasonable and balanced opinions – espousing extremist attitudes. As such, women have not been requested to morph into men so as to be allowed into politics, neither have they been threatened with being physically exterminated. These notwithstanding, it seems that women have discursively been contained to a position of *less-than-men* in Swedish politics (cf. *SD-K* 84, 2009: 5; *SD-K* 85, 2010: 5).

In conclusion, being a woman *and* a politician seems to go against the radical right populist ideology. Being individualised subjects, women active in politics transgress the logic of the hierarchical gender binary that relegates women – as discussed in the previous section – to the position of patriarchal dependency to their male guardians in the context of the national family. It appears that the *NATION IS A FAMILY* metaphorical cluster does not accommodate women as subjects, their striving for emancipation being described in terms of a threat to the dominance of men in the public sphere, and the denaturation of their motherly instincts, thereby embodying an explicit danger to the very survival of the *people*.

#### 7.2.4 THE NATIONAL FAMILY FACING ITS OTHERS: THE OTHERS AMONG US AND THEM AS COLLECTIVE OTHERS

The genealogical development of the *NATION IS A FAMILY* metaphorical cluster is accompanied by a parallel albeit antagonistic process, which involves the continuous boundary-drawing of the intelligible – circumscribing the national hierarchical gender binary – and that which falls outside its limits – (re)defining the national family's Others. This does not occur, I maintain, only by laboriously

listing those external Others – be they ethnic minorities with a long history within the *people's* envisioned homeland, or migrant communities settled only recently in the *people's* home – that are excluded from the national family on ethnocentric nativist grounds (Betz & Meret, 2009: 318; Canovan, 2002: 34; Mudde, 2004: 546). It also entails indexing the inner Other, particularly the non-heteronormative Other that posits a danger – similarly to the *people's* women who become individualised subjects – to the existence and perpetuation of the hierarchical gender binary that underpins the national family construct (cf. Kulpa, 2011; Rankin, 2000).

In the Romanian radical right populist discourse, the figure of the Other is contoured most clearly when Tudor describes what he considers the main challengers to Romanian *people's* sovereignty in their own homeland. This has been analysed in detail in section 5.2.4. Among these outer Others, the Hungarian minority is given a rather ambiguous masculine performative: financially potent and committed irredentist saboteurs of Romanian statehood; secretly plotting whilst complaining at international forums (cf. *RRM* 523, 2000: 14; *RRM* 525, 2000: 15; *RRM* 526, 2000: 14). In turn, the Romani minority does not appear to enjoy the same level of respect, being disparagingly labelled as ‘Țigani’; it is however much feared for what Tudor considers its alarming fertility and this constitutes a threat to the position of Romanians as the ethnic majority in their homeland. In fact, Romani men appear unidimensionally reduced in their masculinity performative to their alleged hyper-sexuality. In relation to this, the description of Romani women – promiscuous, overly fertile, yet void of maternal instincts – seems to be a counterpoint to the depiction of the *people's* women and their place within the national family; in (legally sanctioned) monogamous heterosexual unions with Romanian men, and devoted mothers to the nation's offspring (cf. *RRM* 523, 2000: 14; *RRM* 529, 2000: 15; *RRM* 731, 2004: 12). The list of foreign Others is completed with the figure of the mythical Jew, who is also relegated to a position of an inferior masculinity performative – physically deformed albeit economically successful, but morally corrupt – echoing the interwar nationalist anti-Semitism (*RRM* 524, 2000: 14). With regard to the description of the internal Other, the collapse of Orthodox Christianity into Romanian identity circumscribes the *people* to a heteronormative family construct that vehemently rejects any accommodation efforts towards the non-heteronormative Other. The portrayal of internal Other – a masculine performative underpinned by degeneration, depravity, and dejection – serves, in this context, to legitimise the rules of heterosexual reproduction and patriarchal family structuring that govern Romanian national family (cf. *RRM* 521, 2000: 14; *RRM* 984, 2009: 13).

In the Swedish radical right populist discourse, in a similar fashion, the depiction of the Other seems to be related to ideas of damage, danger, and pollution – this is mainly discussed in section 6.2.4. More concretely, the

collective social democratic project, undertaken by the Swedish ethnic majority, with substantial aid provided by labourers from diverse ethnic backgrounds – to construct a welfare society – appears reinterpreted in a welfare chauvinistic key: the *folkhem* belongs exclusively to the Swedish *people* (cf. *SD–K* 65, 2005: 2; *SD–K* Kampanj, 2009: 3). The immigrant Other is thereby depicted as an intrusive parasitical presence in the national home. In this regard, Åkesson seems to hold the non–autochthonous migrant Other responsible for the deterioration and disappearance of the welfare state, with special reference to the increased amount of violent crimes, deterioration of the labour market, and unnecessary strain on healthcare services. What I consider specific to the Swedish case is that the Other’s *not–being–part* of the national family is tacitly collapsed into a specific religious affiliation (particularly, the Islamic faith), while the Other’s skin colour is employed as a primary cue for such process of exclusion, often disguised under apparently innocent references to a specific geographic origin. In a similar vein to the radical right populist manifestations in Romania, in Sweden the figure of the foreign Other appears as a menacing masculine presence, accompanied by honour killings, forced marriages, and oppression of women (cf. *SD–K* 65, 2005: 2; *SD–K* 70, 2006: 10; *SD–K* Kampanj, 2009: 3). The outside Other’s masculinity performative is thereby depicted as a hyper–sexual, hyper–violent, and staunchly patriarchal presence, in a sense warranting the Swedish national family’s reliance on the masculine guardianship afforded by the radical right populist party and its leader (cf. *SD–K* 78, 2008: 8; *SD–K* 81, 2009: 9). With regard to the non–heteronormative performative of the internal Other, it is deemed to be problematic by Swedish radical right populism, for its potential to undermine the position of the moral standard that heteronormativity enjoys in the *folkhem*. What sets the Swedish case apart from the Romanian one, however, is the depiction of the internal Other. Indeed, the non–heteronormative Other is not dismissed outright as alien to the *folkhem*; rather, the insistence on children’s right to be born in monogamous heterosexual families, and appeals to traditional family life, indicate the tacit relegation of non–heteronormative Others as *less–than–perfect*, allowing their exclusion from among the ‘real’ *people* (*SD–K* Kampanj, 2009: 3).

To sum up, in the process of defining and reifying its fundamental concept – the *people* – radical right populist ideology engages in explicating discursively who are those who do not meet the criteria of membership in the national family. In a sense, I argue, the hierarchical gender binary that underpins the *people* conception rests on the constant expounding of the Other. Another important conclusion is that the *people’s* Others seem to be invested with a decidedly masculine performative. As such, the competition for *people’s* future – understood in radical right populist discourses to entail the unhindered access to the national family’s women and their wombs – and for the fate of their *home(land)* involves the confrontation between the menacing male Others and the *people’s* male defenders: the radical right populist party and its leader. However, the quality of *not–being* part of the *people* assigns these (male) Others to various positions of

inferiority in radical right populist ideology. The national family is also faced with the risk of being dismantled from within by those who challenge the hierarchical gender binary – the non-heteronormative Other. Noteworthy in this context is – yet again – the particular focus on male homosexuality, which appears to be particularly problematic to radical right populism. Indeed, the homosexual male Other posits a direct threat to the heterosexual masculinity of the *people* – corrupting it into homosexuality – and to the national hierarchical gender binary – refusing to reproduce the nation, and *in extremis*, demanding an equal treatment with the other family members of the nation.

### 7.3 THE PLACE OF THE (POLITICAL) MAN IN THE NATIONAL FAMILY: A STRICT FATHER FIGURE AND/OR A YOUTHFUL CHALLENGER?

The genealogical development of the NATION IS A FAMILY metaphorical cluster – as evidenced in the analysis of radical right populist discourses in chapter five and chapter six – elaborates, hypostatizes, and maintains a rigid hierarchical gender binary. The different standings to which various members of the national family have been relegated – be they the ‘real’ *people*, or their women, and their offspring – within this hierarchical conceptual structure appear to gravitate around the figure of the (political) man. Under these conditions, I maintain, the aforesaid conceptual cluster finds its apex in the radical right populist (political) man. This is made intelligible through the masculinity performative that is discursively constructed to reflect the power position he is afforded in radical right populist ideology.

The main conclusion that comes from the analysis of the radical right populist discourse in Romania – as presented in section 5.3 – is that the NATION IS A FAMILY metaphorical cluster appears to be crowned by the STRICT FATHER conceptual metaphor, and the masculinity performative it enables (cf. Miller, 2003). Notably, Tudor has consecrated his presence in Romanian politics as ‘the Tribune’ – utilising the supposed Latin descent of the Romanian *people*, to claim a democratic genealogy, and to transfer upon his persona the alleged masculine righteousness of these proclaimed political ancestors. The posture of *people’s* tribune has allowed Tudor to position himself as their champion capable of articulating popular demands in the language of party politics. In other words, while the *people* are depicted as a vulnerable silent majority, hence invested with feminine passivity and defencelessness, as previously mentioned, Tudor seems to embody the STRICT FATHER conceptual metaphor: the national family’s rational, concerned, and engaged male guardian (cf. *RRM* 524, 2000: 1; *RRM* 743, 2004: 12). In this manner, Tudor appears to naturalise his claims to be included in the panoply of great national forefathers, whose figures have often served to

(re)construct the Romanian national family (cf. Leustean, 2007; Livezeanu, 2000).

From this position of moral superiority, Tudor has virulently attacked his political opponents, often unflatteringly labelled as ‘profiteers’, ‘barons’, and even ‘Taliban’, for their indifferent detachment from the people’s burden (cf. *RRM* 525, 2000: 14; *RRM* 735, 2004: 13; *RRM* 743, 2004: 12). Consequently, his adversaries appear to represent a morally bankrupt, politically extreme, and backwardly exploitive masculinity performative. In the same vein, some of them are considered disqualified from the electoral competition, and dismissingly relegated to a position of inferiority for their alleged non–masculine, or outright non–heteronormative masculinity performatives, or for their inability to rise from their brutish condition to the demands of civility for leading the national family (cf. *RRM* 524, 2000: 15; *RRM* 530, 2000: 14; *RRM* 742, 2004: 12; *RRM* 745, 2004: 13; *RRM* 976, 2009: 12). In contrast to these masculinity performatives, *sine qua non* non–dominant, Tudor appears to represent the warrior–leader, voice of the divine will, and rallying force for popular energy in the battle against injustice. Tudor’s masculinity performative thereby seems to incarnate the radical right populist rightful leadership, embodying the providential *pater familias* whose messianic task is to lead ‘his’ *people*/family into a new moral order.

Somewhat surprisingly, in the context of radical right populist understanding of the hierarchical gender binary, Åkesson’s masculinity performative, unlike his Romanian counterpart, does not seem to follow the STRICT FATHER conceptual metaphor – as discussed in section 6.3. Concomitantly, his masculinity performative appears rather compellingly articulated in opposition to the NURTURANT PARENT conceptual metaphor – reflective, in my view, of Åkesson’s solid anchoring in radical right populist ideology. At a first glance, it appears that he embraces the idea of a parental presence entrusted the fate of Swedish national family in its *folkhem*. At a closer inspection, however, whenever the aforesaid parental presence engenders a destabilising presence for the constitutive hierarchical gender binary of radical right populist ideology – understood in terms of efforts to reforming the *folkhem*, or assumed commitment to gender equality – it is vehemently dismissed as a failed instance of proper parenthood (cf. *SD–K* 72, 2007a: 12; *SD–K* 75, 2008: 3).

With this in mind, I maintain, it seems that the political competition unfolds between unequal opponents. On the one hand, there are the established political parties – discursively depicted as aged parental figures – which Åkesson accuses of mismanaging the national family’s welfare (cf. *SD–K* 75, 2008: 3; *SD–K* 78, 2008: 3). On the other hand, the masculinity performative of the radical right populist leader embodies a youthful and dynamic underdog, which has a conceptual consistency of its own (cf. *SD–K* 65, 2005: 2; *SD–K* 70, 2006: 11; *SD–K* 73, 2007: 12; *SD–K* 75, 2008: 3; *SD–K* 78, 2008: 3). The conceptual metaphor thus identified in the Swedish radical right populist discourse I have labelled the CONSERVATIVE SON. The suggested appellation mirrors, in my view, the contingent

aspect of radical right populist ideology, which manifests discursively in a different manner in Sweden than in Romania. This new conceptual metaphor does not have an emancipatory potential, I may add. Rather, it confirms the importance of the hierarchical gender binary in articulating the radical right populist discourse in Sweden.

In conclusion, the leaders of the two radical right populist parties, whose discourses I have analysed in the present study, despite their different means of achieving it, embody a masculinity performative that unmistakably occupies the point of origin, foundation, and summit within the hierarchical gender binary that underpins the NATION IS A FAMILY metaphorical cluster. In so doing, it confirms the contingent nature of the discursive manifestations of radical right populist ideology. In addition, it shows the inherent flexibility of radical right populist ideology, and its ability to indicate the (political) man as the cornerstone of hierarchical gender binary, either confirmed in a position of *pater familias*, or as a youthful contender of an existing family order. Both of them rest, in my view, on the portrayal of radical right populist leaders as trustworthy guardians of the *people*, whom thereby reconstitute the symbolic heteronormative dyad: the (political) man – leader of the national family – and the *people* – vulnerable and entrusting their salvation in the hands of such a man.

#### **7.4 THE IDEOLOGICAL PRODUCTIVITY OF GENDERED CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS: A FEW CONCLUDING REMARKS AND NEW AVENUES OF RESEARCH**

At a more theoretical level, there are several conclusions that concern the ideological productivity of gendered conceptual metaphors that come forth in the present study. First, I maintain that the interaction between radical right populist ideology, discourse, and language in giving expression to the hierarchical gender binary manifests great complexity, displaying the dynamic ability to continuously develop over time, accommodating novel conceptual articulations, and manifestations of the ideological tenets into discourse with the aid of conceptual structures. In this regard, I argue that the discursive manifestations of conceptual metaphor – and its corresponding metaphorical cluster – becomes sublimated, and transformed into an invisible envelope of ideology (Holborow, 2007: 53–54).

This needs however to be understood in the wider context of hegemonic manifestation of neoliberal capitalism, which is present in different guises across Europe. Indeed, Romania has followed a trajectory similar to the other countries in Central and Eastern Europe, characterised by the formal adoption of principles of representative democracy, and uncritical embrace of neoliberal market capitalism (cf. Gallagher, 2005; Miroiu, 2010; Pasti, 2003; Soare, 2010). In turn, Sweden has witnessed from 1990s onwards the full impact of ‘the shift to the

right', and the rise to prominence of conservatism in neoliberal clothes (cf. Agius, 2007; Andersson, 2009a; Boréus, 1994). The models for these developments have been the Reagan administration, in the United States, and the Thatcher government in the United Kingdom. For these political forces the imperative of 'rolling back the state' has been accompanied by that of 'falling back' onto 'the family unit'. The heteronormative family has been depicted as the ideal setting to ensure the reproduction of a disciplined working force, to stimulate and regulate consumerist identifications, and to provide for childcare and social security, under the guise of a much acclaimed return to the traditional family values. The neoliberal conservative appraisal of traditional family values rests on the conviction about the existence of fixed, 'natural' gender binary (women and men); this, in turn, entails the innate difference and absolute complementarity between women and men that consequently posits the heteronormative family as the locus for their perfect union; and, finally, the idealisation of heterosexual domestic construct from around the middle of the twentieth century (Lancaster, 2006: 117).

With this in mind, a second conclusion the present study suggests is that the discursive expression of the hierarchical gender binary operated by radical right populist ideology seems to conceptualise the aforementioned heteronormative family ideal in its most staunchly conservative form. On this matter, the genealogical perspective has played a key role in showing the internal flexibility of the metaphorical cluster centred on the *NATION IS A FAMILY* to continuously incorporate different conceptual aspects – such as claims of working class identification, membership in the ethnic majority (and dominant religious denomination), traditional gender performatives, and a subscription to heteronormative sexuality. More clearly, from a radical right populist perspective, the heteronormative family is conceptually extended to incorporate the *people* monolith, thereby crafting a national family totality over time. As such, the constitutive unit of reference – the *people* – seem to belong to the working class, but most importantly to narrowly overlap the ethnic majority population of the country in question. Nevertheless, class solidarity appears a rather hollow echo; in turn, emphasis is placed upon safeguarding the national family's purity. This is understood both as an express prohibition for the *people's* women to intermarry and bear the offspring of Other men outside the ethnic majority, and the imperative for the ethnic majority men to defend their women and ensure the survival of the nation through the procreation of numerous offspring. Within the *people's* national family, there is barely any place left for non-heteronormative femininity performatives that are not centred on bearing the nation's progenies – understood both in symbolic, and physical terms – nor for non-heteronormative masculinity performatives; these are relegated to a position of internal dangers. The major threat however seems to be represented by the migrant (heterosexual) male Other.

A third conclusion that arises from this study is that the different manners in which the radical right populist ideology works through discourse to give

expression to the hierarchical gender binary express a difference of degree, not of kind. More clearly, the *NATION IS A FAMILY* conceptual metaphor maintains its centrality in confirming the hierarchical gender binary as a key principle of radical right populist ideology, irrespective of its localised manifestations – either on the Romanian national political scene, or in Swedish mainstream politics. What seems to differ, however, concerns the position and role of the masculinity performative. In this framework, the common *people* appear to be ascribed feminine passivity and defencelessness, and, as such, emphasise the complementary dynamic masculinity of the radical right populist party (and its leader). In other words, the aforesaid masculinity performative, while articulated differently in the various depictions of the party leader in the context of radical right populist ideology – the *STRICT FATHER* conceptual metaphor and what I have labelled the *CONSERVATIVE SON* – appears nonetheless confirmed in its centrality to the construction of the national family. Summing up, I consider that the similarity in kind of the hierarchical gender binary shown in the two cases is not surprising. Rather, I consider this a confirmation of the argument that conceptual metaphors play a cardinal role in making ideology intelligible at the level of political discourse. It also underlines the deeply traditional understanding attached to the national family metaphorical construct in radical right populist ideology, despite the ostensibly emancipatory tones that may be seen at first glance.

These conclusions indicate, in my view, three main avenues for further research on the topic. A first opportunity would be to map out the usage of the *NATION IS A FAMILY* conceptual metaphor among various discursive manifestations of ideological cleavage among the main parliamentary parties in specific national contexts. Therefore, the ambition would be to explore the specificity of chosen national political setting and its impact on the manifestations of various ideologies with regard to the construction and reification of hierarchical gender binaries. An example readily at hand would be a detailed analysis of the Romanian or Swedish national politics and a detailed examination of the discursive construction, reification, or possible contestation of the hierarchical gender binary within the major ideologies manifest in national politics in the selected countries.

A second path for further research could be exploring the gendered aspect of the *NATION IS A FAMILY* metaphorical cluster in radical right populist discourses, with special attention being paid to those instances in which the chosen radical right populist party has been chaired by a woman – for example, the FN under the leadership of Marine Le Pen, the DF under the chairmanship of Pia Kjaersgaard, or the FrP with Siv Jensen at its helm. The aim of such studies would be to interrogate the centrality of masculinity performatives in radical right populist ideology, and examine the possible tension between the positions afforded to those women chairing these parties – as autonomous political subjects, in positions of parity with their (male) political opponents – and their ascribed place

within the hierarchical gender binary – as women submitting to the task of reproducing the national family construct.

A third line of approach could be to widen the comparative aspect of present study to account for the various different radical right populist ideologies across Europe. A better understanding of the Swedish case study could be afforded by anchoring it in the wider Nordic context – in a comparative study, together with the DF in Denmark, the PS/SF in Finland, and the FrP in Norway. The focus would necessarily be on the translations into the radical right populist ideologies, in the respective national settings, of the gender equality ideals these countries have long claimed to embody. More precisely, it would be worth investigating the potential tensions at the level of discourse between the construction and reification of a hierarchical gender binary, and claims to gender equality among the ethnic majorities in these countries. In turn, the Romanian case study could benefit from a solid grounding in the wider Central and Eastern European context – comparing it, for example, with the Bulgarian Ataka, and/or the Hungarian Jobbik. Such a study might perhaps bring forth a more nuanced picture of the denunciation of previous gender equality efforts, and rapid reinstatement of a deeply conservative hierarchical gender binary, against the background of the collapse of authoritarian regimes, fall of planned economies, and uncritical embrace of neoliberal capitalism across the region.

The three avenues for further research I have sketched above are not mutually exclusive. In fact, they could also be explored in a concerted manner, such as for instance, in a Europe-wide research project. The project could then engage in an exhaustive mapping of the radical right populist ideology, and the challenge its various manifestations may posit to parliamentary democracy, gender equality efforts, and community-building projects for more tolerant societies, in which majority and minority populations may live side by side.

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