

**Men and Women of the Far Right:
the Gendered Dynamics of
Enrolment, Ideology, and
Mobilisation in the Polish
Konfederacja and the Czech SPD**

by
Adrien Beauduin

Submitted to Central European University
Department of Gender Studies

*In partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Comparative Gender Studies*

Supervisor: Professor Elissa Helms

Vienna, Austria
2025

Author's Declaration

I, the undersigned, Adrien Beauduin, candidate for the PhD degree in Comparative Gender Studies, declare herewith that the present thesis is exclusively my own work, based on my research and only such external information as properly credited in notes and bibliography. I declare that no unidentified and illegitimate use was made of the work of others, and no part of the thesis infringes on any person's or institution's copyright. I also declare that no part of the thesis has been submitted in this form to any other institution of higher education for an academic degree.

Stockholm, March 31, 2025

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Adrien Beauduin', written over a horizontal line.

Signature

Copyright Notice

Copyright © Adrien Beauduin, 2025. Men and Women of the Far Right: the Gendered Dynamics of Enrolment, Ideology, and Mobilisation in the Polish Konfederacja and the Czech SPD - This work is licensed under [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike \(CC BY-NC-ND\) 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/) International license.



For bibliographic and reference purposes this thesis/dissertation should be referred to as:
Beauduin, Adrien. 2025. Men and Women of the Far Right: the Gendered Dynamics of Enrolment, Ideology, and Mobilisation in the Polish Konfederacja and the Czech SPD. Doctoral dissertation, Department of Gender Studies, Central European University, Vienna.

Abstract

This dissertation interrogates the role of gender and sexuality in the far-right parliamentary parties *Konfederacja* (Confederation) in Poland and *Svoboda a přímá demokracie* (Freedom and Direct Democracy, SPD) in Czechia. While they have been kept in opposition, the chosen parties are representative of two political contexts where far-right ideas have gained ground, from the radicalised Polish mainstream to the mainstreamisation of the far right in Czechia. Based on ethnographic methods, including 38 face-to-face interviews with rank-and-file party members and fieldwork during public events, as well as an extensive study of online material, I examine how members join the far right, what ideological projects the two parties propose and how they mobilise around their ideas. Drawing from the concepts of the gender and sexual order, and hegemonic masculinity, I examine the gendered and sexualised aspects of involvement, ideology and mobilisation in *Konfederacja* and SPD. This dissertation advances as its main argument that gender and sexuality are central to these far-right projects, but with some nuances. Thus, while these elements do not stand out strongly in members' involvement paths, they are very much central to the parties' ideological projects and to their mobilisation styles. Comparing the two parties, I show how gender and sexuality matter in various, contextual and relational ways, as they are intertwined with other regimes of inequality – mostly racial/ethnic and class-based – and thus play out differently in *Konfederacja*'s paleolibertarian vision of middle- and upper-class heterosexist families replacing the state than in SPD's project of workfare chauvinist state. In both cases, the parties' mobilisation displays a strongly masculinist style drawing from the local masculine hegemony, from *Konfederacja*'s militaristic and business masculinities to SPD's one-man show led by Tomio Okamura. In these masculinist politics, women face a double bind between the 'masculine' expectations of

leadership and the ‘feminine’ expectations of womanhood, thus explaining their rarity in visible positions and their restricted focus on ‘women’s’ issues. Challenging mainstream political science’s view that gender and sexuality are peripheral to the far right, I contend instead that they are central in three ways: as pervasive to far-right ideology on race/ethnicity and class; as one of the main dimensions of inequality defended, naturalised and/or promoted by the far right; and as intrinsic to the far-right mobilisation style. Based on the idea that the two far-right parties, despite their important differences, represent the most inegalitarian position on gender and sexuality within their respective contexts, I also propose a new conceptualisation of the far right identifying anti-egalitarianism as its ideological core. Finally, I argue that *Konfederacja* and SPD do not represent some specific ‘Eastern European’ phenomenon, and I conclude instead that they should be considered as part of wider, pan-European, and even global developments.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank first and foremost the interviewees who graciously accepted to share their stories, their views and their experiences with me. While they might not agree with my analysis, I believe that they will find their words faithfully represented.

I express my gratitude to my supervisor, Professor Elissa Helms, for believing in this project and for keeping it on track. Her timely and insightful feedback, and her great patience and respect for my rhythm in the tough times of pandemic and the reverberations of war have made this academic marathon reach its happy end. I also thank my co-supervisor, Professor Dorit Geva, for her encouragements and feedback.

I would like to acknowledge the work of the university and department faculty and staff, who opened new intellectual horizons, offered steady support in all tasks, and kept the university running amidst a move and crises.

As a reminder that academic work is always the result of an immense collective labour, I consider this dissertation as the fruit of countless discussions, debates and exchanges with my professors, fellow students, friends and colleagues. Without their constant input, my data and knowledge would have remained sterile.

In particular, thank you to Ryan and Sara for pulling me out of the pandemic gloom with fun and inspiring ‘collabs’, a reminder that academia can be more than solitary monastic work. Another big thank you goes to Sara for her sharp feedback on two of this thesis’ chapters.

I would like to thank those in Prague who welcomed me in their academic bubbles and offered me the opportunity to test my ideas and to enrich them with new insights. In particular, the Centre français de recherche en sciences sociales (CEFRES) provided me with financial, intellectual and practical support, and the Department of Political Science of Charles University's Faculty of Arts welcomed me in its exciting discussions.

In shaping my consciousness and sharpening my analytical lenses, I particularly thank the *Szabad Egyetem* collective, who keeps on reminding me that life is a struggle worth living. And that activism without friendship, passion and fun is pointless.

Last but not least, I thank from the bottom of my heart my loved ones, family and friends, who might have not always understood or even remembered what this seemingly never-ending project was about, but remained supportive and helpful. Спасибо, Писикуца, за твою поддержку и любовь. À mes parents, qui ont nourri ma curiosité intellectuelle et soutenu mes choix. À Maman, qui en plus de m'inculquer ses valeurs féministes, m'a entretenu lors de longs séjours 'à la maison'; à Papa et Valérie et à leurs multiples accueils chaleureux; à mes soeurs qui auront désormais le privilège de m'appeler 'docteur'. À mon meilleur ami Julien, au million de moments partagés qui nous ont façonnés et qui continuent à le faire, à Philippe, Patrick, Marc-André, Jean-Philippe, Guillaume et Marie-Ève, fidèles amis québécois. To my beloved friends of the Šventasis Laurynas crew, London survivors, Czarny Punkt band, Silesian castle squatters. To my furry darlings Shuba and Mercedes.

I dedicate this thesis to Alexandra Elbakyan and Aaron Swartz, who fought to free scientific work from the claws of the publishing mafia. Without them and the shadow army of open access activists, I could not have written this thesis.

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	iv
Acknowledgements.....	vi
List of Abbreviations and Acronyms.....	xii
Introduction: The far right, gender and sexuality.....	1
1. Theoretical framework and literature review.....	9
The far right as inegalitarian and authoritarian.....	9
The politics of belonging, nationalism and gender.....	12
The gender and sexual order.....	15
Masculinity and (populist far-right) politics.....	17
Gender and sexuality as marginal or central for the far right?.....	19
2. Overview of the two case studies.....	25
3. Research methods and methodological considerations.....	27
Combined methods and Critical Discourse Analysis.....	28
Semi-structured life-history interviews.....	31
Positionality and ethics.....	34
4. Structure.....	40
Chapter 1: Radicalising the Polish mainstream, mainstreaming the Czech far right.....	41
1. Poland: The return of the <i>Polak-katolik</i> and the radicalisation of the mainstream.....	42
From post-communism to the far right.....	43
Challenging the far right from the right.....	46
The birth of Konfederacja.....	49
Gender and sexuality as a central battlefield in post-1989 Poland.....	52
2. Czechia: Competing challengers and far-right mainstreaming.....	56
Challenging the bipartisan system.....	57
Shaping a far-right alternative.....	59
The surge of culture wars.....	63
Conclusion.....	67
PART I – INVOLVEMENT.....	69
Chapter 2: Poland – Far-right youths against the system.....	70

1. The Polish interviewees.....	72
2. Early socialisation into the far right.....	73
It runs in the family.....	73
JKM as a political mentor and leader.....	76
The far-right online presence.....	79
3. The Generation of the Independence March.....	81
Growing up between PO and PiS.....	82
The Independence March as a turning point.....	84
Marching together under the red and white flag.....	88
4. Getting active in the party.....	90
5. Gender as (almost) invisible.....	93
Conclusion.....	97
Chapter 3: Czechia – The youth of '89 wants its revolution back.....	99
1. The Czech interviewees.....	100
2. The hope and disillusion of 1989.....	101
From enthusiasm to disappointment.....	102
Nostalgia for (some) state socialism.....	104
Winners and losers of the transition.....	106
3. From the mainstream to alternatives.....	109
Mainstream parties, frustration and apathy.....	110
Anti-establishment challengers and the ANO gateway.....	112
4. Joining the SPD.....	114
The Okamura effect.....	114
Turning points and emotions.....	116
Political wanderers and compliants.....	119
‘Radicalisation’ and the mainstreaming of the far right.....	121
Conclusion.....	125
PART II – IDEOLOGY.....	127
Chapter 4: <i>Konfederacja</i> – Tax cuts to restore the gender and sexual order of the traditional Polish family.....	128
1. The decline of the traditional family as normality under attack.....	130

The decline of society and its gender and sexual order.....	130
From Catholicism to normality.....	132
The politics of victimisation, moral panics and resentment.....	135
2. The counter-revolutionary gender and sexual order.....	138
Reasserting the traditional family.....	139
Catholicism, normality and the naturalisation of gender roles.....	142
The ambivalent use of state power: enforcing nature and changing culture.....	146
3. Connecting the dots: gender, class and ethnicity/race.....	152
The class politics of the neoliberal and paleolibertarian gender regimes.....	152
The family against migration and the ‘Great Replacement’.....	158
The neoliberalism–nationalism nexus and ‘cultural racism’.....	161
Conclusion.....	167
Chapter 5: SPD – Defending the normal world of the Czech working family.....	169
1. The supremacy of the White working family.....	171
Hard work against the Roma.....	171
The decent Czech family vs the unadaptable Roma family.....	176
Bad migrants, good migrants.....	181
2. The ‘traditional family’: tying together gender, sexuality, race and class.....	185
‘Family First’.....	186
The normal world against ‘gender’.....	190
The ‘common sense’ of homonormativity.....	197
An Eastern revolt against Western colonialism?.....	201
Conclusion.....	204
PART III – MOBILISATION.....	206
Chapter 6: <i>Konfederacja</i> ’s masculinist counter-hegemony and female activists’ double bind.....	207
1. <i>Konfederacja</i> as masculinist identity politics.....	209
<i>Konfederacja</i> as a ‘men’s party’.....	209
Politics as brutal masculine domination.....	215
Keeping the balance between counter-hegemony and hegemony.....	220
<i>Konfederacja</i> as the voice of masculinity.....	223
2. Women in <i>Konfederacja</i> ’s gender order.....	225
Naturalising women’s absence.....	226

Tensions of representation in a masculinist party.....	230
The gendered division of roles and women's subordination.....	233
3. Women of <i>Konfederacja</i> : between masculinity and femininity.....	237
The double bind of masculinist politics.....	238
Party 'demasculinisation' and the emergence of women leaders.....	241
Ewa Zajączkowska-Hernik as the woman warrior.....	244
Conclusion.....	248
Chapter 7: Tomio Okamura's one-man show as masculinist politics.....	250
1. From self-made man to man of the people.....	252
Tomio Okamura's Czech dream.....	252
With 'normal people' against the Roma and politicians.....	255
2. The one-man show with the people.....	259
Rebellious, but respectable.....	260
For the people, among the people.....	264
Boasting, muscle-flexing and flirting.....	270
3. The authoritarian 'Sect of direct dictatorship' and the boys' club.....	274
Army discipline in the party.....	275
The boys' club and women.....	280
Conclusion.....	285
Conclusion: Towards a new conceptualisation of the far right and gender and sexuality.....	287
The normality and normalisation of the far right.....	289
The centrality of gender and sexuality.....	291
An Eastern European post-socialist phenomenon?.....	296
Reconceptualising the far right and the role of gender and sexuality.....	301
Looking backwards and forwards.....	309
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	315
APPENDIX I.....	361

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

- ANO: *Akce nespokojených občanů* (Action of Dissatisfied Citizens)
- ČSSD: *Česká strana sociálně demokratická* (Czech Social Democratic Party)
- DS/DSSS: *Dělnická Strana* (Workers' Party) / *Dělnická strana sociální spravedlnosti* (Workers' Party of Social Justice)
- EP: European Parliament
- EU: European Union
- JKM: Janusz Korwin-Mikke
- KDU-ČSL: *Křesťanská a demokratická unie – Československá strana lidová* (Christian and Democratic Union – Czechoslovak People's Party)
- Konfederacja: *Konfederacja Wolność i Niepodległość* (Confederation Liberty and Independence)
- Korona: *Korona Konfederacji Polskiej* (Crown of the Polish Confederation)
- KORWiN: *Koalicja Odnowy Rzeczypospolitej Wolność i Nadzieja* (Coalition for the Renewal of the Republic of Poland, Freedom and Hope)
- KSČM: *Komunistická strana Čech a Moravy* (Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia)
- LPR: *Liga Polskich Rodzin* (League of Polish Families)
- MW: *Młodzież Wszechpolska* (All-Polish Youth)
- NATO: North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
- ND/endejca: *Narodowa Demokracja* (National Democracy)
- NN: *Nowa Nadzieja* (New Hope)
- ODS: *Občanská demokratická strana* (Civic Democratic Party)
- ONR: *Obóz Narodowo-Radykalny* (National Radical Camp)
- PiS: *Prawo i Sprawiedliwość* (Law and Justice)
- PO/KO: *Platforma Obywatelska* (Civic Platform) / *Koalicja Obywatelska* (Civic Coalition)
- Republicans: *Sdružení pro republiku – Republikánská strana Československa* (Rally for the Republic – Republican Party of Czechoslovakia)
- RN: *Ruch Narodowy* (National Movement)
- SO: *Samoobrona Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej* (Self-Defence of the Republic of Poland)
- SPD: *Svoboda a přímá demokracie* (Freedom and Direct Democracy)
- Úsvit: *Úsvit přímé demokracie Tomia Okamury* (Dawn of Direct Democracy of Tomio Okamura)

Introduction: The far right, gender and sexuality

Standing in the centre of Warsaw on November 11, 2013, I observed the impressive crowds celebrating Poland's 1918 independence, moving as a sea of red-and-white flags and drowning in the fumes of red flares reminiscent of a football stadium atmosphere. What started as a small gathering of far-right groups in the 2000s had taken massive proportions by the early 2010s, with tens of thousands of marchers, from Polish neo-fascist organisations to 'normal' people, gradually turning the *Marsz Niepodległości* (Independence March) into the central event of the Polish far right, and even the European far right. I watched marchers – mostly young men – pass by, some in historical military uniforms or contemporary camouflage with their organisations' flags, roaring nationalist, anti-government and anti-communist slogans, while others calmly enjoyed a stroll through the city centre. The march started right on the Roman Dmowski Roundabout, named after the leader and ideologist of the interwar far right, who has been largely rehabilitated in contemporary Poland despite his extremist views, including his rabid antisemitism. Walking further, I saw aggressive masked men recalling football hooligans running down towards the *Plac Zbawiciela* (Saviour Square) and throwing around thundering bangers. A few minutes later, I read online that they had burnt an iconic artistic work installed on that square, which represented a giant rainbow and was despised by the far right as the symbol of the LGBT+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and other non-cisheteronormative sexual orientations and gender identities) movement. At the time, I considered such manifestations – including their homophobic character – as a relic of the past:

as the backwardness of a nation retrenched in nationalism and Catholicism due to its experience of two totalitarian regimes, something bound to wither with the country's transformation under the bulldozer of neoliberal capitalism. And yet, even then, I could not fail to notice how 'mainstream' this extremist event had become.

Several years later in the Summer of 2015, upon returning to Prague, Czechia, where I had studied a couple of years before, I realised that the surge of far-right mobilisation was not the last twitch of a dying movement. Arriving in the midst of the 'refugee crisis', I witnessed the tensions between opponents and proponents of welcoming refugees from the Middle East, and I observed how racist discourses spread like wildfire, ultimately shaping a societal consensus against refugees. In largely non-religious Czechia with few displays of ardent patriotism, I was surprised by the eruption of discourses on 'Christian values' and national identity surrounding this anti-refugee mobilisation, in opposition to Islam as embodied by refugees mostly coming from Muslim-majority countries. I personally mobilised in favour of accepting refugees, seeing it as the humanitarian and just thing to do, and I came to voice my opposition against the anti-refugee groups with more or less explicitly far-right views. From the opposite side of the police cordon lines, I could see not only aggressive young men with shaved heads shouting *Čechy Čechům!* (Czechia for the Czechs!) and looking for confrontation, but also the mostly middle-aged 'normal' people waving Czech flags and little flags with a crossed out mosque. Listening to their speeches, I was struck by the combination of both racist and 'liberal' arguments, such as the idea of Muslims representing a threat to democracy, freedom, and women's rights. The last part of this argument particularly astonished me, considering the virtual absence of a feminist movement in Czechia. At one of those demonstrations, I remember being puzzled by a large banner held up high by anti-refugee activists reading in

Czech and English ‘*Muž = Žena*’, ‘Man = Woman’ and ‘Stop Islam’. As I left the counter-protest, I also recall a middle-aged woman verbally attacking young female counter-protesters by predicting that they will soon be forced to wear a *burqa* – an outer garment fully covering face and body worn by some Muslim women. I felt this bewildering paradox between, on the one hand, Czech anti-refugee discourses weaponising women’s rights against refugees – racialised as Muslim – and, on the other hand, a large societal consensus against feminism and substantive gender equality. Later on, as I engaged into my doctoral research, I would come to recognise this combination of racist and feminist arguments as part of what Sara Farris calls ‘femonationalism’ (2017).

During the so-called ‘refugee crisis’ in 2015-2016, the strong anti-refugee reaction led by Viktor Orbán’s Hungary and joined by Slovakia, Czechia, and eventually Poland, came to be initially dismissed in Western Europe as a sign of the region’s – often designated as ‘Eastern Europe’ – backwardness (Kalmar, 2018). In the following months, however, the triumph of the Brexit movement in the United Kingdom and the rise of Donald Trump to the U.S. American presidency, both largely fuelled by nationalist and anti-migrant sentiments, and the surging results of far-right parties throughout the ‘tolerant’ and ‘liberal’ West, refuted any hypothesis of a particularly ‘Eastern European’ phenomenon. Despite the growing understanding by both scholars and observers of the need to seize the rise of the far right as a global phenomenon, the idea of fundamental East-West differences in the far right has persisted (e.g. Minkenberg, 2017; Pirro, 2015), such as the idea that ‘Western’ European movements and parties insist on wider civilisational ‘European’ liberal values against an allegedly backward Islam, while ‘Eastern’ (or ‘East Central’) Europeans stand firm on nationalist, conservative and anti-liberal positions (Brubaker, 2017). As a Westerner – a Belgian raised in Québec – who had developed

an interest and expertise in Central and Eastern European history and politics, I saw such a divide as not only oversimplifying and exaggerating the dichotomy between the ‘liberal’ character of the Western far right and the ‘conservative’ character of its ‘Eastern’ counterparts, but also grossly misrepresenting the Czech case, where many in the anti-refugee movement drew from ‘liberal’ arguments. Amongst others, the ‘femonationalist’ instrumentalisation of women’s rights – and of gender and sexuality in general – within the Czech anti-refugee movement displayed a strong resemblance to arguments deployed in the West.

In light of the similar, yet different entanglements of nationalism and gender that I witnessed in Poland and Czechia, which echoed developments in Europe and beyond, I chose the field of gender studies for my return to academia, convinced that its interest in intersectional analysis provided the most insightful tools to understand the current far-right surge. Embarking on this dissertation focusing on the far-right parties *Konfederacja* in Poland and *Svoboda a přímá demokracie* (Freedom and Direct Democracy, hereafter SPD) in Czechia, I wanted to better understand the role of gender and sexuality in the contemporary far right, beyond the Iron Curtain of the East-West dichotomy, by comparing two neighbouring countries with a similar contemporary history and often lumped together as ‘Eastern European’ despite their stark socio-political and cultural differences. Moreover, since there had not been any ‘close-up’ research (Toscano, 2019a) – i.e. studies using ethnographic methods and direct contact with activists – of *Konfederacja* and SPD, I wanted to contribute to a growing scholarship on the far right using ethnographic methods in order to fill the important empirical gap caused by scholars’ tendency to keep their distances with the far right (Blee, 2007; M. J. Goodwin, 2006). After standing on the opposite side of the ‘barricades’, I wanted to take off my activist hat, put on the researcher’s and cross the police line to make an effort to understand far-right

party members, with an open and yet critical mind. The people I encountered had a rich array of experiences, views and feelings, embodied historical continuities and breaks, and displayed coherent – even if at times strongly discriminatory and even hateful – worldviews, as well as hesitations and contradictions. I listened to them as respectfully as I could, trying to keep my judgements in check and to apprehend their worlds on their own terms, albeit with a critical analysis. The present dissertation is the result of this ‘immersion’ consisting of thirty-eight face-to-face interviews with male and female members of *Konfederacja* and the SPD, hours of participant observation at political meetings and demonstrations, and years of online observation of media and social media.

In the present dissertation, I explore the puzzles that have been running through my mind since those heated street encounters of the early to mid-2010s: on the roots and dynamics of far-right mobilisation in both countries; their seemingly different forms and rhetorics, such as the obsession with abortion and LGBT+ people within the Polish far right, or the paradox of some Czech far-right activists deploying ‘feminist’ and ‘pro-LGBT+’ arguments against Muslims while rejecting feminist and LGBT+ claims; and on the movements’ similarities and differences between themselves, and with my own Western context. These interrogations coalesced into the following research question: what is the role of gender and sexuality in the contemporary far right, and how does this confluence of far-right politics and gender politics play out in Czechia and Poland? Looking into this topic from the viewpoint of gender studies and political sociology, I pose three subquestions, which structure my three-part dissertation, each containing two chapters, one for each country.

In the first part, I ask whether and how gender affects the activists’ pathway into far-right membership, focusing on the life stories and involvement paths of the interviewed male and

female members. Analysing the starkly different sample groups – the young, urban and university-educated Polish interviewees, and the middle-aged, provincial Czech members with more modest class and educational backgrounds – the two groups’ distinctive generational experiences, ideological background and pathways into the far right strongly stood out. Whereas the Polish youths came from conservative and nationalist families, and joined the far right as a reaction to Polish socio-political developments in the 2010s, the Czech interviewees took a longer path and more often referred to the experience of the 1989 revolution and the transformation. When it comes to gender, I did not find decisive evidence of specifically gendered paths into the two political parties under study.

In the second part, I examine the importance and role of gender and sexuality within the two far-right ideological projects, mixing insights from the interviews with the parties’ communication. As I argue, gender and sexuality are central to the far right, but in different ways and to varying extents: while these issues stand out clearly in *Konfederacja*’s paleolibertarian vision of Polish middle- and upper-class heteronormative/heterosexist families replacing the state, they mostly come in as an extension of the ethnonationalist workfarist state in the SPD’s ideology. Comparing the two cases, I show that there are important differences between the two parties because of local socio-political dynamics, underlining the need to understand the far right and its gender and sexual order within their context. Thus, despite both sharing a concern over the gender and sexual order, like all far-right parties, *Konfederacja* defends ultra-conservative positions against women’s rights – including their reproductive rights – and rejects sexual minority rights, while SPD merely defends the status quo of ‘modern traditional’ views without pushing for more inequalities.

Finally, in the third part about mobilisation, I examine these parties as gendered institutions, looking at the ways in which the local gender hegemony structures the parties' activism, their leadership, and the division of roles between men and women. I demonstrate that it is only possible to comprehensively understand gender and sexuality within the far right by going beyond rhetoric to look into the style and organisational culture. Namely, I show how masculinist styles of politics and leadership – despite the differences between the two cases – tend to reproduce masculine domination and exclude women by catching them in a double bind between performances of masculinity and femininity.

Based on my close-up comparative study of two far-right parties, I contribute to the theoretical debates about the far right and gender and sexuality, which still tend to limit their scope to what party programmes and leaders say about 'women's and LGBT+ rights' and 'family policy', often coming to the conclusion that gender and sexuality are secondary or even instrumental issues for the far right. By adopting a wider, intersectional understanding of gender and examining political style and organisation, I rather conclude that gender and sexuality are essential to the far right, not only in its ideological projects, but also in its mobilisation. My main contribution is thus to assert the importance of gender and sexuality for the far right in three ways. First, even when not explicitly evoked, gendered and sexual aspects are always entangled into the far right's ethnonationalist vision, its socio-economic project and its anti-establishment rhetoric. Second, the gender and sexual orders foreseen by the far right always (re)assert gender- and sexuality-based inequalities and hierarchies, i.e. the dominant position of cisheterosexual ('native') men. Third, gendered and sexualised performances are crucial in the far right's political mobilisation style because far-right activists heavily draw

from their local gender hegemony to perform the contextually ‘correct’ masculinities and femininities.

My secondary contribution lays in my challenge to the conceptual division of the European far right between West and East by showing through transnational comparisons that the Polish and Czech far right cannot be understood as ‘Eastern European’, ‘East Central European’ or ‘post-socialist’, but rather represent Europe-wide, and even world-wide, developments. While the far right, and the two parties under study, are located within their own national contexts and draw from their own heritage, they reflect first and foremost wider developments in contemporary globalised Europe and beyond. Thus, despite the relevance of some common historical experiences, such as the post-war state socialist regime, the 1989 revolutions, and the subsequent democratic transition accompanied by neoliberal capitalism, *Konfederacja* and SPD do not represent the same generational experiences and do not belong to the same ideological branch of the far right. Thus, state socialism and the 1989 revolutions do not constitute central reference points for *Konfederacja*’s young membership as much as for the SPD’s middle-aged members. Moreover, concerning ideology, *Konfederacja* stands much closer to U.S. American paleolibertarianism than to the SPD’s statism. Similarly, the SPD’s weaponisation of women’s and LGBT+ rights against (Muslim) migrants resembles more Northern and Western European trends than *Konfederacja*’s staunch defence of patriarchy. Instead of reproducing assumptions of regional homogeneity, such as the East-West European divide, close-up studies of the far right should take into account distinct local and national features as much as similarities between – and ‘translations’ of – transnational ideas and repertoires.

Based on my research and related academic work, I reach the wider conclusion, which I frame here as a tertiary and final contribution, that, while far-right parties have different views on gender and sexuality adapted to their national context and electoral competition, they all adopt and perform an anti-egalitarian position that naturalises hierarchies and power imbalances. Therefore, the far right's positions on – and performances of – gender and sexuality as being the most opposed to gender and sexual equality in its local context constitute one of the core characteristics of this party family. Based on these findings, I question mainstream conceptualisations of the far right that set ethnic nationalism – or 'nativism' – as the sole core of the far right. My final contribution is thus to recenter conceptual debates on the far right by arguing that the combination of anti-egalitarianism and authoritarianism constitutes the ideological core of the far right. This authoritarian anti-egalitarianism manifests itself along different, intertwined dimensions, such as race/ethnicity, gender and sexuality and socio-economic class. While the far-right activates and combines these dimensions in different ways and to different degrees, it always remains true to its ideological essence, i.e. the authoritarian defence, naturalisation and/or promotion of inequality.

1. Theoretical framework and literature review

The far right as inequalitarian and authoritarian

Before engaging more with existing scholarship on the topic of the far right and gender and sexuality, I must clarify what I mean by – and how I use – those terms, which are not only widely discussed and debated in the academic world, but have also become widespread and even weaponised in the public sphere. Under the term 'far right', I do not simply consider the parties, groups and activists located on the right end of the political spectrum, but rather a political family with an ideological core, regardless of its historical variations and

contemporary forms. Challenging Cas Mudde's (2007) influential definition identifying nativism as the central defining feature of the far right, I join other scholars who have kept the important issue of inequality, considered to be the historical ideological core of right-wing ideology (Bobbio, 1996), at the centre of the far right's conceptualisation (Betz, 1994, p. 4; Carter, 2005, pp. 16–17; Mondon, 2016). However, since these authors do not provide a 'minimum definition' (Mudde, 2007, p. 14) of the far right based on the idea of inequality, I propose the following, succinct definition as capturing the far right's essence: *the authoritarian defence, naturalisation and/or promotion of inequality*. As I argue further, keeping inequality at the core of the far right's definition helps better understand the ways in which this party family considers other dimensions beyond race/ethnicity, such as gender and sexuality, and socio-economic class.

This definition does not invalidate Mudde's remark that nativism is a central element in the (European) far right, but it reasserts the entanglement of dimensions – such as the gendered and sexualised aspects of nativism – and the importance of other dimensions in far-right ideology. In the present thesis, I do not use the term 'nativism', preferring instead to use the wider concept of 'ethnonationalism' – the striving for the sovereignty and supremacy of an ethnically defined national group (Brubaker, 2004; Connor, 1973, 1994; Lecours, 2000; Rydgren, 2007) – which better fits the Polish and Czech contexts, where ethnonationalism is still often directed against other 'native' ethnic or religious groups, such as the Roma, and not just against migrants (Dražanová, 2015; Kajta, 2020a, p. 15; Krzyżanowski, 2018; Pasieka, 2015; Stejskalová, 2012). I do follow Mudde's conceptualisation of the far right as marked by authoritarianism, understood as “the belief in a strictly ordered society, in which infringements of authority are to be punished severely” (Mudde, 2007, p. 23). I also adopt Mudde's

distinction between the radical right – which accepts basic democratic rules – and the extreme right – which does not – and the use of the umbrella term ‘far right’ to designate both the radical and extreme right (Art, 2011; Mudde, 2019; Pirro, 2023). I use ‘far right’ throughout this dissertation to designate the two parties.

Considering the widespread use of the term ‘populism’ in today’s scholarship – and especially the term ‘populist radical right’, following Cas Mudde’s widely accepted terminology (2007) – I must explain why I avoid it in the present dissertation. First of all, its use as a label corresponds to an understanding of populism as an ideology, suggesting that it possesses a coherent set of ideas, which it does not (Moffitt & Tormey, 2014, p. 383). As Moffitt and Tormey underline, this does not mean that populism is a useless term, nor that it does not express any idea, but they contend that populism is better conceptualised as a political style combining appeals to ‘the people’, a discourse of crisis and the use of ‘bad manners’ (2014, p. 382). A second issue with the label is that it is too often used as a euphemism for far-right ideological views and policies, obscuring the centrality of ethnonationalism and authoritarianism (Mondon, 2016; Slačálek & Svobodová, 2018). The third and final argument against the ‘populist’ label is that its proliferation in public discourses has turned it into a political weapon to disqualify opponents (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017), especially in the wake of Brexit and the rise of Donald Trump. Due to these theoretical and ethical concerns, I prefer the wider term ‘anti-establishment’ signifying criticism and/or rejection of ‘established politics’ and ‘elites’ (Engler et al., 2019, p. 1320). Occasionally, I use the word ‘populist’ when referring to scholarship on far-right parties that draw from the concept of populism.

The politics of belonging, nationalism and gender

To a large extent, the contemporary political agenda in times of globalisation and mass migration is dominated by the ‘politics of belonging’ – who belongs where, and who does not – with their critical socio-economic and political effects (Yuval-Davis, 2011, p. 2). In the present world still mostly organised along ‘national’ lines, and especially in post-socialist Europe, most states present themselves as nation-states, as the political and institutional framework of the nation, often understood as an ethnic group, and (ethno)national belonging thus constitutes an important reference point (Brubaker, 1996). However, as constructivist thinking has theorised, the nation is not a pre-existing group, but rather an ‘imagined community’ (Anderson, 1983; Hobsbawm, 1990) that is constantly (re)constructed through continuously shifting discourses and practices (S. Hall, 1996; Wodak et al., 1999) which (re)define the question of boundaries between those who belong and those who do not, the members and foreigners, the ‘Self’ and ‘Other(s)’ (Barth, 1969). The focus of constructivist research on nationalism is not on the nation’s genuineness or fictitiousness, though, but rather on the “processual dynamics of nationalism” (Brubaker, 1996, p. 21) and on “ethnopolitical entrepreneurs” (Brubaker et al., 2006, p. 10). Today’s far-right actors are some of the main ‘ethnopolitical entrepreneurs’ who (re)produce the categories of nation, ethnicity/race, culture and citizenship as central to their politics of belonging (Meret & Siim, 2013).

In the study of nationalism as a social construct, feminist scholars have pointed out that the construction of national – and, in general, ethnic/racial – belonging is intertwined with constructions of gender and sexuality. Amongst others, George Mosse shows how modern Western European nationalisms encompassed particular ideas about proper gender roles and sexuality (1985), Anthias & Yuval-Davis analyse the different biological, cultural and

symbolic roles assigned to men and women in nationalist projects (1989), and Anne McClintock points out the constructions of gender underlying nationalist ideology (1993). In this body of work, the crucial role of masculinity in nationalism has also been scrutinised (Bracewell, 2000; Kimmel & Ferber, 2000; Massad, 1995; Nagel, 1998, 2003), vividly illustrated by Cynthia Enloe's claim that "nationalisms have typically sprung from masculinized memory, masculinized humiliation and masculinized hope" (Enloe, 1989, p. 44). The consensus among this first wave of feminist scholarship is that nationalism is intrinsically patriarchal, heteronormative – i.e. based on heterosexuality as the norm – and even "heterosexist" – i.e. establishing a relationship of domination of heterosexual men over women and non-heterosexual men (Peterson, 1999). Some authors early on also included the issue of socio-economic class, as George Mosse in his pioneering *Nationalism and Sexuality* (1985), where he shows that emerging German nationalism not only asserted a certain ethnic/racial order, but also served the bourgeoisie as a rising socio-economic class by affirming its own norms of 'respectable' gender and sexual behaviour.

More recent scholarship criticises two widespread assumptions and conclusions contained in feminist scholarship on nationalism and gender from the 1980s and 1990s. First of all, the conceptualisation of nationalism's relationship to gender as fixed, i.e. that nationalism is inexorably 'heterosexist.' This assumption not only erases the feminist aspects of many past and present nationalist struggles, and especially anti-colonial nationalism (Scrinzi, 2024; West, 1997; Yuval-Davis, 2008), but it also hinders any understanding of nationalism as a versatile and changing ideology. Especially in recent decades, some neoliberal, nationalist and far-right actors in the global North have rearticulated the relationship between nation and gender and sexuality, claiming a gender-equal national culture against the alleged misogyny of minorities,

especially Muslims, the aforementioned ‘femonationalism’; an argument sometimes also extended to homosexual rights and defined by Jasbir Puar as ‘homonationalism’ (Puar, 2007). The second issue lies in the tendency to view women as objects – and even victims – of nationalism, erasing their role as its subjects, supporters and perpetrators (Scrinzi, 2024, p. 5; Žarkov, 2007). This bias reproduces certain misconceptions about gendered characters, such as the idea that women are less prone to nationalist and/or far-right views because of their nature or socialisation (Mudde, 2007, p. 113; e.g. Nagel, 1998). Questioning this assumption, historians have shown the active engagement of women, even in the most extreme ethnonationalist – i.e. far-right – political projects (Blee, 1991; De Grazia, 1992; Koonz, 1986) and in contemporary ones (Amesberger & Halbmayer, 2002; Bacchetta & Power, 2002; Blee, 2002; Blee & Deutsch, 2012; Köttig et al., 2017). Such research demonstrates that women can hold the same extremist views as men and commit violent acts just like men, even though they might have different, less visible or secondary roles in nationalist and far-right movements.

To better understand how gender and sexuality interact differently and dynamically with other dimensions – such as race/ethnicity and socio-economic class – in the politics of belonging, scholars have increasingly drawn from Kimberle Crenshaw’s (1991) concept of ‘intersectionality’ originating from U.S. American Black feminist thought. While some scholars have noted that the term ‘intersectionality’ denotes a rather fixed, rigid and geometrical addition of categories (Connell, 2009, p. 86; Yuval-Davis, 2011, p. 6), others have used it productively to interrogate the formation of identities in the context of gender and the far right (S. Mayer et al., 2014; Norocel, 2017; Scrinzi, 2024; Snipes & Mudde, 2020). To do so, scholars have somewhat adapted the concept to shift the focus on processes of categorisation (and exclusion) rather than on the processes of subjectification originally

designated by Crenshaw. Some of these authors have renamed the concept as ‘intersectionality from above’ (S. Mayer et al., 2014, p. 251) or ‘exclusive intersectionality’ (Meret et al., 2016, p. 109) to investigate how the far right deploys categories and establishes hierarchies in discourses, policies and deeds. I will follow their academic lead by using the concept in this sense, looking at intersectionality as the myriad ways in which “political projects construct and activate various categories of difference and belonging” (Scrinzi, 2024, p. 6). Thus, this dissertation studies the far right in Poland and Czechia “as an intersectional struggle over social relations – class, gender, sexuality, religion, and ethnicity” (Sauer, 2020, p. 35).

The gender and sexual order

When it comes to my focus on gender and sexuality, what do I mean by those terms? I use Raewyn Connell’s definition of gender as “the structure of social relations that centres on the reproductive arena, and the set of practices that bring reproductive distinctions between bodies into social processes” (Connell, 2009, p. 11). As Connell underlines, there are powerful ‘structures of inequality’ rooted in time and place, something reflected in her use of the term ‘hegemony’, which denotes power struggles in the maintenance and contestation of structures, such as in the ‘hegemonic masculinity’ at the centre of the gender order (Connell, 2005, p. 77). Thus, while individuals have some room for manoeuvre, some agency, to enact – or perform – their own practices, and are not completely subjugated to structures, their subjectivities are also (re)produced and limited by powerful structural effects. This understanding means that gender as structure and practices is historically grounded but also continually changing as it is constantly (re)produced and contested through power struggles (Ferree, 2018).[^]

To analyse *Konfederacja*’s and the SPD’s conceptualisations of the gendered organisation of society, I draw from the conceptual frameworks of the ‘gender order’ (Connell, 2005, 2009,

2012) and ‘gender regime’ (Walby, 2009, 2020). Connell defines the gender order as “the structure of gender relations in a given society at a given time” (Connell, 2012, p. 1677). Striving to enable a more systematic analysis of gender and the ways it inhabits both the domestic and public spheres, operates at different – and yet connected – levels of social life and organises all domains of society, Sylvia Walby has developed the concept of ‘gender regime’, “a set of inter-related gendered social relations and gendered institutions that constitutes a system” (Walby, 2009, p. 301). A strength of Walby’s approach is her refusal to limit ‘gender’ to the issue of the family, insisting that gender is dispersed through different domains of social interaction, in both the domestic and public spheres (Walby, 2020, p. 418). Both Connell and Walby adopt a certain intersectional approach, underlining the importance of studying “the mutual conditioning of structures – i.e. the ways they change each other – and how actual social situations are produced out of that mutual conditioning” (Connell, 2009, p. 86) and the co-constitutive macro-level ‘regimes of inequality’, such as gender, race and class (Walby, 2009, p. 19). These complementary approaches acknowledge both the importance of structures and the agency of individuals and groups, something that accounts for dynamic interplay and changes. Regimes of inequality are thus understood as dynamic configurations rooted in historical, but also changing contexts, which explain continuities and transformations in configurations between gender, sexuality, race/ethnicity, class and religion in some instances, or the salience of other categories.

In their conceptualisations of gender, both Connell and Walby locate sexuality across ‘dimensions’ or ‘institutional domains’ of their gender order or regime, but they do not theorise it separately. Although she does not use it repeatedly, Connell mentions the ‘sexual order’ in an article when referring to “institutionalized heterosexuality” (Connell, 1997, p. 74). Michael

Warner also uses ‘sexual order’ to refer to heterosexuality’s deep intrenchment in institutions and culture (Warner, 1993, pp. x–xiv). Thus, while I agree that sexuality is much more than sexual identities (Jackson, 2018; Rubin, 2011), I will draw from the concept of the ‘sexual order’ to talk about the organisation of sexual orientations and identities in a given society at a given time. Throughout the dissertation, I thus refer to the ‘gender and sexual order’ to designate the ways in which relations between gender and sexual identities are organised in society, since gender and sexuality are intimately linked, especially in “the institutionalization and practice of heterosexuality and the maintenance of heteronormativity” (Jackson, 2018, p. 140). This conceptual simplification serves adequately the purpose of laying out and analysing far-right discourses and practices, which tend to be based on dichotomous and hierarchically-organised understandings of both gender and sexuality as fixed identities: men and women, heterosexuals and homosexuals.

Masculinity and (populist far-right) politics

Considering the idea that “[t]hose performances of masculinity that citizens accept as appropriate serve to legitimate the actors’ claim to power” (Ferree, 2020, p. 900), I join those scholars who have focused on masculinity to understand the far right and to do so I turn to the concept of hegemonic masculinity developed by Connell (Connell, 1987, 2005; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). She defines masculinity as “a place in gender relations, the practices through which men and women engage that place in gender, and the effects of these practices in bodily experience, personality and culture” (Connell, 2005, p. 71). According to Connell, there are several forms of masculinities and femininities organised in a relational and hierarchical way within the gender order, with hegemonic masculinity as its cornerstone, defined as “the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer

to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women” (Connell, 2005, p. 77). Connell highlights that hegemonic masculinity is more of an ideal-type than a statistical reality, has local, regional and global forms and is in constant change through the reproduction of hegemony in dialogue with subordinate, alternative, and counter-hegemonic forms of masculinities and femininities. As she writes, there is no hegemonic femininity, but there is a prominent form of femininity she calls ‘emphasised femininity’ that “is defined around compliance with [the] subordination [of women to men] and is oriented to accommodating the interests and desires of men” (Connell, 1987, p. 183).

One of the main issues with the application of Connell’s concept to empirical studies is the lack of clarity around the necessity for all manifestations of hegemonic masculinity to clearly express or embody the hierarchy of masculinities and femininities (Messerschmidt, 2018, pp. 74–75). While Connell and her collaborators are right to point out that hegemonic masculinity cannot be reduced to a collection of traits, they risk missing out on the implicit reproduction of hegemonic masculinity through some performances of masculinity that do not explicitly demean subordinate masculinities and/or femininities. Mimi Schippers reworks Connell’s concept in a more analytically practical way by focusing on the “idealized *quality content* of the categories ‘man’ and ‘woman’” to understand what she re-baptises as the ‘gender hegemony’ (Schippers, 2007, p. 90). She also insists on the importance of heterosexuality in maintaining the hierarchical difference and complementarity between masculinity and femininity. This theoretical work leads her to redefine hegemonic masculinity as the “qualities defined as manly that establish and legitimate a hierarchical and complementary relationship to femininity” (Schippers, 2007, p. 94). This understanding brings back into focus the

symbolic reproduction of gender hegemony by identifying characteristics idealised as masculine or feminine and anchored within a relationship of superiority/inferiority and complementarity. To be clear, this perspective does not reduce hegemonic masculinity to what powerful men do, but rather critically assesses how certain characteristics are made more available to men and less to women, how this reproduces gender hegemony as the overall subordination of women to men, and how ‘deviant’ behaviour is marginalised and repressed (Schippers, 2007, p. 95).

Following the idea that the anti-establishment style of many far-right parties is a repertoire of performance used to build political relations (Moffitt & Tormey, 2014, p. 387), it becomes crucial to look more into far-right actors’ behaviour, demeanour, manners, dress, accent, vocabulary, and more. However, while Moffitt and Tormey use Judith Butler’s understanding of performativity to underline the discursive power of ‘populist’ claims – how ‘populist’ politicians and their audiences can jointly bring into being ‘the people’ and ‘the leader’ – they do not engage with the gendered aspects of performativity. It is nevertheless essential to do so, because an important aspect of leaders’ charisma rests to a large extent on their ‘correct’ gendered performance – as corresponding to the local ‘gender hegemony’ (Geva, 2018, 2020). Only through a combination of scholarship on masculinity/femininity and on political style can the importance of gendered performances of the far right be fully appreciated, and I draw from Connell’s concept of ‘hegemonic masculinity’ with Schippers’s insights on ‘hegemonic gender’ to analyse the ways in which *Konfederacja* and SPD are organising and mobilising.

Gender and sexuality as marginal or central for the far right?

When a new body of work around the contemporary far right emerged in the 1990s, it largely ignored the issue of gender in this political family (Blee & Creasap, 2010; Mudde, 2007).

Moreover, when scholars studying the far right increasingly looked into the issue of gender within the far right, they tended to ignore existing feminist scholarship on nationalism, perhaps because they considered it as biased ‘activist’ research with little empirical grounding (e.g. Mudde, 2007, pp. 91–92). Nevertheless, when mainstream political scientists took a greater interest in the gendered aspects of the far right with their own toolkit, they provided new data and insights, adding complexity to the picture. While some of the early works confirm that far-right political actors tend to be conservative and even very conservative on issues of gender and sexuality such as the family, women’s rights and LGBT+ rights (Kitschelt & McGann, 1997; Kofman, 1998), other scholars have also rightfully pointed out that there is a great deal of variation between countries and parties, and over time (Akkerman, 2015; Amesberger & Halbmayr, 2002; De Lange & Mügge, 2015). As mentioned above, it is especially in the increasing targeting of people racialised as Muslim or non-White/non-European that some far-right parties have embraced a more ‘modern’ position on gender and sexuality, at least in rhetoric (Akkerman, 2015, p. 19; Meret & Siim, 2013). Due to this variety of views, some leading scholars like Cas Mudde have come to the conclusion that a conservative position on gender could not be considered as a defining feature of what he called the ‘populist radical right’ (Mudde, 2007; Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2015).

Another important focus of political science has been to identify and explain the heavily male-biased electorate and membership of the far right, the ‘gender gap’ (Betz, 1994, pp. 142–146; Givens, 2004; Harteveld et al., 2015). In this body of research mostly limited to the global North, sometimes including Central and Eastern Europe (e.g. Harteveld et al., 2015), scholars have advanced several explanations, such as women’s socialisation, their allegedly more liberal views, lower workforce participation, higher religiosity, lower political efficacy, higher

distrust for new parties or parties labelled as extremist, stronger dislike for far-right political style or lower interest in far-right issues. With time, a certain consensus has formed around the idea that the gender gap is not due to women's disapproval with far-right opinions (Dietze, 2020; Hartevelt et al., 2015; Mudde, 2007; Spierings & Zaslove, 2015), something that tends to be proven by the fact that the gender gap has narrowed and even disappeared in some countries like France or Italy (N. Mayer, 2015; Scrinzi, 2024, p. 76). Nevertheless, those mainstream political science attempts have showed certain limits in their analysis of the far right and gender and sexuality, and some of these scholars have admitted that their macro-level transnational comparative studies could not provide satisfactory answers (Hartevelt et al., 2015, p. 129; Spierings & Zaslove, 2017, p. 840). As Francesca Scrinzi rightfully observes, these approaches might partly explain why men more often vote for – and join – the far right than women, but they do not explain why many women do indeed vote for – and join – the far right, nor why the gender gap might vary over space and time (Scrinzi, 2024, pp. 3–4).

Thanks to the growing influence and presence of feminist scholars in mainstream political science (Engeli, 2020), there has been a return of classic feminist theory in the field of research on the far right and a return to qualitative methods to fill these important remaining gaps. Two of the most productive trends have been, first, to widen the scope of investigation about gender and sexuality, and, secondly, to shift the focus from demand-side factors – i.e. what the electorate wants – towards supply-side factors – i.e. what the parties/movements are offering (Scrinzi, 2024). This body of research has thus examined gender and sexuality beyond questions of women's and LGBT+ rights, investigating how the far right constructs and evokes masculinities and femininities (Spierings, 2020, p. 46), taking an increased interest in the ways gender and sexuality are enacted and performed by far-right parties and their representatives,

and putting the emphasis on the issue of masculinity (Linders et al., 2023; Löffler, 2020; Moffitt, 2016; Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2015; Norocel, 2009, 2010; Sauer, 2020; Starck, 2020). While scholars have insisted on the importance of masculinity in male leaders' charisma central to many far-right successes (Löffler, 2020; Starck, 2020), the emergence of successful female far-right leaders has also triggered insightful studies explaining their appeal as a skilful, yet fragile balance of femininity and masculinity (Geva, 2018, 2020; Meret et al., 2016). As an important inspiration for my research, this scholarship has established that gender and sexuality must be studied as more than a programmatic point in political discourses, but also as systems and as performed identities.

Questioning some mainstream scholarly publications that have concluded that issues of gender and sexual equality are not central to the far right (Abi-Hassan, 2017; Mudde, 2007; Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2015), scholars adopting a feminist perspective have insisted on gender's crucial role in articulating essential categories of difference. Gabriele Dietze and Julia Roth thus argue that, more than a simple issue, it is "a meta-language for negotiating different conditions of inequality and power" (Dietze & Roth, 2020, p. 8). Birgit Sauer also insists on gender's position at the crossroads of different axes of difference, claiming that the far right is "a gendered movement, which fosters masculinist identity politics at the intersection of gender, class, religion, ethnicity, and sexuality" (Sauer, 2020, p. 23). Underlining the complementary, yet different influences of populism and ethnonationalism on the contemporary far right, Niels Spierings concludes that gender "brings together and highlights every element of [populist radical right] ideology, tapping into fundamental parts of people's identity" (2020, p. 42). In one of the most recent and most in-depth studies of gender and sexuality within the far right, Francesca Scrinzi comes to similar conclusions, insisting on the diverse manifestations, and

yet intrinsic character of gender in the ideological projects of the French and Italian parliamentary far right (2024). She uses an intersectional lens to look at the ways in which gender and sexuality interact with other dimensions and how these ‘regimes of inequality’ are adapted and activated in different and shifting ways in the parties’ ideologies and in the ways the members relate to them.

Recent contributions have not only highlighted the need for contextual and intersectional approaches combining gender and sexuality with ethnicity/race, but have also brought back socio-economic issues, fruitfully looking at interactions with the current neoliberal capitalist system (Cooper, 2017; Dietze, 2020; Farris, 2017; Graff & Korolczuk, 2022; Rathgeb, 2024; Sauer, 2020; Scrinzi, 2024). As Melinda Cooper convincingly argues about family policies during the U.S. American neoliberal turn led by the conservative right, “the history of economic formations cannot be prized apart from the operations of gender, race, and sexuality without obscuring the politics of wealth and income distribution itself” (2017, p. 24). In a recent book on the far right’s political economy in Europe and the USA, Philip Rathgeb makes a similar point, insisting on the interdependence of socio-economic and sociocultural questions, such as race and gender, to argue that the far right is conducting a ‘culture war capitalism’ (2024, p. 10). Drawing from contemporary examples of far-right parties in power, Rathgeb shows that, even where the far right has defended the welfare state, it has only promoted “selective protections for the native (male) core workforce [that] go hand in hand with the promotion of a racialized and gendered precariat” (2024, p. 8). In the present dissertation, I draw from these insights to analyse *Konfederacja*’s and the SPD’s politics of wealth and income inequalities as entangled in their gendered and racialised political projects.

Last but not least, the understanding of gender and sexuality in the far right has greatly benefitted from the growing scholarship studying the far right from close up and inside with ethnographic methods. While early research tended to focus on macro-structural factors and voter surveys, and to neglect direct interaction with far-right actors and groups (M. J. Goodwin, 2006), interviews and participant observation provided more in-depth and behind-the-scene insights, uncovering the many complex and multifaceted aspects of far-right involvement, including from the activists' perspective (Art, 2011; e.g. Bizeul, 2003; Blee, 2002; Klandermans & Mayer, 2005; Pasieka, 2024; Pilkington, 2016; Scrinzi, 2024; Shoshan, 2016; Simi & Futrell, 2010; Virchow, 2007). In these contributions, the authors often show the diversity of far-right engagement and how distant far-right activists are from stereotypes about neo-Nazi skinheads. While not all of these works engage with gender aspects, those who have done so have provided rich nuances to the understanding of gender in the far right, such as Kathleen Blee's research on women in both past and present far-right movements in the United States, which has shown how women engage in essential recruiting, organisational, propaganda-related and identity-building work, behind the highly male and masculinist frontstage (Blee, 1991, 2002). As Blee and other scholars have demonstrated, despite representing conservative gender views about women's roles, far-right women have also stepped out into the public sphere, and sometimes even engaged in violent confrontations (Bacchetta & Power, 2002; Blee, 2018; Blee & McGee Deutsch, 2012; Félix, 2017; Scrinzi, 2024). Other academic works have focused on the obvious, yet understudied link between far-right involvement and masculinity, and shed light on the role of performances of hypermasculinity in men's far-right activism (Ferber, 2004; Kimmel, 2007; Kimmel & Ferber, 2000; Ralph-Morrow, 2022). As Francesca Scrinzi rightfully criticises, many of the

aforementioned analyses focused exclusively or overwhelmingly on female or male participants, thus failing to engage with gender in a relational way, i.e how gendered roles and identities constitute each other (2024, pp. 32–34). In her book on French and Italian far-right party activists, Scrinzi shows the relational ways in which gender is negotiated within the parties, highlighting how age and class also influence gendered perceptions and forms of engagement (2024). In this dissertation, I largely draw my inspiration from this rich body of literature to study how “gender makes parties” (Scrinzi, 2024, p. 97) – gendering involvement and participation; what parties make out of gender – how they articulate it with other ideological elements; and how “parties make gender” (Scrinzi, 2024, p. 97) – by gendering their mobilisation and structures.

2. Overview of the two case studies

In the present dissertation, I fill in several of the research gaps in research on the far right through my two-country comparative analysis of the Polish *Konfederacja* and the Czech SPD focusing on gender and sexuality. I have chosen two political parties that have not been widely covered by scholars, nor studied through close-up, ethnographic methods. Through my in-depth study of two national cases, I avoid the idiosyncrasy of the single-case study or the glossing over of differences inevitable in the large-scale multi-country study. Despite the comparative drive and the attention to transnational trends, I follow the call to adopt an approach sensitive to context (Scrinzi, 2024, pp. 8–9; Wodak et al., 2009), firmly anchoring my analyses in two national contexts I have intimate knowledge of. Indeed, I had lived in both Poland (one year) and Czechia (three years) before starting my dissertation and I spoke both languages fluently prior to beginning my fieldwork. As I previously mentioned, by looking at two ‘Eastern’ or ‘Central Eastern’ European countries, I expand the focus beyond the West-

centric body of academic literature, and I question the East-West division of Europe reproduced in scholarship on the far right (Brubaker, 2017; Minkenberg, 2017; Mudde, 2005; Pirro, 2015; Rydgren, 2018).

I have chosen two relatively new parliamentary parties, SPD having been founded in 2015 and *Konfederacja* emerging over the course of 2018-2019. They also have a rather similar level of electoral support, around 10% for SPD and 7% for *Konfederacja* ('Konfederacja Wolność i Niepodległość', 2024; 'Svoboda a přímá demokracie', 2024). While SPD was an obvious choice as the main party of the Czech far right, the Polish case was a bit trickier, considering the presence of the then-ruling *Prawo i Sprawiedliwość* party (Law and Justice, hereafter PiS), which has been classified as far-right by leading experts (Mudde, 2019; Rooduijn et al., 2023). Since the PiS is a well-established party with a large bureaucratic organisation benefitting from its access to power during its rule between 2015 and 2023, I did not consider it as a fitting case to compare it with the smaller SPD devoid of any power positions. Instead, the emerging *Konfederacja* party offered a unique opportunity to study a new far-right party that united rather different trends of the Polish far right, from the traditional ultra-nationalist and Catholic fundamentalist tendencies to economically ultra-libertarian elements. Finally, considering my interest in grassroots, social-movement-like activism, and the ways it is conducted by rank-and-file members, *Konfederacja* represented a better choice than the institutionalised PiS.

While they are similar organisations in terms of general political orientation, size and importance, the two parties also exhibit obvious differences that have influenced this comparative analysis. Namely, *Konfederacja* does constitute a political party and, as I argue, it does have a rather unitary ideology, but it is organised as a coalition of three different parties:

the ultra-nationalist *Ruch Narodowy* (National Movement, hereafter RN), the paleolibertarian – i.e. economically libertarian and socially conservative – *Nowa Nadzieja* (New Hope, hereafter NN) – formerly known as KORWiN – and the Catholic fundamentalist *Korona Konfederacji Polskiej* (Crown of the Polish Confederation, hereafter *Korona*). Writing about such a coalition, I had to do justice to its ideological diversity, amongst others by interviewing representatives from all three parties, or wings, as I refer to them. In the case of the SPD, it possesses, on the contrary, a highly centralised character, which proved to be a practical issue, since the party does not have a lot of grassroots activism to study beyond the media presence of the party's leader and central figure Tomio Okamura. Nevertheless, I argue that the comparison of *Konfederacja*, which represents more of a 'movement-party' – combining street mobilisation with electoral competition (Kitschelt, 2006) – with the SPD, which corresponds to an 'entrepreneurial party' – a project connecting economic and political interests, with a hierarchical, centralised management and a business logic (Hloušek et al., 2020) – not only offers interesting insights into the various shapes of far-right ideology, but also into the multiple forms of far-right political organisation and mobilisation.

3. Research methods and methodological considerations

For my research, I combined several methods: participant observation, semi-structured interviews and discourse analysis. In Poland, I attended several party meetings and far-right demonstrations, mostly during the parliamentary elections of 2019, the presidential elections in 2020 and the parliamentary elections of 2023. In Czechia, I attended party meetings during the 2021 parliamentary election and two leafleting/petitioning sessions. I conducted 38 one-on-one semi-structured interviews in total: 23 interviews with *Konfederacja* members and 15 interviews with SPD members in 2020-2021. In addition to this ethnographic work, I

monitored and analysed social media posts by the two parties and their representatives over the course of the last six years (2019-2025).

Combined methods and Critical Discourse Analysis

The fieldwork proved very challenging practically and personally. The Covid-19 pandemic and its recurrent waves over the course of 2020-2021 severely disrupted my research, forcing me to cancel interviews, to realise intense periods of fieldwork in-between ‘waves’ and travel restrictions, and eventually to wait for vaccination until planning further meetings. Originally, I had the ambition of engaging in participant observation within the parties under study, as I wanted to get inside far-right parties in order to understand their attractiveness beyond the ideology they diffuse in the public sphere (Blee, 2007) and to analyse the ways in which they perform gender, sexuality, race, class, and more (Geva, 2018, p. 2). However, by the time of fieldwork, because of the release of public information about my political background – something that I will discuss shortly in the later section on positionality – I did not believe that I would be accepted and able to personally manage such an immersion. Attending political meetings and demonstrations, albeit not without fear, did give me some insights about the political culture and appeal of the parties, and hopefully other scholars will be able to gather more data through a more close-up, in-depth ethnography.

The interviews with individual activists proved to be my main source of inspiration for the present dissertation, as they turned out to provide fascinating insights. The 38 interviews lasted from 50 minutes to 3 hours and 15 minutes, with the average interview duration being close to one and a half hours. The interviews were held in Polish with the *Konfederacja* members – with the exception of Karol, who is a diaspora Pole living in Poland and spoke better English than Polish – and in Czech with the SPD members. Endnotes in Appendix I provide the

original text of quotations in Polish and Czech. Although I could have conducted more interviews, I had to stop at the end of 2021 in order to put this research phase behind me, as I experienced this period of contacting and meeting as particularly heavy, considering the emotional strain and the perceived risks involved, an experience I elaborate on below. I also realised that I had reached a certain ‘saturation’, with the same main themes and frames coming up over and over again, showing that it was time to move on (Boellstorff et al., 2012, p. 59).

Besides the participant observation and the interviews, the third set of data is made out of material by – and about – the movements and their members: online and offline written and audio-visual material. For this set of data, I widely used social media, on which both parties are very active and successful. I started collecting data in the Fall of 2019 and have done so continuously until the beginning of 2025. At first, I collected data from social media through screenshot tools, but I then used the *CrowdTangle* tool available until recently for researchers to study Meta platforms (*CrowdTangle*, 2024). I conducted a systematic quantitative analysis of SPD posts over six months in 2019-2020 to find thematic trends but did not do the same for *Konfederacja*, because the pandemic and then the renewed war in Ukraine upset the political agenda. Since I have been living in Prague since 2019, I have also been following and observing local political and socio-economic developments on a daily basis.

For the analysis of the material, I draw from the insights of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as developed by Ruth Wodak (1997) and Norman Fairclough (2003). While this approach does not claim that the whole social world exists only through discourse, it does insist on the importance of discourse in the (re)production of society (Fairclough, 2003, p. 2). This is in line with more materialist accounts of categorisation, such as Stuart Hall’s insistence that race is a

“discursive system” with material effects (Solomos, 2014, p. 1670). Although a discourse can be understood as a simple social interaction, like an interview, I use it in the sense of a more or less coherent set of ideas expressed through texts, written or oral (Wodak, 1997, p. 5). Looking at discourses of belonging as a part of wider social practices, CDA insists on the way texts are anchored into a context (Wodak, 1997, p. 6) and are part of an “‘order of discourse’, the relatively durable social structuring of language which is itself one element of the relatively durable structuring and networking of social practices” (Fairclough, 2003, p. 3). True to CDA’s insistence on questions of power and ideology, I examine the ways in which discourses (re)produce and challenge power relations supporting particular ideological structures (Wodak, 1997, p. 7).

In line with this emphasis on discourse, I turn to the concept of ‘framing’ and ‘collective action frames’ developed by David Snow and Robert Benford to investigate how social movements discursively represent social reality (2000; 1988). As they write, framing is essential to the ideological aspects of collective action as “frames help to render events or occurrences meaningful and thereby function to organize experience and guide action” (Benford & Snow, 2000, p. 614). They identify three kinds of frames: diagnostic frames, the identification of problems; prognostic frames, the suggestion of solutions; and motivational frames, the call to action (Snow & Benford, 1988, pp. 200–201). As Scrinzi specifies, frames are not the same as ideology – which is more stable and coherent – but are rather ‘below’ ideology, “bridging ideas among them”, being more “specific and strategically deployed” (Scrinzi, 2024, p. 15). Parties and movements thus draw from – and are limited by – their ideology to frame social reality, but can also diverge from its ideology (Benford & Snow, 2000, p. 613; Scrinzi, 2024, p. 15). Finally, related to the strategic aspect of framing, the

concept of political opportunity structure – i.e. “opportunities and constraints offered by the political-institutional setting in which collective action takes place” (Koopmans & Olzak, 2004, p. 201) – and the derived concept of ‘discursive opportunities’ – i.e. “the aspects of the public discourse that determine a message’s chances of diffusion in the public sphere” (Koopmans & Olzak, 2004, p. 202) – help understand how political and discursive opportunities, and their perception by actors, influence how movements/parties frame the social world.

Semi-structured life-history interviews

While I was sceptical about my ability to build enough trust to make the interviewees talk about themselves to me, and I originally intended to conduct semi-structured interviews focusing on the interviewees’ ideological worldviews, with some basic background questions at the beginning to break the ice and sketch a sociological profile of the interviewees, I quickly realised how interesting the life-histories into which the interviewees often spontaneously launched were. As Scrinzi discusses (2024, p. 187), I felt like life-history questions helped create an atmosphere of confidence, as the interviewees could focus on ‘innocent’ questions about their family, origins, background, and I could demonstrate my readiness to listen. On some occasions, acknowledging some details, I could exhibit my knowledge of their countries and cultures, which was appreciated by some interviewees. I thus switched to more of a life-history approach combined with a semi-structured interview focusing on some of the main ideological dimensions thematised by the parties (gender, sexuality, race, nation, religion, class). This approach helped me both address involvement in the far right as a process and also understand the interviewees’ views in a dynamic conversational context (Blee & Latif, 2020; Blee & Taylor, 2002; Mrozowicki et al., 2019).

Interviews must always be taken with a grain of salt as the information is provided in a certain context influenced by what the interviewees are willing to tell a certain person, with a series of potential factors: the interviewer's persona, or its perception by the interviewee, the interview settings, the questions, the interviewee's own goals and fears, etc. (Blee & Taylor, 2002, p. 111). Nevertheless, the ways in which interviewees retell their stories of involvement and formulate their views – however 'distorted' they might be – provide precious information about how they explain their engagement and the world to an outsider like the interviewer (Klandermans & Mayer, 2005, p. 62). Ideally, researchers use triangulation and collect data in other ways, through participant observation and the study of other material (Bizeul, 2003, pp. 285–286; Blee & Taylor, 2002, p. 111), and I have done my best to do so for this present dissertation, although I do not possess the rich ethnographic material resulting from an immersion within the parties. While I cannot say whether the interviewees were always truthful and sincere, and I did once realise that an interviewee had left out some information about their past showing them in a more 'radical' light, I had the impression of talking to people willing to cooperate, share their experiences and express their views. In the end, all the meetings went well and some were even pleasant, confirming previous experiences by researchers (e.g. Pasieka, 2019). As I wrote in the acknowledgements, I am grateful for their cooperation and their willingness to talk to me.

Expressing surprise about the openness of far-right parties and their members to scholars, and lamenting scholars' tendency to avoid close up research with the far right (M. J. Goodwin, 2006) has become quite a cliché and the growing number of academic work using ethnographic methods shows that this stereotype has been largely overcome. In my own experience, it was rather easy to contact and access the Polish interviewees, amongst others

because activists often had their contacts online and were responsive to messages, while it was harder on the Czech side. This is perhaps because SPD is more of a centralised organisation, or because it still carries more of a stigma and its members are thus more distrustful of outsiders, something that might be reinforced by the members' profile as older, more working-class and less urban than *Konfederacja* members. It is hard to tell since I only had one or two flat refusals, with no reason given, and I mostly had a lot of unanswered messages. All of this probably explains why most Czech interviewees (9) were municipal deputies and thus people with a certain habit in communicating their views. Since they were not seasoned politicians and were only active on a lower level of politics, I did not feel like they “only parroted rehearsed slogans” (Blee, 2018, p. 16) or deployed “public relations strategies” (Klandermans & Mayer, 2005, p. 51). A couple of those SPD activists-turned-politicians did however seem to be talking to me with a certain intention of ‘destigmatising’ or ‘normalising’ the party’s image, something reported by other researchers on the far right (Blee, 1996, p. 686; Boumaza, 2001; Kajta, 2020a, p. 111). Perhaps the only regret that I have is that I could not interview more women, with five on the Polish side and three on the Czech side. While female interviewees are overrepresented in the Polish case, they are slightly underrepresented in the Czech one, according to my own estimates and to information provided by the interviewees on the gender gap in membership. In the case of the SPD, two women cancelled arrangements made for interviews by citing time issues, which might have been second thoughts about meeting with me, or just reflecting women’s comparatively smaller amount of free time due to the frequent double burden of employment and family.

Positionality and ethics

When it comes to understanding my presence in the field, and especially the influence my presence might have had on the interviewees during the interviews, it is important to address my positionality. As a Western White male, I enjoy many privileges, including what I perceive as a certain deference in countries of Central and Eastern Europe such as Czechia or Poland. Moreover, speaking the local languages also probably opened doors as some of the interviewees positively commented on my linguistic skills and cultural knowledge of their respective countries. During participant observation, my looks meant that I was not singled out as an outsider (Ramalingam, 2020, p. 261). While being a Western White male – which could be seen or assumed from the special (politically neutral) Facebook account I set up to contact the interviewees – might have helped to establish contact, the fact that I was a PhD student might have also hinted that I am not sympathetic to far-right views. I thus assume that I was perceived as both an insider and an outsider at the same time (Blee, 2018, p. 54), but I did not receive many comments during the contacting or the interviewing that helped me understand how the party members perceived me.

To approach potential interviewees, I mostly contacted interviewees through this politically ‘neutral’ Facebook account under my real name, without any information about my political leanings. I also described my research in broad terms and did not mention my disciplinary affiliation. I simply said that I was a PhD student researching Polish and Czech politics, with a particular interest in ‘patriotic parties’, as those parties more often present themselves. Not mentioning the word ‘gender’ – considered by many people, especially on the far right, as a threatening ideology (Graff & Korolczuk, 2022, pp. 16–20; Kuhar & Paternotte, 2017, p. 5) – I rather formulated my focus as interest for party members and their views on demographics.

These choices were meant to balance out my practical, ethical and methodological concerns and were approved by my university's ethics committee.

On the practical level, the goal was not only to gain access to interviewees, but also to diminish possible personal safety risks. Having no contacts within the two chosen political parties, I had to contact a wide array of potential interviewees and I feared that more detailed information could have set off alarm bells and even a possible backlash, from physical threats to completely barring me from the field and potential interviewees. On the ethical level, I consider that the chosen approach balanced out my own practical necessities and the interviewees' rights. Indeed, I always used my real name, explained the academic purposes of the research, asked for permission to record, guaranteed anonymity and answered truthfully to questions, which were surprisingly rare. All the interviewees were adults, except two Polish interviewees who had volunteered to talk to me and whose interviews had been organised through other party members. They were 17 years old, as I found out during the interview. Since they had joined their political party's youth wing with parental consent, had volunteered to talk to me, and had the possibility to later contact me and withdraw from the research, I did not consider their age to be a reason to exclude their responses. Last but not least, my approach was based on concerns for the methodological validity of my research. Indeed, I was concerned that approaching interviewees with mentions of 'gender' would lead to a sort of pre-selection among interviewees or trigger some particular answers. Since part of my research was to understand the importance of gendered issues for party members, it was crucial that the interviewees did not perceive it as the interview's focus. Thanks to such an approach, it was possible to find out whether the topic of 'gender' played an important role in their involvement paths, their ideological worldviews and their activism.

To study the far right close up, scholars find little help in most mainstream works dealing with the ethical and methodological issues of ethnographic research and ethnographic methods (Fielding, 1993, p. 148). Despite the wide variety of guidelines and rules, there are a few common principles present throughout these frameworks, such as “minimizing harm, respecting autonomy, preserving privacy, and acting equitably” (Hammersley, 2015, p. 434). These mottos sometimes apply not only to the individuals directly involved, but also to the communities or groups in which research is conducted, with the view that research has to ‘do good’ (Israel & Hay, 2006, p. 2). Many of these principles are based on the view that there exists a power imbalance between the scholar and the participants, since the scholar has control over the information collected, decides about how it will be framed to a larger public, sometimes receives confidential or even sensitive information, and is usually the one reaping the benefits (Stacey, 1988, p. 23). Thus, the ideal would be for the scholar to take particular care of the interviewees and try to make them benefit from the research as well (Boellstorff et al., 2012, pp. 129–130). Feminist scholarship especially has developed an ethics of care that “stresses people’s relationships with one another, the importance of context and nurturing relationships” (Israel & Hay, 2006, p. 21). However, many of the scholars writing on ethical and methodological issues tend to assume that research participants come either from vulnerable and disenfranchised groups or, at least, from groups towards which the researcher feels sympathy (Atkinson & Hammersley, 2007, p. 217; Blee, 2018, pp. 27–28; Galliher, 1982, p. 157). This bias reflects a wider trend in research to focus on groups that are ideologically close to scholars and ethnographies on social movements, for example, have tended to overwhelmingly feature ‘progressive’ movements (Blee, 2007, pp. 119–120).

While the primary principles of mainstream ethnographic ethics is the researcher's openness and transparency upon accessing the field, scholars of the far right have often found this impracticable. Thus, while most of them communicate their academic profile and goals, and very few engage in covert fieldwork (Fielding, 1982; Lauder, 2003; Lofland, 1961), they often make some more or less important arrangements with their persona. Thus, doing fieldwork with extreme-right youth in Germany, Israeli scholar Nitzan Shoshan went so far as to change his name and his nationality, pretending to be Nate, a U.S. American (Shoshan, 2016). Martina Avanza presented herself as an ethnologist to approach the North Italian far right, fearing that "sociology student would sound too leftist" (Avanza, 2008, p. 50). Elisa Bellè remembers hiding her political identity as a left-wing feminist activist while in the field with the Italian far right and she offers an insightful analysis of her positionality in an article on the issue (Bellè, 2016, p. 7). In many other cases, scholars remember having to lie about their identity and opinions while researching the far right (see also Avanza, 2008; Bizeul, 2007; Boumaza, 2001). Meera Sehgal who worked on the Indian far right questions the overt/covert dichotomy, preferring to talk about 'partial disclosure' and 'partial secrecy', and recalls 'front-staging' and 'back-staging' certain aspects of her identity and biography (2009). Ultimately, Nigel Fielding asks the rhetorical question whether fieldwork does not always involve a form of deceit, as the task of the researcher is always to put on a good performance and answer adequately the expectations of the interviewees in order to foster trust (Fielding, 1982, p. 88).

In my case, the decision to front-stage and back-stage certain aspects also came from particular circumstances arising at the beginning of my PhD, as my student activism in Hungary led to international media coverage after I was arrested and unjustly charged with a serious crime. While I would be cleared two years later, there were several news articles on the

internet that clearly identified me as a left-leaning activist, including in Czech and Polish. This fact contributed to my decision not to engage in a more immersive ethnography, as I did not want to eventually face a confrontation in uncontrolled settings. I originally thought about conducting interviews strictly in public places like cafés and restaurants, but I also accepted several times to see people in their homes when I judged that the situation was not threatening. On one occasion only did two Polish interviewees from the central party organisation make it clear that they had done a background check on me, jokingly asking right upon meeting me: “Shouldn’t you be in Hungarian jail?” I answered with humour and they immediately dropped the topic by remarking that ‘their guys’ often had baseless charges pressed against them too. In this context, my experience served as a bond between ‘radicals’. They did not bring the topic up again and proved to be friendly and cooperative interlocutors. Despite not experiencing any unpleasant situation, my back-staged identity hung over me like a sword of Damocles throughout the fieldwork and caused me a lot of stress. Looking back on the interviews, it seemed that potential interviewees were either willing or unwilling to talk in the framework of academic research in general, and it did not seem to matter to them who the researcher was. Perhaps they would have been more picky about scholars coming from their own national contexts, as Bhakti Deodhar experienced (2022). Since additional information about myself and my research was freely available online on the website of my department and elsewhere, and would instantly come up through search engines, as my name is not common, the interviewees were free to find out more about me if they had any misgivings about particular scholars or academic spheres. Finally, since the interviewees were guaranteed and granted anonymity, I believe that I struck a balance between the respect of the interviewees’ privacy and access to a field of immense political importance.

The particular nature of the far right means that ethical considerations must always keep in sight the bigger picture of research on this political family (Ashe et al., 2020; Toscano, 2019b; Vaughan et al., 2024b). I believe that there are a number of aspects to consider. First of all, the political importance of such research must be recognised and must be accompanied by the flexibility of ethical situationism rather than the rigidity of ethical absolutism (Atkinson & Hammersley, 2007, p. 219) in order to balance out access to the field and interviewees' rights. Second of all, the idea of limiting harm must be critically examined as applying to individuals' personal lives, but not to their political engagement or their group as a whole. It is rather absurd to expect from those who research the far right that they avoid potentially harming a far-right group or hindering some individuals' political engagement, not to mention the dubious expectation of 'giving back' (Blee & Latif, 2020, p. 51). In my own research, I took measures to protect my own self and the interviewees' privacy, and I believe that I have minimised or even eliminated any potential harm for themselves personally, but not for the parties under study. Last but not least, it is imperative to keep in mind that ethical considerations cannot solely apply to groups under study, but also to the more vulnerable groups who are targeted by the groups under study (Busher, 2020; Mondon & Winter, 2020a; Vaughan et al., 2024a). Failure from institutions and ethical committees to recognise that the researchers' ultimate alignment is with the disadvantaged and disenfranchised would be tantamount to ethical and moral bankruptcy. I certainly believe that interviewees who might read my research will find their words and ideas faithfully transmitted and fairly criticised, but I make myself no illusion about their general appraisal of my work.

4. Structure

This dissertation is structured in three parts on involvement, ideology and mobilisation, each containing one chapter on each political party. After a contextual chapter, the first part – Chapters 2 and 3 – looks into involvement within the Polish *Konfederacja* and the Czech SPD, examining the factors and processes leading to joining a far-right political party, including the importance of gender. In the second part – Chapters 4 and 5 – I analyse ideology, with a special focus on the role of gender and sexuality as central ideological elements in the two far-right parties' political projects. Finally, in the third part – Chapter 6 and 7 – I look into gender performance and gender roles in the parties' mobilisation to further elaborate on gender and sexuality's importance for the far right, beyond ideology and rhetoric. In the concluding chapter, I underline the key comparative points between the two cases and develop my own theoretical contribution to the studying of the far right, and gender and sexuality.

Chapter 1: Radicalising the Polish mainstream, mainstreaming the Czech far right

While the rise of far-right parties and ideas across Europe (and beyond) responds to international developments linked to the rapid pace of globalisation, such as mass migration, growing socio-economic inequalities and fast cultural changes, the role of local contexts remains central to understanding the ways these developments play out in distinct national settings. Even the widely-used analytical lenses of ‘Eastern’ or ‘Central’ Europe, or other regional denominations, do not fully shed light on key local dynamics that are shaping – and being shaped by – far-right ideas, political parties, members and supporters. Despite sharing – along with most of their neighbours – a recent history marked by the passage from one-party state socialism to multi-party capitalism and by the integration into Euro-Atlantic institutions, Poland and Czechia’s post-1989 developments have been distinct. In order to better understand dynamics of the far right in each country, a short overview of the two countries’ contemporary history and politics is necessary.

In the present chapter, I do not offer a comprehensive history of both countries, but rather aim to provide the most important information on the socio-political contexts, with a particular emphasis on the far right and on issues of gender and sexuality, to guide readers through the rest of the dissertation. While specific past events, their lingering presence in society and their strategic deployment by current political actors have played an important role, it is ultimately

contemporary developments that have shaped the present socio-political contexts in Poland and Czechia, and the fortunes of the far right. In the first part of this chapter, I show how recent Polish politics have been marked by a ‘radicalisation of the mainstream’ along strongly nationalist and conservative lines, how the far right has both contributed to and benefitted from this shift, and how ‘culture wars’ around gender and sexuality have played an important part in this process. Indeed, adding to an anti-egalitarian approach to race/ethnicity and religion – the supremacy of the Pole-Catholic – the far right has actively agitated for sexual and gender inequalities. In the second part, I move on to the Czech case, which has been rather marked by a ‘mainstreaming of the far right’, as post-89 politics gradually shifted from differential to antagonistic conflicts with the rise of populist challengers and the spread of certain far-right ideas across the political spectrum. I explain what this shift has meant for far-right political parties and I finally lay out how issues of gender and sexuality have fit into these dynamics. In the Czech case, the far right has successfully spread its anti-egalitarian views towards the Roma, and later on against extra-European migrants, and especially Muslims, and it has also pushed other parties into accepting the status quo marked by gender and sexual inequality. In both countries, I show how the far right and its ideas have played a major role in shaping recent developments, as it moved from the margins to the mainstream.

1. Poland: The return of the *Polak-katolik* and the radicalisation of the mainstream

Contemporary socio-political developments in Poland cannot be described in any other terms than as a shift toward the far right. The post-89 political struggle has evolved into an institutional, material and cultural war led by far-right forces, from the mainstream-turned-far-right Law and Justice party (*Prawo i Sprawiedliwość*, hereafter PiS) to more extremist

elements such as those allied in the *Konfederacja* coalition. Drawing from past discursive frames, such as interwar Polish radical nationalism and fascism, and repackaging them with new elements like antifeminism and anti-LGBT+ views, and economic libertarianism in the case of *Konfederacja*, these forces have tried to impose their similar, yet competitive, far-right counter-hegemonies based on radical nationalist and conservative views. In these struggles, debates over the shape of the gender regime have figured prominently and at times even centrally, as illustrated by acerbic ‘culture wars’ on gender, sexuality and the family.

From post-communism to the far right

The first 15 years following the return to parliamentary democracy in Poland were marked by the struggle between the post-communist left and anti-communist forces stemming from the *Solidarność* (Solidarity) trade union which had brought down the state socialist regime (Szczurbiak, 2016, p. 2). After the fall of the left in the mid-2000s, this ‘post-communist divide’ was replaced by a ‘post-transition divide’ opposing the two main post-*Solidarność* political parties: the aforementioned PiS party and the *Platforma Obywatelska* (Civic Platform, hereafter PO). In this “post-transition divide”, the two originally close parties became increasingly antagonistic starting from 2005, as they clashed during the parliamentary and presidential elections (Szczurbiak, 2016, p. 2). In this new divide, the PiS claimed to incarnate “solidary Poland” standing up to the “liberal Poland” supposedly represented by PO (Pankowski, 2010, p. 163).

During the 2005 electoral races, the PiS party led by the Kaczyński twin brothers Lech and Jarosław “took on strong features of populism and nationalism with authoritarian tendencies, and positioned itself as an anti-systemic force seeking radical change rather than maintaining democratic stability” (Pankowski, 2010, p. 152). The PiS party, which had started in 2001 as a

“more or less mainstream centre-right party” (Pankowski, 2010, p. 152), a “conservative, anti-communist” party (Bill & Stanley, 2020, p. 4), increasingly shifted towards far-right positions by adopting the identity of the ‘*Polak-katolik*’ (Pole-Catholic) based on an inegalitarian ethnic/racial and religious hierarchy echoing the authoritarian and exclusionary rhetoric of the interwar far right (Pankowski, 2010, p. 152). PiS’s transformation continued after winning the parliamentary and presidential elections in September and October 2005, when it build a coalition with the “agrarian-populist” *Samoobrona Rzeczpospolitej Polskiej* (Self-Defence of the Republic of Poland, SO) and the far-right *Liga Polskich Rodzin* (League of Polish Families, LPR) (Bill & Stanley, 2020, p. 4). Engaging with these populist and far-right parties, PiS not only adopted their ethnic nationalist and Catholic fundamentalist views, but also adopted a virulent critique of the 1989 transition as a conspiracy by ‘mendacious elites’ (*łże-elity*) allied inside a “shadowy post-communist *układ* – the network of former security operatives and communist party members supposedly controlling Poland’s post-1989 business and politics” (Bill, 2022, p. 22). While the PiS-led coalition was short-lived, it resulted in a shift of Poland’s ‘rhetorical climate’ towards far-right positions and a brutalised political style (Pankowski, 2010, p. 173). In the end, PiS won over most of their coalition partners’ voters, an electoral shift revealing how much far-right sentiments came to be embodied by PiS by 2007 (Stanley, 2016, p. 123).

The centre-right PO led by Donald Tusk went on to take the country's leadership for eight years. As a socially conservative and economically liberal Christian-Democratic party, PO pursued a rather moderate line, following the neoliberal consensus and the pro-EU positions of its pre-2005 predecessors (Fomina & Kucharczyk, 2016, p. 59). During its time in opposition, PiS relentlessly attacked the PO-led government with the help of the Catholic fundamentalist

Radio Maryja media network and, less explicitly, the Catholic Church (Fomina & Kucharczyk, 2016, p. 61; Stanley, 2016). Over its years in office, PO shifted from being “centre-right liberal-conservative” to “an ideologically eclectic centrist grouping” which was criticised by some as becoming a “values-free ‘post-political party of power’” (Szczurbiak, 2016, p. 4). The party eventually became worn out by its long stay in power and ended its second term in 2015 ridden with scandals.

Ahead of the 2015 presidential and parliamentary campaigns, PiS put forward a message of positive change focusing on social welfare programmes (Szczurbiak, 2016, p. 8). It also capitalised on – and stirred – anti-refugee sentiments during the so-called ‘refugee crisis’ in Summer 2015, as the PO-led government was reluctantly accepting EU refugee relocation schemes to Poland (Jaskółowski, 2019, p. 40; Krzyżanowski, 2018). Gaining an absolute parliamentary majority, PiS moved on to implement its agenda combining far-right nationalist and conservative cultural views with a program for a ‘Polish model of the welfare state’, as leader Jarosław Kaczyński put it, all packaged in an anti-establishment rhetoric about the betrayal of the nation and ordinary Poles by corrupted elites in the service of foreign interests (Bill & Stanley, 2020, p. 8). Once in power, going far beyond its program, PiS embarked on a take-over of the state through the suppression or weakening of the autonomy of public media, justice and political institutions, which led to “the emergence of an arbitrary and monistic political system” (Bill & Stanley, 2020, p. 8). The party also relentlessly engaged in culture wars, i.e. “polarizing conflicts in the arenas of the politics of memory, politics of identity and politics of morality” (Hesová, 2021, p. 130), amongst others targeting women’s reproductive rights and LGBT+ rights, as I further develop. The PiS’s radicalisation has led a growing number of scholars to identify it as far-right (Mudde, 2019; Rooduijn et al., 2023), and so do I.

While there was widespread resistance to many of PiS's sweeping changes, the party maintained high levels of popular support, amongst others thanks to social programmes such as the flagship 500+ child support scheme, and it won the 2019 elections (Bill & Stanley, 2020, p. 8). However, its second mandate was shaken by the pandemic, widespread demonstrations following the stricter abortion ban by the PiS-controlled Constitutional Court in October 2020, and an energy crisis, an influx of refugees and rampant inflation after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. In the 2023 parliamentary elections, a large coalition of liberal, right-wing and centre-left parties led by Tusk and his *Platforma Obywatelska/Koalicja Obywatelska*, (Civic Platform/Civic Coalition, hereafter PO/KO) won a majority promising a return to liberal democracy.

Challenging the far right from the right

After the fall of the state socialist regime and the return to multi-party democracy, far-right forces were marginalised in Poland, as they were divided and unable to gain greater visibility and political power (Płatek & Płucienniczak, 2017). Despite its lack of electoral weight, an active far-right movement developed under the surface of parliamentary politics during the 1990s and built “sizeable cultural bases, pockets of social legitimacy on which political organizations could build” (Pankowski, 2010, p. 78). In a time of wide parliamentary consensus over socio-economic and political developments despite increasing popular discontent and disillusion, issues of identity, symbols and memory increasingly served as ideological battlefields and the extra-parliamentary far right increasingly channeled social anger into “a nationalist repertoire of contention” (Pankowski, 2010, p. 76; Zubrzycki, 2009).

In the early 2000s, the Polish far right entered a ‘phase of institutionalisation’ (Płatek & Płucienniczak, 2017) as it strengthened its organisational structures and pooled its forces

together in the aforementioned LPR, winning 7.9% of votes and parliamentary representation in 2001 (Stanley, 2019, p. 172). The party heavily drew from the identity of the ‘Pole-Catholic’, echoing the rhetoric of the interwar far-right *Narodowa Demokracja* (National Democracy, nicknamed *endecja*) (Stanley, 2019, p. 173; Stanley & Cześnik, 2019, p. 71). The *endecja* had several branches with authoritarian anti-egalitarian views usually combining anti-democratism, ethnic nationalism and Catholic fundamentalism, and often including rabid antisemitic views and outspoken fascist sympathies (Pankowski, 2010, p. 29). This was particularly true of the *Młodzież Wszechpolska* (All-Polish Youth, hereafter MW), a youth group which had been active in the interwar period as a student group – amongst others violently attacking Jews – and was resurrected in 1989 (Wrzosek, 2010). It eventually became the LPR’s youth branch and continued its aggressive street actions, targeting left-wing political opponents and, with an increasing frequency in the early 2000s, LGBT+ rights activists (Pankowski, 2010, p. 123). Despite its initial success, the LPR crumbled after joining the PiS-led government in 2006-7, as the Kaczyński twins skilfully appropriated LPR and *Samobrona*’s rhetoric and voters, and managed to occupy the whole political spectrum to the right of the centre-right ruling PO party by appealing to both mainstream and radical right-wing voters, “forcing [other far-right forces] to work in the gaps left behind” (Stanley, 2019, p. 168).

Following the LPR’s electoral downfall in 2007 and the PiS’s radicalisation, the far right thus entered a ‘phase of radicalisation’, with a return to more confrontational street tactics (Płatek & Płucienniczak, 2017, p. 304). The movement managed to hijack national memory and mobilise a growing number of sympathisers around certain symbolic dates and topics, the best example being the annual November 11 *Marsz Niepodległości* (Independence March) in

Warsaw, which started as a small, fringe demonstration in 2006 and became a massive, even mainstream celebration in the 2010s (Kajta, 2020a, p. 69). Amongst other led by the MW, the March eventually received the support of PiS politicians and the radicalised mainstream right in the early 2010s, and started to attract tens of thousands of citizens, helping normalise the event in the eyes of the public despite the presence of Polish and other European far-right – including extreme-right – groups, symbols and slogans (Kajta, 2020a, p. 76; Witkowski, 2023c). This normalisation culminated in 2018, as the official state celebrations organised by the ruling PiS party joined the March in Warsaw’s centre. As Marta Kotwas and Jan Kubik argue, it is in this context that “a powerful cultural-political feedback loop” emerged in Poland, as mutually reinforcing public culture and political forces diffused and adopted far-right views, creating even more discursive and political opportunities for the far right (2019, p. 435). Despite the normalisation and even mainstreamisation of far-right ideas in the public sphere, PiS continued to monopolise the whole political spectrum on the right of PO, leaving close to no room for more radical groupings. In 2012, the *Ruch Narodowy* (RN, National Movement) was founded as an attempt to unite the far-right groups behind the Independence March, like MW and the *Obóz Narodowo-Radykalny* (National Radical Camp, ONR), and make a comeback into parliament, but it had little success (Płatek & Płucienniczak, 2017, p. 305). Eventually, this string of failures led the RN to reconsider its relationship with the rival, paleolibertarian branch of the far right (Tomasiewicz, 2020, p. 10).

This paleolibertarian branch embodied by veteran politician Janusz Korwin-Mikke (hereafter JKM) and calling itself ‘conservative-liberal’ had been developing in post-1989 Poland in parallel to – and in collaboration with – the nationalist and conservative far right. Its ideological roots are somewhat distinct from the RN’s, as they are more of “a transfer of

American paleolibertarianism to Poland” (Tomasiewicz, 2020, p. 8). Paleolibertarianism mixes paleoconservatism, a longing for a past inegalitarian and authoritarian social order with its strict racial, gender and class hierarchies, with libertarianism, a strict adherence to laissez-faire economics (Cooper, 2021). On the one hand, it rejects neoconservatism’s statism and internationalism, and on the other it discards classic libertarianism’s critique of authoritarianism, conservative morals and social authority. Paleolibertarianism asserts that freedom from the ‘unnatural authority’ of the State is only possible through submission to the ‘natural authority’ of other social structures such as the racial/ethnic group, family, Church or enterprise (Cooper, 2021, pp. 40–41). This ideological fusion has been influential for large parts of what has been termed the ‘alt-right’ in the United States and for U.S. American president Donald Trump (Cooper, 2021, p. 41). Despite running for all Polish presidential elections from 1995 to 2015 and heading several political parties, including the *Koalicja Odnowy Rzeczypospolitej Wolność i Nadzieja* (Coalition for the Renewal of the Republic of Poland, Freedom and Hope, hereafter KORWiN) founded in 2015 (Tomasiewicz, 2020, pp. 8–9), JKM’s electoral bids rarely exceeded a couple of percentage points, which eventually convinced him as well to seek an alliance with other far-right forces.

The birth of Konfederacja

Over the years, through collaboration and competition between the ethnonationalist, the Catholic fundamentalist and the paleolibertarian currents, a certain symbiosis developed in the anti-PiS Polish far right and led to the progressive emergence of the *Konfederacja Wolność i Niepodległość* (Confederation Liberty and Independence, hereafter *Konfederacja*) in 2018–2019. The far-right ideological core of authoritarian anti-egalitarianism – often framed as ‘anti-communism’ – proved a powerful ‘glue’ for far-right forces, with the paleolibertarians

insisting on socio-economic aspects, the ultra-nationalists on ethnic/racial and historical ones, and the Catholic fundamentalists on the cultural and moral ones. A key element that also helped precipitate the union of the anti-PiS far right have been the socio-economic policies of the PiS government after its return to power in 2015, as it somewhat broke with years of neoliberal austerity and introduced many social programmes. Reacting to this situation and competing on the right flank of the PiS party while also facing centre-right and left-wing opposition parties which promised not to discard these new social measures, the far right used its paleolibertarian socio-economic programme to distinguish itself from both the PiS and the PO/KO-led opposition. Moreover, since the PiS party had adopted the far right's nationalist and conservative rhetoric, *Konfederacja* had little else than socio-economic issues to assert its difference from the PiS. To put it in a nutshell, *Konfederacja*'s paleolibertarianism came to challenge PiS's national-conservative 'welfare state'.

Ahead of the Spring 2019 EU parliamentary elections, the RN, KORWiN and other far-right groupings including Catholic fundamentalists gathered around the activist Grzegorz Braun struck a deal to run together. Despite their differences and occasional quarrels, the groups shared the same far-right orientation, often championed the same causes and mingled at the same events before their formal union, amongst others at demonstrations such as the *Marsz Niepodległości* or some anti-refugee protests in 2015-2016. They shared the same disgust for mainstream political parties, which they denounced in more or less conspiratorial terms as representatives of the 'round-table arrangement/system' (*okrągłostołowy układ*) that the dissidents and the communists allegedly established in secret during the 1988-1989 Round Table negotiations for a peaceful democratic transformation of Poland. The *Konfederacja* coalition partners also rejected the European Union (EU) on the basis of the primacy of

national sovereignty, and the rejection of certain of its socio-economic or cultural aspects deemed too liberal or left-wing. On cultural and moral issues, despite rather different policy proposals, the movements also had a lot in common, such as their opposition to feminism and LGBT+ rights. Under the banner of *Konfederacja*, this new common vision took a more concrete shape, one where the radical *Polak-katolik* (Catholic-Pole) embraced ultra-libertarian economics to attack ‘the system’ as a liberal-leftist statist project.

Ahead of its first elections, the May 2019 EU elections, the coalition did not have a common programme, but its messages reflected unity in a series of anti-egalitarian oppositions along racial/ethnic, sexual-/gender-based and socio-economic lines, summarised by one of KORWiN’s leaders Sławomir Mentzen as: “We don’t want Jews, homosexuals, abortions, taxes and the European Union!” (Tomasiewicz, 2020, p. 15). For the October 2019 parliamentary elections *Konfederacja* then put more emphasis on its libertarian socio-economic programme and a general ‘anti-system’ position (Kolczyński, 2020), framing the election as a struggle between themselves, the ‘patriots’ and all the other parties, ‘the system’. The party also presented radical libertarian socio-economic measures as a response to the system’s ills, like radical tax breaks and a voucher system to privatise education and culture (Konfederacja, 2019b), and the coalition gained 6.8% of votes and 11 seats in Parliament (Tomasiewicz, 2020). At the 2020 presidential elections, its candidate Krzysztof Bosak (member of the RN, formerly in the MW and LPR) received a similar score.

Ahead of the 2023 parliamentary elections, *Konfederacja* focused even more on socio-economic questions, blaming the government for surging inflation and denouncing social benefits for Ukrainian refugees pushed into Poland by the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine (Kolanko, 2023). The party promised not to join any of the two main blocks around

PiS and PO, vowing instead to ‘overturn the table’, referring to the post-1989 ‘Round-Table system’ (Konfederacja, 2023f). Somewhat sidelining the old guard and controversial figures like Janusz Korwin-Mikke and Grzegorz Braun, younger male leaders Krzysztof Bosak and Sławomir Mentzen came to the fore, embodying the convergence of ethnonationalism, libertarian socio-economics and Catholic fundamentalism. Shortly before, Mentzen had replaced Korwin-Mikke as head of KORWiN and renamed the party in *Nowa Nadzieja* (New Hope, hereafter NN). After surging in the polls, the party received a lot of critical scrutiny and it ended up with a disappointing 7.2% of votes, but it did better in the June 2024 EU election with 12.1% (Szczerbiak, 2024). More recently, with the exclusions of Janusz Korwin-Mikke in late 2023 and Grzegorz Braun in early 2025, the party has stabilised around the leadership of Mentzen and Bosak and their paleolibertarian symbiosis.

Gender and sexuality as a central battlefield in post-1989 Poland

In post-1989 Poland, much more than migration, topics like women’s reproductive rights and LGBT+ rights have often come to the forefront of socio-political debates and struggles. Right after the return of multi-party democracy in the 1990s, the Catholic Church and conservative political allies mobilised to assert their newly-gained power and succeeded in passing one of Europe’s most restrictive abortion ban (Kulczycki, 1995, p. 471). Looking at those debates within the wider Central and Eastern European context, Susan Gal and Gail Kligman claimed that politics in the region was reshaped around debates about reproduction, creating “new kinds of political actors and subjectivities”, advancing ethnic nationalist ideas, asserting legitimacy through moralising politics and redefining women’s place in society (2000, pp. 15–16). In the Polish case, Agnieszka Graff argued that right-wing and far-right forces

increasingly presented the ethnonationalist religious identity of the *Polak-katolik* in gendered and sexualised terms, as threatened by abortion and homosexuality (2009, p. 135).

In the 2000s, as an emerging Polish LGBT+ rights movement came to assert its rights, organising a first *Parada Równości* (Equality Parade) in Warsaw in 2001 (Chetaille, 2013, p. 130), debates around abortion and homosexuality came to the forefront and an atmosphere of ‘moral panics’ reigned in the country (Kulpa, 2019, pp. 1–2). For far-right groups like the MW, feminist and LGBT+ movements became the main enemies to fight (Wrzosek, 2010). Amongst others, the MW organised its own *Marsz Normalności* (Normality March) as an answer to the LGBT+ equality march, something that it has repeatedly done since then, pitting the ‘normality’ of heterosexuality against the ‘deviancy’ of homosexuality (Zaborowski, 2020, p. 40). While the LPR and the MW took the lead in political homophobia, the PiS party also picked up the issue, amongst others with Warsaw mayor Lech Kaczyński banning the LGBT+ rights Equality March in the capital in 2004 and 2005 (Kulpa, 2019, p. 8). While the first PiS-led coalition in 2006-2007 did not have time to enact much of its programme against feminists and LGBT+ people, PiS appropriated the LPR’s rhetoric on matters of gender and sexuality (Kulpa, 2019, pp. 8–9; Pankowski, 2010, p. 161).

Coming to power in 2007, the PO-led government did not rock the boat on questions of gender and sexuality, but conservative and far-right forces in and out of parliament continued to agitate against LGBT+ rights and women’s reproductive rights. Starting in 2012, fringe actors such as *Radio Maryja* picked up transnational discourses against so-called ‘gender ideology’ – a new umbrella term vilifying sexual education, gender and sexual equality measures, feminism and ideas questioning binary gender identities and roles (Kuhar & Paternotte, 2017, p. 5) – and mainstream political players like the Catholic Church and the PiS party joined in

(Graff, 2014; Korolczuk & Graff, 2017, pp. 175–176). This ‘anti-genderism’ – “the defence [*Abwehr*] against gender, or rather against what it is alleged to be” (Hark & Villa, 2015, p. 7) – was especially deployed in 2012 at the occasion of debates on the ratification of the Council of Europe ‘Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence’ (better known as the Istanbul Convention), both by conservative figures within the ruling PO and in the opposition PiS (Graff & Korolczuk, 2022, p. 72). The ‘anti-genderist’ campaign then accelerated in 2013 when the Bishops’ Conference of Poland officially spoke out against ‘gender ideology’ and in 2014 when PiS politicians unsuccessfully fought against the treaty’s ratification (Gwiazda, 2021, pp. 588–589).

Despite being in PiS’s programme since 2014, the fight against ‘gender ideology’ did not figure prominently in the party’s successful campaign to regain power in 2015, overshadowed as it was by socio-economic issues and anti-refugee views (Graff & Korolczuk, 2022, p. 89). Empowered by PiS’s electoral triumph, conservative actors pushed the party to move on towards a complete abortion ban in 2016, but it triggered such an unprecedented protest wave led by Polish women – called the *Czarny Protest* (Black Protest) and then the *Strajk Kobiet* (Women’s Strike) – that the government eventually backed down, focusing instead on attacks against sexual education and LGBT+ people (Graff & Korolczuk, 2022, p. 79). While PiS mostly refrained from taking substantive radical measures (Gwiazda, 2021, pp. 588–589), it pursued its rhetorical escalation, launching an all-out campaign against the LGBT+ movement and – to a lesser extent – feminists ahead of a series of elections in 2019 by denouncing ‘LGBT ideology’ and the ‘sexualisation of children’ (Graff & Korolczuk, 2022, p. 79).

Considering PiS’s virulent rhetoric against LGBT+ rights and women’s reproductive rights, *Konfederacja* tried to present itself as a more radical and principled alternative to the ruling

party, which it attacked as “a pseudo-right-wing and pseudo-patriotic political party that deceived its voters” (Tomasiewicz, 2020, p. 13). In its programme, *Konfederacja* pledged to protect children against ‘homopropaganda’ (Kolczyński, 2020, p. 272), its deputies proposed a bill forbidding LGBT+ rights marches (Tomasiewicz, 2020, p. 16) and the leader of its ultra-traditionalist wing Grzegorz Braun even claimed that he wanted to criminalise ‘sodomy’ (*Grzegorz Braun chce karać za homoseksualizm*, 2019). For the 2019 EU elections, *Konfederacja* could even count on the presence of the most well-known anti-abortion activist in Poland, Kaja Godek, who had openly attacked the PiS government for backtracking on the full abortion ban (Gwiazda, 2021, p. 587), but she later left the far-right coalition because of internal strife. In October 2020, *Konfederacja* welcomed the Constitutional Court’s decision to fully ban abortion and denounced the feminist protests.

To conclude on the radicalisation of the mainstream in Poland since the return to democracy in 1989, topics of gender and sexuality played an important role in this process. Starting with the abortion ban in the early 1990s, then with homophobia in the 2000s and finally with the current wave of anti-genderism and anti-LGBT+ views, anti-egalitarian positions along the gender/sexual dimension became central to the right and the far right and were appropriated by the radicalised PiS party. Building on the interwar *Polak-katolik* identity based on the supremacy of the Catholic ethnic Pole, which was already implicitly male and heterosexual, the PiS also appropriated the far right’s positions and rhetoric against feminism and the LGBT+ movement, and this ‘opportunistic synergy’ between the PiS and ultra-conservative groups – amongst others the Polish Catholic Church – helped the PiS build its authoritarian anti-egalitarian counter-hegemony (Graff & Korolczuk, 2022, pp. 68–69). However, this shift also had two side-effects: it bolstered more radical far-right forces and triggered widespread

resistance. Indeed, Catholic fundamentalists often pushed the PiS party on topics like abortion, sexual education or sexual minorities, but the party did not always take action, which then led some radical activists to turn their backs on the PiS and to even denounce it publicly. The far-right coalition *Konfederacja* then used such discursive and political opportunities to challenge the PiS party from its right flank and present itself as a more genuine far-right force. Finally, the almost complete ban on abortions led to widespread protests and to a fall of the ruling party in surveys, which translated in a loss of power in the 2023 elections (Szczzerbiak, 2023). However, showing the enduring impact of the far right's anti-egalitarian counter-hegemony in gender and sexual matters, conservative forces within the new government of parties from the centre-right to the centre-left have blocked any attempt to grant women reproductive rights and further equality for LGBT+ people.

2. Czechia: Competing challengers and far-right mainstreaming

In Czechia, socio-political developments in the first two decades after 1989 did not unfold in such a dramatic fashion as in Poland, as the country avoided extreme polarisation and radicalisation. Political competition between parties revolved more around socio-economic issues than cultural ones, and a logic of differences prevailed over a logic of antagonism (Kim, 2020). Nevertheless, growing popular discontent with corruption and collusion among parties at the end of the 2000s and beginning of the 2010s led to the rise of political challengers using anti-establishment rhetoric, and the so-called refugee crisis in 2015-2016 brought culture wars to the forefront. While far-right forces were not the main beneficiaries of this turn, they profited from it to establish themselves in society and contributed to shifting the whole political scene to the right. Amongst the culture wars agitating Czech politics and

society since the 2010s, issues of gender and sexuality have also played a role despite not being as central as in Poland.

Challenging the bipartisan system

Following the fall of State socialism in 1989 and the division of Czechoslovakia in 1993, Czech politics in the 1990s revolved around competition between two parties stemming from opposition circles: the right-wing *Občanská demokratická strana* (Civic Democratic Party, ODS) and the left-wing *Česká strana sociálně demokratická* (Czech Social Democratic Party, ČSSD). Considering the widespread consensus on the Euro-Atlantic integration embodying the ‘return to Europe’, a rather pragmatic and cooperative style dominated the political scene in the 1990s and 2000s, and cultural issues were relegated to minor street protests (Císař, 2017, p. 2; Kim, 2020, pp. 6–7). The right-wing ODS and the left-wing ČSSD alternated in power throughout these years with different coalition partners, and they even struck *opoziční smlouvy* (opposition agreements) in 1996 and 1998 to enable minority governments to govern unhindered. At the turn of the century, this façade of political stability buttressed by a relatively successful economic transition started to show cracks and popular discontent swelled as the two main parties increasingly came to resemble corrupt business networks with little interest in political ideals and programmes (Hanley, 2014, p. 167).

Successive corruption scandals, shady backroom political deals, the 2007-2008 global financial and the 2010 Euro-zone crises further increased popular discontent towards the mainstream political parties and the EU (Císař, 2017, pp. 5–6). At the same time, anti-establishment challengers started emerging at the end of the 2000s with virulent criticism of the political class. The most important challenger was the *Akce nespokojených občanů* (Action of Dissatisfied Citizens, ANO, an acronym also meaning ‘yes’ in Czech) founded in 2011 by

billionaire Andrej Babiš, who had built his fortune privatising the agro-chemical sector. ANO presented itself as a non-ideological civil movement defending ‘ordinary people’ against ‘traditional parties’ (Hanley & Vachudova, 2018, p. 281). Ahead of the 2013 elections, Babiš bought influential media and paid savvy marketing campaigns mixing attacks on the political class and messages of positive change, finishing second and entering a government coalition (Hanley & Vachudova, 2018). The ANO party has been described by scholars as a form of ‘centrist’, ‘managerial’ or ‘technocratic populism’ (Hanley & Vachudova, 2018, p. 281). Another challenger was Tomio Okamura and his far-right *Úsvit* party (predecessor to the SPD), which I introduce in the next section.

When the ‘refugee crisis’ started, anti-Islam and anti-refugee grassroots mobilisation dominated the public sphere in Czechia, putting pressure on political parties across the spectrum, and leading to a ‘radicalisation of the mainstream’ represented by a political quasi-consensus against refugees and – to a certain extent – against Muslims in general (Charvát et al., 2024; Slačálek & Svobodová, 2018; Stojarová, 2018; Wondreys, 2021). An important player in causing this shift was former social-democratic Prime Minister Miloš Zeman, who had come out of political retirement in 2013 to win the presidency. Using the symbolic power of his function and his inflammatory language, he sided with the anti-Islam / anti-refugee movement (Stojarová, 2018, p. 40), and made anti-migrant rhetoric the cornerstone of his successful reelection campaign in 2018 (Wondreys, 2021, pp. 733–734). While he first showed openness to refugees as a possible solution to labour shortages, Babiš quickly switched gears when public opinion shifted (Vallo et al., 2020, p. 168).

Despite being increasingly hit by scandals over his past business dealings and his use of political power for personal interests, Andrej Babiš successfully undermined his social-

democratic allies and won the 2017 elections, subsequently becoming prime minister. Leading a coalition government with the weakened social-democrats and with the parliamentary support of the ostracised unreformed communist party (KSČM), and thus breaking the taboo of involving ‘extremists’ in government, Babiš strengthened his hold on the state apparatus. However, contrary to the PiS, he did not have the power to take over the state, nor did he frequently engage in culture wars (Hanley & Vachudova, 2018, p. 278). In the second half of the 2010s, Czech politics turned into a struggle between, on the one hand, Miloš Zeman and Andrej Babiš’s centralised and personalised power – denounced by their opponents as corrupt and ‘illiberal’ – and, on the other hand, centrist and right-wing forces claiming to represent democracy. Facing increasing mobilisation from civil society and a more united parliamentary opposition, and weakened by poor management of the Covid-19 pandemic, Andrej Babiš was defeated in the 2021 elections by a wide coalition of five parties from the right to the centre-left. The 2021 elections marked the completion of Babiš’s takeover of the traditional Czech Left, as both the social-democrats and the communists failed to pass the electoral threshold, and the Czech political divide roughly corresponded to a pro- and an anti-Babiš camp (Havlík & Kluknavská, 2022). This tendency was confirmed in the 2023 presidential election, in which Andrej Babiš ran as one of the favourites and made it into the second round, but ultimately failed to beat a liberal centre-right candidate endorsed by governing parties, Petr Pavel.

Shaping a far-right alternative

Looking at Czechia with a wide angle, the limits to a holistic far-right project in Czechia can be traced to middle- and long-term factors, such as the myth of Czech national identity anchored in liberal democratic values and the lack of a strong anti-communist nationalist tradition (Slačálek, 2021a, pp. 168–171). Thus, following the 1989 regime change, and

contrary to its Polish counterparts, the far right did not immediately have a strong footing because it could not claim continuity with a powerful historical legacy and it had not played a role in the dissident movement (M. Mareš, 2015, p. 220). However, a far-right party named the *Sdružení pro republiku – Republikánská strana Československa* (Rally for the Republic – Republican Party of Czechoslovakia, hereafter Republicans) was established in 1990 by Miroslav Sládek and started to spread anti-communist, nationalist, anti-German and antigypsyist – i.e. anti-Roma – sentiments (M. Mareš, 2011). The Republicans also attacked the new political elites, denouncing the alleged lack of decommunisation and accusing them of having conspired with the former State socialist establishment (M. Mareš, 2015, p. 212). Labelled as extremists early on, the Republicans came to be seen as political outcasts, like the unreformed communists (*Komunistická strana Čech a Moravy*, hereafter KSČM), by the rest of the political scene and by large parts of the public (M. Mareš, 2011, 2015, p. 220). In parallel to the Republicans, a marginal but deadly skinhead subculture developed in the streets (Slačálek, 2018, p. 129). While the Republicans had some success at the polls in 1992 (6%) and 1996 (8%), scandals linked to the party's management, including fund embezzlement and nepotism led to the party's downfall in 1998 (Hanley, 2012, p. 71). Ultimately, the party did not succeed in overcoming the negative image of far-right ideology, in presenting a convincing programme and in building a sustainable voter base beyond protest voters (Kreidl & Vlachová, 2000; M. Mareš, 2011, p. 295). Despite being rather short-lived and having a weak general impact on politics, the Republicans contributed to spreading antigypsyism in politics and in the public sphere, something that has remained an important feature of the Czech far right and spread to some mainstream parties' representatives (M. Mareš, 2015, pp. 214–217).

After this first ‘epoch of searching’ running from 1989 to 2001, the far right, including the skinhead scene, entered an ‘epoch of repression’, as it came under increasing scrutiny and growing pressure from anti-fascists, civil society, the media, the political scene and the state (Slačálek, 2018, p. 129). With the political struggle mostly revolving around socio-economic issues articulated in the ODS – ČSSD duel, the far right remained outside of parliament. There were attempts to establish a new political party to compete on the parliamentary scene, the most meaningful being the *Dělnická Strana* (Workers’ Party, DS) established in 2003 by some former Republican activists and neo-Nazis, but it failed to garner popular support (Slačálek, 2018, pp. 129–130).

A certain turn took place in the late 2000s and early 2010s, when incidents between Roma and non-Roma inhabitants in Northern Bohemia led to antigypsyist demonstrations and riots involving the far right alongside local non-Roma inhabitants (M. Mareš, 2015, pp. 215–216). Building on a long history of racism against the Roma – often racialised as ‘Gypsies’ or ‘Blacks’ in contrast with the ‘Czech’ or ‘White’ majority (Bancroft, 2001; Crețan et al., 2022; Jusová, 2016; Shmidt & Jaworsky, 2020; Stejskalová, 2012; Walach, 2020) – many local politicians of mainstream left-wing and right-wing parties legitimised discrimination and far-right rhetoric (M. Mareš, 2015, p. 216; Slačálek, 2021b, p. 184). Discourses against ‘parasites’ and ‘unadaptable’ (*nepřizpůsobivý*) citizens committing crime and living off social benefits thus gained momentum in Czechia in the late 2000s, a time of strengthening austerity and social tensions, and political parties, especially the emerging anti-establishment parties, spread and used them in their electoral propaganda (Kim, 2020, p. 9). With time, these discourses increasingly targeted Romas as ‘unadaptables’, racialising the term to the extent that it became an antigypsyist dog whistle (Císař & Navrátil, 2019, p. 187).

While the interracial tensions in Northern Bohemia also caused a backlash against neo-Nazis, leading to the ban of the political party DS as extremist and anti-democratic in 2010 (Charvát et al., 2024; Slačálek, 2021b), the discourse against ‘unadaptables’ was further radicalised and racialised in the new far-right party *Úsvit přímé demokracie Tomia Okamury* (Dawn of Direct Democracy of Tomio Okamura, hereafter *Úsvit*). Founded in 2013 and led by the charismatic Czech-Japanese entrepreneur and media personality Tomio Okamura, *Úsvit* combined criticism of the political system and advocacy of direct democracy with attacks against the ‘unadaptables’, but it more clearly racialised such discourses to deploy them against Roma, took a hard stance against the EU, and started to feed hitherto rare anti-migrant rhetoric (Císař & Navrátil, 2019; Kim, 2020, p. 10). Okamura succeeded in distinguishing himself from “the overly ideological and discredited long-term representatives of the far right” and he gained close to 7% of votes in the 2013 parliamentary election, marking the return of the far right in the Czech parliament after 15 years of absence (Charvát et al., 2024, p. 91).

As the so-called ‘refugee crisis’ opened new opportunities for the far right (Charvát et al., 2024), *Úsvit* was at first overhauled by grassroots anti-Islam / anti-refugee groups mobilising in the streets. Moreover, the party was shaken by internal strife, as Okamura was accused of siphoning off party finances and expelled. However, Okamura quickly set up the new party SPD and he radicalised his message against refugees and Muslims, calling for an outright ban on Islam and using slogans like “No to Islam, no to terrorists” and “We will stop illegal immigration and the EU dictate” (Wondreys, 2021, pp. 735–736). With its superior political marketing, its financial resources and charismatic leader, SPD outplayed his predecessor *Úsvit* and far-right competitors, and it racked up most of the anti-Muslim / anti-refugee vote in the 2017 parliamentary election, receiving 10.6% and coming a close fourth (Císař & Navrátil,

2019, p. 195; Slačálek, 2018, p. 131). Then, in January 2018, the former social-democrat turned conservative populist Czech president Miloš Zeman was re-elected thanks to an aggressive anti-refugee rhetoric (Wondreys, 2021, p. 738).

With the success of new far-right forces like SPD and of radicalised mainstream actors like then-president Miloš Zeman, former representatives of the far right associated with open racism, neo-Nazism and antisemitism virtually disappeared. In many ways, SPD reflects the ‘modernisation’ of the far right that has taken place in some Western European countries, with a more ‘respectable’ image and the adoption of a rhetoric based on democracy and liberalism, including the rhetorical emphasis on cultural differences instead of racial hierarchies (Akkerman & Hagelund, 2007; Brubaker, 2017). With time, SPD also expanded its interest beyond the issues of direct democracy, the Roma and migration, and picked up conservative discourses against ‘gender ideology’ from conservative actors like the Catholic Church (Charvát et al., 2024, p. 93). During the pandemic, SPD became a leading voice against anti-Covid 19 measures, but it was also challenged by more radical groupings and this competition explains its slight decrease in the 2021 elections, where it gained 9.6% of votes (*Volby do Poslanecké sněmovny Parlamentu*, n.d.-a). Moreover, the originally centrist ANO party of former Prime Minister Andrej Babiš has been increasingly encroaching on the far right’s turf, widely drawing from anti-migrant and anti-EU sentiments.

The surge of culture wars

As post-1989 Czech parliamentary politics largely revolved around the socio-economic right-left axis and the competition between ODS and ČSSD, sociocultural issues tended to play a secondary role and to be relegated to street protests organised by social movements (Císař & Vráblíková, 2019). Contrary to Poland, the Czech Catholic Church did not occupy a central

place in a largely secularised society and could not claim political power in the new regime, meaning that there was no strong return of religious discourses on so-called traditional values (Slačálek, 2021a). Hence, while socio-economic hardships disproportionately hitting Czech women, they did not go through the same onslaught on their reproductive rights as women in many other post-socialist countries (Jusová, 2016, p. 1919; Verdery, 1994, p. 19). Stronger secularisation also helps explain the lower level of homophobia in Czechia, compared to Poland, and the fact that the parliament allowed civil partnership for same-sex couples in 2006 without strong social mobilisation (Jusová, 2016, p. 22). However, it would be wrong to assume that the majority of Czech society rejected traditional views on gender roles and sexuality in the 1990s and 2000s.

In socio-political debates of the first post-socialist decades, issues of gender and sexuality did not figure prominently and there was a rather large consensus around ‘modern traditional’ gender roles – combining traditional views on women’s childrearing role and the acceptance of formal gender equality and women’s presence in the wage economy (De Lange & Mügge, 2015, p. 71) – and a widespread rejection of feminist ideas (Svatoňová, 2021, p. 139). Amongst others, negative views of feminism came from its association with the state socialist regime and from a caricatural representation of (radical Western) feminism as being against men (Heitlinger, 1996, p. 81). Throughout various spheres of society, women have remained marginalised after 1989, with a low representation in politics (*Zastoupení žen v poslanecké sněmovně ČR*, n.d.) and one of the worst gender pay gaps in the EU caused by an overrepresentation in precarious and low-paid sectors, unequal childcare responsibilities and outright discrimination (Křížková et al., 2018, pp. 98–99). Despite the existence of such

pressing issues, there has been no mass organised feminist movement to stand up to this situation.

With the erosion of the bipartisan political competition around socio-economic matters in the late 2000s and early 2010s, cultural issues slowly crept into the mainstream. The most important one at that time were the aforementioned relations with the Roma minority, an issue that increasingly came to be framed as cultural, and even racial, despite its strong socio-economic aspects. It did not lead to a lasting division in party politics, however, mostly because representatives of parties across the political spectrum implicitly or explicitly used antigypsyist rhetoric. In the first direct presidential election of 2013, cultural elements came to the fore, as former Prime Minister Miloš Zeman used anti-German rhetoric and presented himself as the defender of the under-privileged majority against the ‘Prague coffeehouse’ (*Pražská kavárna*), i.e. the allegedly disconnected liberal elites in the capital (Slačálek, 2021a, pp. 161–164). This division between, on the one hand, an anti-establishment, majoritarian vision of democracy and, on the other hand, liberal democracy became increasingly crystallised in the second half of the 2010s around issues of geopolitics, migration and governance, especially as Andrej Babiš became caught in – and started feeding – these dynamics, and they eventually came to replace the traditional Right-Left division (Kluknavská & Havlík, 2024).

A major milestone in this process was the so-called refugee crisis in Europe in 2015-2016, when Europe-wide debates on the welcoming of refugees from Muslim-majority countries often revolved around cultural questions, in addition to security and socio-economics. The anti-refugee / anti-Muslim movement also further ‘culturalised’ the political debate by creating new dividing lines in society, deriding pro-refugee activists and sympathisers as ‘do-gooders’

(*sluníčkáři*, literally ‘sun people’ or ‘little suns’) (Slačálek & Svobodová, 2018, p. 489) or neo-Marxists, labels that were then widely deployed in subsequent culture wars. As with the issue of antigypsyism, this mobilisation had limited influence on political party competition because a cross-partisan consensus against Muslim and extra-European refugees took shape through the mainstreaming of far-right ideas on the topic. Nevertheless, politicians like Miloš Zeman, Tomio Okamura or more recently in 2021 Andrej Babiš have continued to demonise their opponents as ‘pro-refugee/migrant’, sometimes successfully (Wondreys, 2021).

In the Parliament and in the public sphere, cultural questions touching on gender and sexuality did not abound, although they occasionally surfaced around two policy issues: the Istanbul Convention and equality for same-sex couples. Echoing international ‘anti-genderist’ discourses, conservative politicians started denouncing the Istanbul Convention as a Trojan horse of ‘gender ideology’ in 2016 (Kopecký, 2016) and this rhetoric was later adopted by the Czech Catholic Church, which stepped up its interventions on the matter in 2018, trying to spread a moral panic around the treaty (Svatoňová, 2021, p. 150). SPD jumped on this topic in 2018, spreading existing discourses and reframing them in its anti-establishment and anti-EU rhetoric, while also developing its own vision around the promotion of the ‘traditional family’. These efforts were successful enough to create a political stalemate around the issue and the convention is yet to be ratified by the Czech Parliament. Members of this parliament have also regularly discussed and rejected a legislative proposal legalising same-sex marriage in the last years, despite recent surveys showing an overwhelming support among the wider public (Grim, 2023).

Among the mainstream political forces, the rather weak Christian-Democratic party (KDU-ČSL) has been the only one to systematically promote conservative views on gender roles and

sexuality, while SPD has been a bit of a latecomer. Apart from them, many political parties have internal differences and struggle to find a common position, with more or less conservative deputies. On cultural matters, the parliamentary scene has not been split according to the dominant pro-Babiš and anti-Babiš camps – the latter including both liberal and conservative parties – which might explain why these matters did not become more central. This cross-party cultural heterogeneity is also the reason why the 2021 elections and the new government composed of anti-Babiš parties did not unlock the political stalemate on the Istanbul Convention nor on equality for same-sex couples. While cultural matters have largely taken over the Czech political debate, it has been far less over gender and sexuality than over political culture – with the anti-Babiš camp claiming to be anti-populist and accusing Babiš and Okamura of representing populism – and over geopolitical identity – with the anti-Babiš camp presenting itself as pro-Western and castigating ANO and SPD as pro-Russian and/or pro-Chinese – a trend reinforced by Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022 (Havlík & Kluknavská, 2022).

Conclusion

The contemporary social and political dynamics in Poland and Czechia bear similarities, as both countries have experienced a surge in far-right views in the last 10-15 years. Nevertheless, the two national contexts have also been marked by stark differences, with the radicalisation of the mainstream in Poland and the mainstreamisation of the far right across the political spectrum in Czechia. While the far right held power in Poland under the PiS leadership and implemented many of its ideas in 2015-2023, it has been kept at bay in Czechia, where parties across the political spectrum have nevertheless absorbed or reproduced parts of the far-right agenda and rhetoric – like antigypsyism, anti-Muslim racism, or

homophobia. This development has paradoxically resulted in, on the one hand, the weakening of far-right parties like SPD and, on the other hand, in the normalisation of far-right ideology. This contrast has also appeared on questions of gender and sexuality, which have been central to the radicalisation of the mainstream in Poland, but have not played the same crucial role in Czech politics, where conservative positions cut across party lines. In both contexts, despite the rise of far-right ideas, *Konfederacja* and SPD have had to face a series of challenges. *Konfederacja* has struggled to carve itself a spot on the far-right side of the political scene where the PiS already dominated, whereas SPD experienced problems as it has seen its issues hijacked by other parties and it has faced increasing competition from other far-right groups. Finally, for both *Konfederacja* and the SPD, it has also been challenging to find a space on a political scene marked by a deeply entrenched and polarised division, the PiS-PO war in Poland and the Babiš versus anti-Babiš struggle in Czechia. These similar, yet different contexts are important to keep in mind as I move on to the first part about the involvement pathways of the interviewed members, which have been largely influenced by the respective countries' recent socio-political developments.

PART I – INVOLVEMENT

Chapter 2: Poland – Far-right youths against the system

“One is not born a nationalist” (Adam)

On a hot Summer afternoon in 2020, I arrived at the local headquarters of the NN party (then still called KORWiN) in one of Poland’s largest cities. The head of the section had enthusiastically accepted my request for an interview and had even arranged for him and four other members to talk to me on the same day. To conduct this marathon of interviews, I was led into a small backroom with a table, some old computers and a bright white life-size bust of the Soviet revolutionary leader Vladimir Lenin laying on the ground, covered with small dots suggesting that it had been used as a target for dart practice. On that afternoon, I spoke to four men and one woman, all younger than 25 years old, and they all made the impression of being well-mannered, educated, articulate, passionate youngsters. Yet, they also expressed the economically ultra-libertarian, ultra-conservative and/or ethnonationalist views of their NN party, the paleolibertarian wing of the *Konfederacja* coalition. Over a year and a half of fieldwork in 2020-2021, I met 23 members from the coalition’s three wings and most of them had roughly the same profile : young, urban, middle-class, university-educated youths with a worldview firmly anchored on the far right of the political spectrum. In short, they were far from corresponding to widespread stereotypes of far-right activists as ‘angry white men’, as uneducated, rural and poor. Why and how did they get involved in a far-right political party? And what was gender’s role in this involvement?

In political sciences, scholars have looked at various aspects of personal involvement in political parties, such as the importance of resources, self-interest, social psychology or opportunities to explain political mobilisation (Whiteley & Seyd, 2002). Considering such frameworks as too static, other scholars have instead investigated activists' socio-political journeys as processes, amongst others with the use of qualitative tools like life-history interviews (Blee, 2002; Kajta, 2020a; Klandermans & Mayer, 2005). In my interviews, I explored the party members' trajectories and identified several engagement factors that I treat in this chapter in order of importance as the micro-, macro- and meso-levels. The micro-level represents the family and the close social environment, the macro-level corresponds to the wider socio-political context and the meso-level refers to organisational matters. Most of the interviewees joined the far right because of early political socialisation marked by nationalist, conservative and/or libertarian economic ideas, especially in the family (micro-level); because of a political context in which the far right appeared as an 'anti-system' alternative (macro-level); and finally because of the far-right party organisations' ability to channel beliefs and ambitions (meso-level). I argue that this interplay of personal, contextual and organisational factors explains why *Konfederacja* has had such an impressive success with the youth. In this chapter, I will start by exposing some of the early socialisation factors that have shaped the interviewees' worldviews, then I will move on to show how the socio-political context of the early 2010s pushed parts of the youth towards the far right, and I will then explain how far-right parties have offered compelling engagement opportunities for aspiring activists. Finally, I explain why I conclude that *Konfederacja* male and female members' pathways into far-right activism are not gendered, i.e. not different for men and women.

1. The Polish interviewees

Most of the interviewees (13) were linked to the paleolibertarian NN wing (then still called KORWiN), of which two were members of the NN's youth organisation *Młodzi dla Wolności* (Youths for Freedom) and one was an active NN sympathiser; five others were members of the Catholic fundamentalist *Korona* wing; and the rest (4) belonged to the ultra-nationalist RN. This uneven distribution partially reflects the bigger size of the NN wing and partially arose from the greater readiness of its members to talk to me. Since differences among wing members were milder than expected, I did not make additional efforts to reach a more representative sample of the coalition's internal composition.

The demographic profiles of the 18 men and 5 women interviewed were as follows: 10 were aged 17-25 (seven men and three women), eight 26-35 (seven men and one woman), three 36-45 (all men) and two were around their sixties (one man and one woman). The sample of interviewees thus corresponded to the party's internal make-up strongly dominated by young men, as proven by its parliamentary representation (all of its deputies being men) and its 2019 candidate lists, which were the youngest and most male-dominated of all parties (*Najstarszy kandydat na posła ma*, 2019).

When it comes to socio-economic characteristics, the interviewees were mostly urban youths from middle-class backgrounds. The few interviewees coming from rural areas usually came from more modest family backgrounds. All the younger members had university-level education, were in the process of obtaining a university degree or planned to attend university after finishing school. Those in employment mostly worked in white-collar positions. The interviewees' profiles corresponded to other findings on active far-right supporters in Poland,

which were said to be mostly young, male, urban, educated and with above-average incomes (Mrozowicki & Kajta, 2021, p. 5; Witkowski, 2023c, p. 27).

2. Early socialisation into the far right

“One is not born a nationalist”, explained Adam, a corporate accountant in his mid-thirties active in the ultra-nationalist RN wing, talking about his ideological maturing. While the interviewees were certainly not born with their far-right mindset, they often acquired it very early through family, friends and precocious politicisation, especially through online media. This micro-level, immediate, intimate environment with strong nationalist, conservative and economically libertarian views, goes a long way to explain how the far right finds a fertile ground among parts of the Polish youth and exposes the interviewees’ trajectories as a rather continuous line between early socialisation and later political engagement.

It runs in the family

As it transpired from the interviews, the apple rarely falls far from the tree, and many of the interviewees have parents, and especially fathers, with nationalist, conservative and/or economically libertarian views. Few of these parents ever got involved in social movements or political parties, but the interviewees often traced back their ideological mindsets and political trajectories to their upbringing. The topic of family background and family members’ political views was addressed in most of the interviews, in 21 of the 23 to be precise. In the majority of cases, one or both parents were said to be supportive of the then-ruling PiS party (6), to have conservative or religious inclinations, without specifying partisan preferences (5), or to be sympathetic to JKM and his paleolibertarian current (4). In two other cases, parents were

described as close to economic libertarianism. In the rest of the cases, the parents were considered as apolitical (2) or to have loosely defined leftist sympathies (2).

While family was not always identified as a defining factor by the interviewees, it came up on several occasions as a direct influence leading to political interest and political engagement, especially towards the paleolibertarian branch of the far right led by JKM, who has been active on the political scene since the late 1980s. Patrycja, a woman in her early twenties with a high position in the NN party, underlined the ideological influence of her father, a financier with a strong interest in the Austrian school of economics, a school of thought inspiring right-wing ultra-libertarian ideas whose most famous representative was Friedrich Hayek. She said that her father always voted for JKM and “somewhat brought her up in that spirit.”¹ Other NN members also noted that their parents were JKM supporters.

While some of the NN interviewees mentioned a direct link between their parents’ views and their own choice of political party, other interviewees talked about a more general influence on their mindset. Many of them recalled how conservative, nationalist and economically libertarian views abounded in the family. Reflecting on the idea that one is not born a nationalist, RN member Adam remembered the patriotic upbringing given by his father, who took him every year to official Independence Day ceremonies in his middle-size city to honour those who had fallen for the fatherland. For Dominik (RN), upbringing was also strictly patriotic, especially by his grandparents: “they brought me up ‘God, Honour, Fatherland’, there were some [historical] plaques I read or these patriotic songs.”² He also added that he was brought up as a practicing Catholic and at the time of the interview he was a church musician. Łukasz and Mateusz (both NN) also insisted on their grandparents’ influence in constructing their rightist value system. In addition to transmitting certain ideas and values,

families sometimes also played a role in triggering an interest in politics and political engagement. Magdalena (NN) recalled being pushed to take an interest in politics by her family environment, noting that “the male part of my family is very much involved in politics.” However, her engagement in the NN party caused a great deal of conflicts with her conservative father, a loyal PiS supporter.

Many of the interviewees identified socialisation in the family as crucial for their ideological development and their political involvement. While this finding corresponds to previous research on Western European far-right party members (Klandermans & Mayer, 2005, pp. 270–271), *Konfederacja* members differed from Western European counterparts in that none of them came from families with a long history of involvement in historical far-right movements and parties. This fact might be traced back to the interruption in far-right organising during the state socialist era (Pankowski, 2010). In Poland, family heritage more often came in the form of general conservative and nationalist ideas and, considering how widespread such ideas in Poland are, as illustrated by the high proportion of practising Catholics and the high scores realised by nationalist-conservative and far-right parties (Stanley, 2016), it is unsurprising to see that many youths adopted them early on as their own. However, as the case of Magdalena and others show, interviewees did not automatically replicate the exact same political sympathies and engagements running in the family, but sometimes drifted towards more radical options or added paleolibertarian beliefs to nationalist and conservative values, often under the influence of JKM, as I further explain.

Finally, while Catholicism was mentioned as important for several of the interviewees, it mattered to them in different ways. Like the activists studied in other research on the Polish far right, several *Konfederacja* members attended the traditionalist Tridentine mass organised by

the semi-sectarian Society of Saint Pius X (Kajta, 2020a, p. 144; Pasięka, 2024, p. 138). For them, this traditionalist congregation represented a more authentic but also more rigorous approach, while the Catholic Church was too weak, and even ‘effeminate’, in the words of former RN leader Robert Winnicki (Nowak, 2021), a gendered framing also found among Kajta’s interviewees (Kajta, 2020a, p. 149). Among my interviewees, this religious affiliation tended to follow from political beliefs rather than lead to them, and organised religion only proved to be identified as a gateway into the far right by Tomasz, who recalled his religious conversion as decisive in his rejection of previously-held liberal views, his decision to join a traditionalist congregation, and then his membership in the Catholic fundamentalist *Korona* wing. Thus, the importance of personal faith, the religious community, the value-system and the identitarian aspects of religion were entangled in far-right involvement to largely different degrees, as Agnieszka Pasięka notes in her ethnography on another Polish far right group (Pasięka, 2024, p. 139).

JKM as a political mentor and leader

As it already came up in aforementioned family stories, the figure of JKM played a central role in driving several of the interviewees towards paleolibertarianism. While in some cases parents directly passed on to their children sympathies for JKM and his ideas, in many others, the interviewees were drawn to his figure and political projects through other channels, especially the media and the internet. For many, he was even a mentor shaping their worldviews, often bringing them from diffuse nationalist and conservative sympathies to a more defined paleolibertarian ideological mindset. Even several interviewees from the RN and *Korona* wings identified JKM as a strong influence in their political upbringing.

Elżbieta (*Korona*), one of the two older interviewees, described in vivid terms the role played by JKM in shaping political her consciousness after 1989. “Korwin-Mikke is a sort of standard-bearer who hasn’t changed his opinions for thirty years”, she said approvingly. “He never changed [his opinions] and actually I was re-learning freedom from him, I learned.... He introduced me to the meanderings of this world, right, to this politics. [...] actually for our generation, thanks to Korwin-Mikke, we have what we have today, we have *Konfederacja*”³ (Elżbieta). He had such a strong influence on her that she eventually joined his party at the beginning of the 2010s, where she was an active member for 4-5 years before eventually disengaging. Coming back to party politics as *Konfederacja* took shape, Elżbieta opted for Grzegorz Braun’s *Korona* wing since she had started perceiving the NN wing as too liberal on social matters. Also from the *Korona* fraction, Roman remembered a similar experience of early political socialisation in the 1990s, as a young teenager, when he saw JKM mocking his political opponents on TV for their lack of courage in decommunisation. He told me that he grew more interested in politics and started reading more on JKM’s revelations about informants of the secret police under state socialism and the alleged deal struck between dissidents and the regime in the village of Magdalenka in 1988-1989. While the older interviewees like Elżbieta and Roman denounced the so-called Round Table Agreement paving the way to a peaceful regime change as hiding a conspiracy to maintain the power of state socialist elites, a theory defended early on by JKM and later promoted by the PiS party (Bill & Stanley, 2020, p. 6; Kopeček, 2021, pp. 66–67; Pankowski, 2010, p. 162), the younger interviewees did not often refer to state socialism, 1989 and its aftermath.

Growing up two decades later, young NN members also described JKM as having a determining impact on their worldview. As a teenager, Antoni remembered seeing JKM on the

news because of hateful comments against transgender deputy Anna Grodzka. He said that he found himself agreeing with JKM and that it triggered his interest for the politician. He searched for more information on the internet and got acquainted with JKM's views, gradually coming to agree with most of them. Although he felt closer to Grzegorz Braun because of their joint adherence to Catholic traditionalism, he considered JKM's campaigning and controversial style as more effective to attract media attention. The politician's frequent controversies were also something that attracted Weronika's (NN) attention as a teenager: "I saw something cool, something good, something original in these controversies."⁴ For others, those controversies proved more of an obstacle or repellent. Despite having shaped his views thanks to JKM, Łukasz, a young NN member in his early 20s hesitated to join the party because he saw JKM as too controversial. Magdalena (NN) also remembered hesitating because of JKM's personality, but she underlined his political appeal and role: "despite the fact that [JKM] is a controversial figure and likes to cause chaos and confusion, people follow him. It is he who has been shaping the conservative-liberal idea in Poland for 30 or more years. He is the one who spread the libertarian idea spread in Poland in the first place. And he is the face and pillar [of the party]."⁵ After personally coming in contact with JKM, both Łukasz and Magdalena stated that their perception of the then-party leader changed for the better.

Although JKM could be seen as the stereotypical charismatic far-right leader, with his name appearing in the names or acronyms of the party he led, his figure rather reveals the multiple aspects of political leadership. As some of the interviewees said, JKM appealed to many of them and played an important role in their political socialisation, yet he also repelled other people, and his electoral results show that he never attained mass appeal. Running five times for president between 1995 and 2015, he never garnered more than 3.3% of votes ('Janusz

Korwin-Mikke', 2023). The appeal he has on his followers can be better understood as 'coterie charisma', i.e. an ability to attract a faithful core of supporters (Eatwell, 2018, p. 382). However, he is widely recognised as a central figure for the Polish far right, and especially for challenging the post-1989 political system based on the Round Table Agreement and for spreading libertarian economic views. Amongst others, JKM was an early adopter of online media and many interviewees mentioned the importance of the internet in their political socialisation.

The far-right online presence

JKM's controversial statements fit well modern media mechanisms, where increasing commercialisation and competition has led to a greater focus on the scandalous and shocking sides of politics (Maly, 2022; Mazzoleni, 2014; Mudde, 2004). Moreover, JKM and other Polish far-right figures and organisations took an early interest in online and social media to overcome what they considered as marginalisation by mainstream public and private media, gaining an important auditorium, especially among the youth (Lipiński & Stępińska, 2019; Witkowski, 2023b, p. 155). This investment in the online space proved crucial for the political trajectories of many interviewees, who noted that the internet contributed to discovering, developing and adopting far-right views, and even to joining organised politics.

Maciej remembered growing up with an early interest in politics and followed events through social media like Facebook and YouTube. His liking for the nationalist movement was shared by some like-minded school comrades in the mid-2010s in his middle-size city:

We didn't know which party to choose, but we knew that our national values were close to us, that we didn't like socialism and interventionism, and we simply knew that this was not the right direction. We didn't know why for the time being, but it's just that we were in such an environment, from our elders or something like

that too, those people watched this Korwin right there on the internet too. We just felt that he was right, right?⁶

In Maciej's case, in addition to a conservative family and social media, the influence of his surroundings in the form of school comrades also proved important in his political socialisation, but it is JKM's and his movement's online presence that more definitely shaped and refined his views. In another case, NN member Patryk told me that he did not have internet at home in the 2000s, but he could use it on school computers after class and he came across JKM's blog. He recalled how impressed he was by the texts and he became more interested in paleolibertarian ideas. He later joined a demonstration against a tax hike and met JKM there. Patryk took a picture with him, that he then posted on his social media page: "Well, and from then on I started to identify more, because as I took the picture, well then I started to take more of an interest in it. And so I came to the conclusion that indeed these views are the right ones."⁷ Patryk's story shows the interesting interplay of various online and offline dynamics, of ideological and identity-based factors in political socialisation and mobilisation: he first came across some ideas online, then joined a related real-life event and subsequently started to closely identify with a politician and his movement. JKM and his movement were not the only ones to be able to reach out to the public through the internet. Other far-right activists reported becoming active online, amongst others on the video-based social media YouTube, which proved to be an important platform for the Polish far right to spread its views.

As the interviewees' stories show, early political socialisation in the immediate surroundings, and especially in the family, played a crucial role in shaping their beliefs. Growing up with such values, the interviewees later shaped their views more definitely through coming in

contact with far-right ideas, especially through the media and the internet. In some cases, the internet also proved instrumental in building up a political identity and in joining the movement. It is noteworthy to see the importance of online spaces in the interviewees' socialisation and this points out to the relevance of further research on online practices (Krämer et al., 2021) and social media algorithms (Maly, 2022) for the study of the far right. Denouncing mainstream media as leftist-liberal, foreign-owned and biased against their movement, far-right circles invested a lot of efforts in occupying online spaces and drawing youths towards far-right ideas, gradually turning some of them into Linden and Klanderman's prototypical 'revolutionaries', i.e. activists with strong ideological convictions and a willingness to get involved in order to achieve radical changes (2007). The interplay of intimate surroundings such as family and friends on the one hand and the accessibility of far-right political ideas through online and offline media on the other hand created a fertile micro-level environment for far-right radicalisation. However, despite the crucial role of such micro-level factors, it is doubtful that they would have resulted in the same political involvement if it were not for macro-level factors such as the growing discontent with socio-political affairs in the 2010s, when most of the interviewees came of age.

3. The Generation of the Independence March

Most of the interviewees came of age in the 2010s, at the time the PO-PiS duopoly came to be increasingly challenged by a rising far-right movement embodied by the aforementioned *Marsz Niepodległości* (Independence March). Therefore, in addition to the micro-level – the frequently nationalist and conservative immediate environments of family and friends – macro-level events – the March, controversies surrounding it and national politics – contributed to shaping the political understandings of many interviewees into far-right ideas.

As I show in this section, the macro-level socio-political context helped form the interviewees' 'anti-system' mindset against the PO-PiS duopoly, mobilised some of them to action and even set the path for the union of ultra-nationalist, Catholic fundamentalist and paleolibertarian factions into the *Konfederacja* coalition.

Growing up between PO and PiS

Most of the interviewees came of age or grew up under the PO-led governments of Donald Tusk in power between 2007 and 2015, and their values developed in the context of anti-government sentiments in their families and surroundings. Mateusz (NN) remembered reactions to this government by his grandmother, who mostly raised him and "really hated Tusk". He recalled in his early teens associating the PO and other centre-right or left parties to 'communists', thus being 'bad people'. Around the same time, Mateusz started to listen to Polish hip hop expressing opposition to the PO governments, and more general 'anti-system' and far-right views, which abound in this musical subculture in Poland (Majewski, 2021). Interviewees more often denounced the PO governments as corrupt and held it responsible for the socio-economic situation, seeing PiS as an alternative.

Another important point of contention against the PO governments for the right and far right was its foreign policy orientation, as it was considered as selling out to foreign interests, and interviewees denounced PiS for compromising the country's sovereignty. According to Lech (*Korona*), who obsessively came back to antisemitic conspiracies during our three-hour interview, PO represented Jewish interests and was full of Jews, and he paraphrased the acronym PO as '*Platforma Obrzezanych*' (Platform of the circumcised). He remembered regularly voting for PiS in 2007 and after, until he perceived the PiS as becoming the '*Partia interesów syjonistycznych*' (Party of Zionist Interests), another antisemitic nickname based on

the original acronym. Dominik (RN) also put PO and PiS back-to-back as heeding foreign interests: “It is no secret that the Civic Platform has more, has more business with Germany, because what they do is go to the German embassy to get some guidelines, yes, literally. PiS goes to Israel.”⁸

While some interviewees expressed sympathy for the opposition PiS party and even voted for it in 2015, when it won an absolute majority, they then quickly turned their back on what they considered as an oppressive regime which took over state institutions, especially public media, did not act resolutely enough on issues of national sovereignty and moral conservatism, and implemented what they saw as left-wing socio-economic policies, including tax hikes and social programmes. Eventually, most of the interviewees came to see both parties as equally problematic at best and accomplices in a large conspiracy at worse, echoing the widespread far-right slogan “*PiS-PO jedno zło* (PiS-PO one/same evil)”. Antoni (NN) remembered barely seeing any difference between the two when he was growing up watching the news: “actually they are saying more or less the same thing, only that PiS is targeting the Catholic electorate more and PO is targeting the kind of secular electorate more, and that’s basically what they differ on.”⁹ For some of the interviewed members, especially the older ones, the PiS-PO duopoly comes from the aforementioned conspiracy between dissidents and the state socialist regime in 1988-1989, the Round Table Agreement, but for the younger members, the rejection of the two parties was more anchored in a contemporary analysis of the contemporary liberal democratic system and its neoliberal capitalist economy. For those interviewees, state socialism, 1989 and the immediate post-socialist period did not matter as much. Thus, the young *Konfederacja* members expressed a rather different generational experience than the older ones, whose reference point remained 1989 and who thus resemble more the SPD

members presented in the next chapter. Scrinzi also highlights the importance of generational effects for activists within the same party, albeit in different contexts (2024).

The Independence March as a turning point

Over the years, the November 11 Independence March in Warsaw came to best embody this ‘anti-system’ revolt of the Polish far right. The event provided an opportunity to demonstrate the movement’s values, but also to express its discontent. Opposition to the March by the centre-right PO governments and the PO-dominated Warsaw municipality, as well as police reactions to the March, especially under the PO governments, contributed to establishing the March and its organisers as rebellious, anti-system forces (Witkowski, 2023a). Despite the March’s relationship to the authorities becoming more ambiguous after 2015, as the new PiS government attempted to co-opt the event (Mierzyńska, 2023; Mrozowicki & Kajta, 2021, p. 2), the interviewees often mentioned the March as a milestone in their political socialisation on the far right, whether through direct participation or through their perception of the events surrounding it. More than half of the interviewed members went at least once to the Warsaw March and some others reported planning to go to the upcoming one.

For some of the interviewees raised with nationalist values, participation in the first marches was a personal decision to express their identity and preceded any organised political engagement. RN member Adam explained why he decided to participate: “I wanted to go to the marches because it's nice to be Polish, I wanted to show that I love my fatherland, that I want to celebrate this holiday, right?”¹⁰ He went on to explain: “it was a place where I could celebrate [...] shout, demonstrate a bit, wave the flag, walk, show people what is important to me, right, the red and white flag, the country...”¹¹ Patryk (NN) insisted more on the communal aspects of the march, saying that he travelled to Warsaw to celebrate independence together

with like-minded people, to meet them and experience the event. The words of Adam and Patryk reflect the idea that the March changed the anniversary's meaning, not only giving a strong ideological character – the figure of the *Polak-katolik* – but also offering participants an active role and an immersive experience, in contrast to official state celebrations (Kotwas & Kubik, 2019). In the two activists' words, the positive emotions stemming from participation in the March come out, showing the mixture of personal and political motives in participation in the massive Independence March, something also expressed by Polish far-right activists interviewed by Justyna Kajta (2020a, pp. 200–203, 2023).

The March became a natural part for all those considering themselves nationalists, such as Natalia (NN), a white collar worker in her early thirties. She underlined that her family was apolitical and she traced her nationalist right-wing ideology to her participation in a local sport fan club starting as a teenager, a place where she met her future husband. For her, it was self-explanatory that she and her husband would be right-wing, being in a sports fans environment (*“w środowiskach kibicowskich”*), and she described her attendance in all of the first Independence Marches as a logical consequence of being a club supporter. Indeed, in Poland, sports fan clubs tend to be hotbeds of ultra-nationalist ideas, especially in football but not only (Grodecki et al., 2024; Kossakowski et al., 2020; Woźniak et al., 2020). Although she missed a few marches after giving birth, Natalia started going again and explained it as an act of resistance against the government. Dominik (RN) also explained that the March was not only a celebration, but also an ‘anti-system’ demonstration against political leaders seen as unpatriotic:

They weren't really pro-Polish, they were just letting go of our pro-Polish ideas in favour of the European Union only, yes, that's cosmo-, cosmopolitanism [...] we wanted to show our Polishness, our attachment to Poland and Poland's

sovereignty, yes. It was actually fun under PO. There was a march where you could say, yes, ‘PiS-PO one evil’ and so on you could show your demands, it was the only anti-system march, [...] I identified myself with this, because that’s what it was about and to show the authorities that they’re doing wrong, and when would it be better than on Independence Day?¹²

As an event embodying certain values and calling on to resist against the present situation, the March also proved to be a mobilisation channel into organised activism for some interviewees. Adam (RN) recalled becoming gradually convinced by speeches one march after the other, when organisers called on participants to do more for the ‘nation’s survival’ than march once a year: “the third year I said to myself, well darn, well enough, enough of listening, something must be done then, if it’s about survival, and I decided to get involved.”¹³ He subsequently joined the political movement born out of the March, the ultra-nationalist RN. After coming as simple participants, Dominik and Patryk became involved in the March’s organisation, joining their security services trying to curb violence.

Especially in the first years, the marches involved many violent incidents, including what the far right denounced as provocations by plain-clothes police officers. The far right, and many right-wing circles, framed the events as political persecution by the PO-led government and used them to mobilise sympathy (Kajta, 2023). For the interviewees participating in these first marches, the incidents confirmed their views of the government, and for those interviewees who were too young in the early 2010s, these controversial events consolidated their already existing far right sympathies. Maciej (NN) remembered being quite young at the time of the first marches, but he saw images on social media: “The nationalists [*narodowcy*] simply appealed to me, that, like, they were opposing the government, right, at these marches, I simply stood in solidarity with them because, you know, they were brutally suppressed there on these Independence Marches.”¹⁴ Antoni (NN) also noted that scenes of police brutality at

the marches influenced him in his early political socialisation: “I had the impression that the Right was being persecuted in the country, patriots were being persecuted by the government.”¹⁵ In addition to the authorities’ behaviour, some of the interviewees also blamed local and international media for showing what they considered an inaccurate image of the March focusing on extremist and violent elements. While a few interviewees admitted that some participants committed acts of violence and that some extremist groups were present, the main framing in the interviews was one of victimisation. In their words, the March’s organisers and participants were the victims of the system – i.e. the government (especially before 2015) – and the media. As I show further in this dissertation, claims of victimhood abound in far right framings, not only about the March.

Although not all interviewees participated in the March, and two of them noted that it was not their kind of event, most of them did, and it was an important milestone – and even sometimes a turning point – in their political socialisation. For the older interviewees, what was an opportunity to express their nationalist feelings and their opposition to the centre-right governments became a mobilisation channel towards activism and/or party politics. For younger interviewees following the scenes through the media or social media, the March often contributed to their political socialisation on the far right, as the event and the authorities’ reactions reinforced existing sympathies by presenting the far right as a rebellious, persecuted movement. In her work on Polish far-right activists, Justyna Kajta also highlighted the importance of the March, not only as a ‘celebration’ for the far right, but also as a central event for recruitment (Kajta, 2020a, p. 198, 2023).

Marching together under the red and white flag

Contrary to my expectations, the interviewees from different party wings did not describe strongly different paths to political socialisation and engagement, as their attitudes towards the Independence March showed. While it was organised by the ultra-nationalist branch of the far right, amongst others by the MW, the March was also attended right at the beginning or early on by interviewees who later joined the paleolibertarian NN wing, such as Natalia, Dominik (he later switched to the RN) and Patryk. Moreover, the younger interviewees who felt sympathy for the March, Antoni, Mateusz and Maciej, all ended up joining the NN wing, not the ultra-nationalist RN born out of the March. Of those who talked about the March as an important milestone in their path towards political engagement, only Adam joined the RN. In a way, the March illustrated the growing political rapprochement between different branches of the far right and brought members from different horizons together long before the emergence of the *Konfederacja* coalition.

As long-time NN member Patryk noted in his interview, the relationship between the ultra-nationalist wing behind the foundation of the Independence March and the paleolibertarian movement embodied by JKM was not always easy, but it eventually paved the way for greater unity. As Patryk recalled, the presence of his group of paleolibertarian activists among the March's organisers was initially regarded with suspicion by both sides. Nevertheless, this presence came to embody this unity despite divisions, as Patryk recalled. From the outside, too, some sympathisers thought that different wings of the far right should unite. Growing up with strong sympathies for the anti-system, nationalist values embodied by the political forces behind the March, Mateusz (NN) then discovered the libertarian economic ideas promoted by JKM and his movement. Since he also thought that JKM had a better chance to make it

through at the polls, Mateusz voted for them at his first elections, but he remained close to nationalist views and thought that the movements should unite their forces. As the interviewees' words show, the March served as an important convergence point for all far right factions, eventually leading to the paleolibertarian *Konfederacja* coalition.

Having observed three Marches in the 2010s, I have seen its multiple aspects: intimidating masked men throwing firecrackers and setting objects on fire, organised groups carrying banners and chanting slogans with passion, and large sections full of peaceful 'normal' citizens. From my experience, one's perception of the march largely depends on where one stands and which groups one accompanies. The crowds I was able to observe largely reflected the idea of the March as being the symbol of parts of a generation, and especially young men. Sociological studies of Independence March participants such as one conducted in 2015 have confirmed that participants are overwhelmingly young (around 80% under 30) and male (75%) (Malinowska et al., 2016, p. 4). Over time, the March became a central rallying and mobilising event for many of the interviewees, both expressing and shaping their conservative and nationalist values, and offering a third way in a country increasingly divided between the centre-right PO party and its national-conservative-turned-far-right PiS opponent. While some the interviewees' attitudes towards the PiS party were ambiguous before 2015, the March eventually came to symbolise a radical anti-system position for most interviewees, who drifted towards organised far-right politics as an alternative, 'anti-system' way out of the PiS-PO duopoly. Sometimes, the March itself served as a catalyst towards political engagement, and participation in the March's organisation by sympathisers of different far right wings eventually set the table for the later *Konfederacja* coalition.

4. Getting active in the party

While having nationalist, conservative and/or paleolibertarian views in a time of rising far-right activism against mainstream parties explained the interviewees' socio-political sympathies, it does not entirely explain why and how they joined organised politics. Instrumental and ideological factors such as the participants' strong desire to change their country and express their ideals provided a large part of the answer, but the interviewees' choice of *Konfederacja*'s party organisations depended on other, meso-level factors, such as the parties' ability to present themselves as a credible option, welcome activists and give them opportunities, something crucial for far-right parties' success (Art, 2011; M. J. Goodwin, 2006).

Whether it was more because of opposition to the PiS-PO duopoly or for the realisation of certain ideals, or a mix of both negative and positive incentives, dissatisfaction with the state of things in Poland pushed them to get involved. For many of the interviewees, it was self-explanatory that counteracting certain things and enacting socio-political changes would only be possible through getting politically active, mostly through party politics. For some of the interviewed members, a sense of urgency pushed them to take the plunge into party politics. The most dramatic story came from Roman (*Korona*), who remembered being called a paedophile by onlookers while participating in a religious march in the second half of the 2010s and feeling that "if things continue to go in the same direction, they'll start murdering us", referring to 'us' as practising Catholics. He explained that PiS's rule and its alliance with the Church was quickly leading to a dire situation. In order to counteract these developments, Roman decided to join Grzegorz Braun's Catholic fundamentalist *Korona* wing. His words reflect the idea of declinism that is central to far-right rhetoric and mobilisation, as I show in

Chapter 4. Many of the interviewees felt a deep ‘cultural pessimism’ (Gingrich, 2006, p. 37) about developments in the Global North and in Poland, especially with the secularisation of society and the enormous feminist protests against the abortion ban. Thus, while the Polish interviewees were certainly not ‘modernisation losers’ in the economic sense, they were in the cultural sense, as those whom Bartek Pytlas calls ‘axiological modernisation losers’ (Pytlas, 2015, p. 7).

This desire to enact change did not automatically mean that interviewees aimed for the bigger parties with a chance to directly influence socio-political affairs. On the contrary, the interviewees described looking for groups true to certain beliefs, regardless of their success. As Marcin said, he searched the internet and chose the MW – the youth branch of the RN – because he wanted first and foremost to join a group that would be reflecting his views: “I was looking for a patriotic movement in the spirit of love for the nation, love for the homeland, the cultivation of our history, traditions, culture in the spirit of also Christian, Catholic values.”¹⁶ Adam also insisted that his choice of the RN was purely a question of values and that the party’s low government potential did not bother him. For Paweł, JKM and his NN party’s unwavering ideological views trumped any concerns about electoral success or personal career ambitions: “I have found that it is simply a credible party where you can actually act in accordance with your conscience, but it doesn’t always... it does not always have to pay off.” For them, ideological agreement took a greater importance than the party’s/coalition’s political efficacy.

Coupling ideological convictions with more instrumental motives such as a will to change society, the interviewed activists corresponded to the aforementioned prototype of the ‘revolutionary’. Conversely, there were very few activists who would correspond to the

scholars' prototypes of the 'wanderer', the 'convert' or the 'compliant', something that underlines the strong continuity between early socialisation and engagement in the Polish case, compared to the Czech one. While activists tend to present a rather linear and smooth path into activism, two elements tend to confirm the idea that early socialisation played a crucial part for the interviewed *Konfederacja* members: firstly, the fact that most interviewees described the decisive step of joining the organisation as an 'individual project' (Kajta, 2020a, p. 173), i.e. an initiative autonomously taken by the interviewees, not through recruitment or peer pressure; and secondly, the frequent lack of alternative political experiences and convictions that could testify about conversions, changes or hesitations. Indeed, contrary to the Czech interviewees, none of the Polish members talked about randomness, chance or coincidence in their party choice. In any case, however distorted or smoothed out the interviewees' narratives might have been, their insistence on political socialisation in the family and thus on quasi-inborn ideological convictions is by itself interesting as an emphasis on genealogical continuity in political identity.

Reflecting on Klandermans and Mayer's involvement model linking instrumental, ideological and identity-based motives (2005), the party organisations' ability to give an expression to such motives also came out in the interviews. Besides seeing the party wings as the right channel to express instrumental motives such as the will to change things or counteract certain trends, the interviewees often mentioned ideological reasons like the expression of certain values or identities, usually as ethnic Poles and/or as Catholics. Such factors have also been underlined in other recent studies of contemporary far-right activists in Poland and elsewhere in Europe (Kajta, 2020a; Pasięka, 2024). Despite being rather marginal groups, the party wings within *Konfederacja* succeeded in providing a place for the interviewees' desires and

answering members' strivings is crucial to understand the party wings' growth. While the party wings have not been strong enough to provide access to public office to a wide array of members, they still have been able to answer the interviewees' desires to build a political career, which some interviewees mentioned as an important factor, showing that ideals and ambitions are not mutually exclusive. Thus, some of the interviewees indeed described a rocket-like growth within party ranks, sometimes despite a rather young age and lack of experience, showing how favourable the opportunities in the *Konfederacja* party wings could be. For some of the interviewees, those opportunities for rapid rise even contributed to the decision to join – and stay in – the parties. The opportunities and the rewards from political involvement might not have been the most important factors for the interviewees' decision to jump into party politics, but they definitely play a role in motivating engagement and sustaining efforts. Ideals are crucial, but part of the instrumental motives of party members is a certain calculation of the costs and benefits of engagement to assess and reassess their activism (Klandermans & Mayer, 2005, p. 8; Whiteley et al., 2021, pp. 648–649). As the interviewees' trajectories and tales show, there are promising opportunities in the *Konfederacja* parties and they might partially make up for the parties' lack of real political power by giving the members space for career growth within the organisations.

5. Gender as (almost) invisible

Even though the sample of interviewees is too small to generalise about the whole *Konfederacja* coalition, it is clear from the interviewees' words that male and female members share similar profiles and pathways into far-right activism. Patrycja, Magdalena, Weronika, Natalia (all NN) and Elżbieta (*Korona*) share roughly the same profile as their male peers: middle-class, urban, educated people with a precocious interest in politics and strong far-right

convictions. They are Linden and Klanderman's prototypical 'revolutionaries' (2007) and they have mostly entered politics as an 'individual project' (Kajta, 2020a, pp. 173–181), sometimes under some influence from family and friends, but never as 'compliant' followers of their male partner, contrary to findings about women of the far right in some other contexts (e.g. Blee & Linden, 2012).

Talking about the reasons for their involvement, Natalia (NN) was the only one to give a clearly gendered framing, telling me how her children's birth led her to feel the urgency to jump into party politics: "after the birth of the second one, that's what I say: 'These are the children we need to fight for, for a better Poland for them simply because what is happening is not what we are happy with and simply we already have someone to fight for now'."¹⁷ Women's tendency to frame their political engagement with references to their parenting role has been noted in many contexts (Werbner, 1999), and I will come back to it in Chapter 6. Even if Natalia framed her activism as a logical consequence of motherhood, as the need to make the country better for her children, her previous engagement in a sports fan club and her systematic participation in the Independence March show that she had already been involved beforehand in a gender-neutral way. Moreover, she also displayed her independence, when she described how she pursued her involvement in party politics despite threats and insults, and despite her husband – who is not involved – discouraging her to continue such a taxing activity. As I analyse in Chapter 6, Natalia's activism had much stronger gendered aspects, especially her emphasis on 'feminine' topics, than her path into activism.

During the interviews, when the members described their path towards far-right membership, an unexpected gendered aspect emerged in Magdalena's (NN) account. Aged 18, already a

convinced paleolibertarian, she ran for JKM's party in local elections and experienced the following:

when my [high school] class found out that I was running on the list of the [party] where JKM is the leader, I lost all my female friends, all my female friends... Male friends stuck with me, said it was cool, cheered me on, in turn my female friends even moved away from me from the [classroom] bench. It was such a trend that girls like to call themselves feminists.¹⁸

In her case, the reaction of her female and male classmates was diametrically opposed, being ostracised by girls and supported by boys. Although it was more because of her activism than her entry into the party, Natalia also reported that it was women who attacked her verbally, accusing her of misusing the topic of perinatal care that she champions. While none of the three other female interviewees reported similar issues, Magdalena and Natalia's stories show a rather unexpected way in which involvement in the far right can work out for far-right female activists in Poland.

None of the interviewed male members reported such incidents and in general very few of the interviewed members reported issues with stigmatisation, although this issue comes up often in research on far-right activists, especially on the most extreme groups (Art, 2011; Blee & Linden, 2012; Simi & Futrell, 2009; Switzer, 2024). It appears that the level of stigmatisation widely depends on the local context and the intensity of the socio-political consensus against the far right (Klandermans & Mayer, 2005). As Rafał Pankowski notes, nothing of that sort existed in post-socialist Poland, and early on far-right activists and parties were able to participate in mainstream politics (Pankowski, 2010, p. 94). This fact does not mean that there is no stigma against the far right in Poland, and far-right activists have reported some forms of stigmatisation in other research (Kajta, 2020a, pp. 204–208), but it appears rather mild and it barely came up in the interviews I conducted. In Poland, it is possible to assume that the

gendered kind of stigmatisation described by Magdalena and Natalia – i.e. female activists being targeted by the female population – is part of a larger phenomenon, considering the strong ideological divide between young men and women in Poland, with men leaning towards the far right and women towards left-wing and liberal options (Graff & Korolczuk, 2022, p. 84; Jurszo & Pacewicz, 2019; Mrozowicki & Kajta, 2021, p. 5).

As Francesca Scrinzi warns, there has been a misleading tendency in academic works to present men's involvement in the far right as the result of structural social factors and socio-economic interests, while women would supposedly be mobilised by symbolic and value-related issues, reproducing the public/private, women/men gendered division (Scrinzi, 2024, p. 38). In the case of my research participants, it was clear to me that women were very much interested in issues of libertarian economics, as much or even more than their male peers, and were not first and foremost driven by 'feminine' questions like abortion. The fact that some of them chose to focus on 'feminine' questions in their activism and the reality of unequal gender relations in *Konfederacja* are issues that I tackle in Chapter 6, but looking at the members' pathways into far-right activism, I argue that it is an aspect where gender does not seem to strongly matter in the Polish case, nor in the Czech one analysed in the next chapter. It serves as a reminder that gender does not always matter in all aspects of the far right (Blee, 2012, pp. 262–263). The only potentially gendered factor for Polish activists would be a gendered stigmatisation, of female activists by other women, and it would deserve some attention in future research.

Conclusion

The interviewees' involvement in *Konfederacja* can hardly be considered the result of sudden conversions or chance encounters. On the contrary, interviewees often presented a rather continuous trajectory, starting with family environments with strong nationalist, conservative and/or economically libertarian convictions, and with early contacts with far-right political ideas. In this precocious political socialisation, the figure of veteran far-right politician JKM stands tall as a major influence, and his ability to reach the youth, amongst others through online media, was highlighted by several interviewees. In general, far-right presence on the internet seems to have played an important role in shaping and radicalising the mindsets of many of the interviewees towards paleolibertarian positions. Mostly growing up under the centre-right PO government, the interviewees sometimes supported the rival PiS party in the early to mid-2010s, but they eventually came to adopt the 'anti-system' position promoted by the grassroots far-right movements gravitating around the yearly Independence March demonstration. Thus, while a few older interviewees saw 1989 as an important reference point, the young interviewees mostly constituted the 'Generation of the Independence March', considering the annual event's crucial role in shaping their worldview and engaging them into organised far-right politics. In this mobilisation, *Konfederacja*'s party organisations' ability to present an ideologically trustworthy alternative and to offer personal opportunities in the form of fast promotions seemed to have contributed to its attractiveness to young ambitious activists. Thus, this interplay of micro-, macro- and meso-level factors best explain both the particularly fertile ground on which the interviewees have grown and their decision to get engaged in organised far-right politics. As I show in the next chapter, this stands in sharp contrast to the Czech interviewees, who belonged to a different generation, often came to

politics at a later age and joined the far right only after a longer political path, sometimes even going first through membership in another non-far-right political party. Finally, in the Polish case, just like in the Czech case, there is little decisive evidence that pathways towards far-right activism have strongly gendered characteristics.

Chapter 3: Czechia – The youth of '89 wants its revolution back

The main pedestrian street is bustling with activity on a late weekday afternoon in Autumn 2020 in this medium-size Moravian city. Several middle-aged men and a woman distribute flyers to passer-bys and invite them to sign a petition against EU refugee quotas. They are local SPD members trying to convince the crowds to support their party in the regional elections. Jaroslav, a municipal deputy and one of the top candidates, is enthusiastically exchanging with citizens stopping by. While I wait for him to start our interview, I stand around and chat with a SPD sympathiser who is standing uncomfortably close to me in these times of pandemic, as neither he nor any of the other SPD activists is wearing a mask. He is mostly interested in car rally racing and it is hard to bring him to discuss politics. Jaroslav had invited me to come earlier than our interview meeting time to see him and his fellow party members campaign, and it later became clear to me that he wanted to present me with the picture of a 'normal' party enjoying widespread support and no popular backlash. During the interview, Jaroslav bragged that his party did not receive negative reaction from the public anymore, even though I overheard him and his fellow members discussing an incident before parting ways. Indeed, a Roma woman had come to the petition stand to provocatively ask them why the party railed against migrants, since the party leader was himself of foreign origin. What is certain is that Jaroslav and his fellow activists did not project the image of an 'extremist' party in the streets that afternoon.

In sharp contrast to the young Polish ‘revolutionaries’ of *Konfederacja*, the Czech interviewees were mostly middle-aged citizens who were latecomers to politics and rarely had any far-right background. They were rather ‘ordinary’ citizens pushed into organised politics in the early and mid-2010s by their increasing disappointment with post-1989 developments. Their paths to joining a far-right party could not be traced to early political socialisation and voting patterns, but were rather long journeys starting with a growing disaffection with mainstream parties and anger towards political, social and economic developments in the first two decades of post-socialist transition. While there was a certain randomness in the interviewed members’ paths to the SPD, I argue that their enrolment can be best explained by Tomio Okamura and his *Úsvit* / SPD parties’ ability to channel growing disappointment, anger and fear with post-1989 developments and, later on, with the ‘refugee crisis’. As a radical, yet credible and ‘respectable’ alternative articulating criticism of the post-1989 elites, antigypsyism, rejection of the EU and, after 2015, anti-refugee/anti-Islam positions, Okamura and his parties provided a coherent ‘declinist’ frame to these disparate elements, proposed a set of radical solutions wrapped in the language of democracy, freedom, justice and patriotism, and provided a platform for the members to act on their beliefs and emotions.

1. The Czech interviewees

From June 2020 to November 2021, I conducted fifteen interviews in Czech with SPD members – twelve men and three women. Their ages ranged from 35 to 77 years at the time of the interview, with the majority (10) being in their forties or fifties. Most of them had started out their professional life with secondary levels of formal education (10), but some of those earned a higher education degree later in their life. The interviewees were active (or had been active before retirement) in the service and industry sectors as blue-collar (4) or white-collar

workers (3), or as entrepreneurs (2), civil servants (3), police officers (2) and a school teacher. Four of the male interviewees had served in the police or in the army, and out of those one was still in active service at the time of the interview. Interviews were held in nine different regions, mostly in middle-size cities, with no particular region being over-represented.

Out of the 15 interviewed SPD members, 11 can be said to belong to the generation of 1989. Indeed, two were children and two were already adults in their forties, but all the others were teenagers or young adults when the state socialist regime came down and was replaced by multi-party democracy and a capitalist economy. Due to their age, most interviewees had directly experienced life under state socialism and those who were too young to be fully conscious of all its aspects had parents who were born and raised in that system. Whenever more detailed information about families were provided, it showed that most interviewees came from rather modest backgrounds with parents belonging to the working class. While most did not have parents in the Czechoslovak Communist Party, five of them did and even one interviewee, Josef, was himself in the party.

2. The hope and disillusion of 1989

For most interviewees who were teenagers or young adults in 1989, the Velvet Revolution, as the demonstrations leading to the fall of state socialism in Czechoslovakia are called, was an important turning point. While few of the interviewees witnessed or participated in the events, they remember the enthusiasm that they, their parents and the whole society felt. Regardless of their family's stance towards the state socialist regime, most interviewees recalled November 1989 and its immediate aftermath as a moment of great hopes. In many cases, though these

hopes were recalled with a touch of bitter irony, as the interviewees overwhelmingly remember subsequent developments in terms of disappointment.

From enthusiasm to disappointment

When talking about November 1989, the words that came forth most often during the interviews were those of “enthusiasm” (*nadšení*) and “euphoria” (*euforia*). While most of the interviewees experienced the events from afar, either because they lived in regional towns with little upheaval or because they were too young, some of them recalled going to demonstrations and even doing some activism, like transporting oppositional leaflets and posters. Those who were younger remember taking part in the demonstrations or feeling the atmosphere through their parents, although they recall not being fully aware of the events’ significance. For several of the interviewees, November 1989 marked a moment when they became politically active or aware, regardless of their level of political interest and consciousness at the time. Whether it was simply a closer interest in public affairs discussed in the media (Petr, Miloš), going to demonstrations (Václav, Jana, Martin) or even engaging in some form of activism (Milan, Zdeněk), that time of political effervescence touched them as they touched large parts of society (Krapfl, 2017). As they were living through November 1989 and the regime change, the interviewees recalled hoping for and expecting various changes in political, social and economic matters.

While they welcomed many of the changes, other issues came to the fore that made the interviewees look back more critically at the revolution and led to growing scepticism towards the post-1989 system. It was particularly issues such as corruption and the privatisation of state enterprises that increasingly angered the interviewees. Coming back to his hometown, a regional urban centre, from Prague after having done so activism during November 1989,

Milan became a policeman and he recalled feeling left behind by the new state, which did not provide the police with the means to act in a time of rising criminality, the ‘Wild East’ as he called it. Milan bitterly remembered the privatisation swindles and rising corruption, as he was being told by his superiors not to investigate particular influential people, which eventually led to his departure from the police and into the army.

Socio-economic issues also figured prominently in other interviewees’ tales about post-89 disappointment. Zdeněk, an entrepreneur and local municipal deputy expressed disappointment with the economic changes following November 1989, denouncing the return to ‘fabric capitalism’ (*manufakturní kapitalismus*) forcing people to work from dawn to dusk for low wages, with former regime representatives benefitting from the privatisation. This also came up in the interview with school teacher and municipal deputy Miloš, who was in his mid-teens when the revolution happened and was a big fan of the new democratic party *Občanský fórum* (Civic Forum). Miloš remembered losing his illusions several years later in university upon finding out about how Communist Party members had profited from the privatisation. Just like in Poland among the older *Konfederacja* members, Miloš’s words took conspiratorial tones when he said that he believed the whole revolutionary process had been ‘blessed from above’¹⁹, since well-placed communists profited from the changes to massively enrich themselves. As the quote from Miloš show, the disappointment was not always immediate and it took some interviewees years, and even decades before they came to the conclusions they presented in the interviews.

Only the two interviewees most closely linked to the former regime, the retired policeman and former Communist Party member Josef, and the daughter of devoted communists Monika, a civil servant in her sixties, recalled not sharing the enthusiasm in 1989. They did not have high

hopes for the Revolution and declared having seen right away that it would not bring only positive changes. Josef remembered staying away from politics and elections in November '89 and after, sceptical about the new political elites. However, he did not reject all the changes, immediately adding: "And what was before that, it was impossible to live with that anymore."²⁰ He went on to call the privatisation a "plain theft"²¹. Monika recalled quickly becoming critical about the new regime, calling the nineties "horrible", and explaining: "the privatisation started and it was fraud after fraud, everything."²²

Nostalgia for (some) state socialism

Monika was not the only interviewee to favourably compare the state socialist regime with the current system, but she was only one of two interviewees to conclude that the former regime was better altogether. With the benefit of hindsight, she said that she was surprised that people massively abandoned the former regime, despite its shortcomings. She went on to list all the socio-economic advantages of the foregone regime, according to her own experiences and views. The other interviewee expressing a preference for the previous regime was Jana, who participated in the 1989 demonstrations as a teenager, but said in the interview that she did not know why she protested. "People in general, they just felt trapped in some kind of system, and then in the end they will have found out that life is worse today than it was back then"²³, she explained. For Jana as for Monika and other interviewees, state socialism also had the advantage of forcing everyone to work under the threat of imprisonment, whereas they claimed that many people do not work nowadays, especially targeting the Roma minority.

More often, interviewees expressed some degree of regret for the socio-economic might of the previous system in terms of large industry and national sovereignty. While Václav, a pensioner who worked as a qualified worker, was always against the regime, he expressed resentment

about the post-89 economic reforms: “Tell me what’s Czechia today, while under the communists it was an engineering superpower, a textile superpower, a foodstuff superpower, self-sufficient. Today? Today there’s nothing left of those factories.”²⁴ While acknowledging the problematic parts of the state socialist regime, this unfavourable contrast in socio-economic matters and the opposition to the post-89 privatisation is expressed in the clearest way by Jaroslav, an IT worker, who disputed that Czechoslovakia had only suffered from communism:

“When I look back at it: there were political blunders, there was like, there was no freedom, but they built a lot of things. After the coup, all these things were basically stolen, nothing at all was built any more. I can’t, like, I can’t imagine that projects like before would be built, done... There was this nostalgia, or effort to do politics to really serve people, to really do projects for people. So they were built and now they serve the interests of groups of financiers.”²⁵

Talking about the state socialist regime, Jaroslav even went as far as to relativise the differences in liberties under the old and new regimes, something frequently used by Okamura and SPD to present themselves as victims of repression and censorship.

Despite the presence of various degrees of nostalgia in the interviewees’ answers, most of them nevertheless rejected any return to the former regime. In general, interviewees mostly said positive things about the former regime in contrast to some contemporary issues. With more than 30 years of hindsight, the interviewees often adopted an equivocal view of the regime and, despite the rarity of fully nostalgic positions, there was a widespread conviction among interviewees that the country as a whole had lost much due to post-89 developments. The interviewees’ words reflect some widespread social trends in contemporary Czechia. While the post-89 political class and large parts of the media paint a strictly negative picture of state socialism, making the rejection of the former regime a widely shared social norm (Pehe,

2020, p. 27), parts of the public did not and still do not share this view. Surveys have regularly shown that around a quarter of surveyed inhabitants tend to see the former regime as better than the current one (*Názor veřejnosti na současný režim*, 2013; *Každý třetí nad 40 let...*, 2019). Such a view is more widespread among those who are older and have less formal education, which also happens to be social groups where SPD has more success (*Výzkum mezi středoškoly 2017*, 2017). A more recent survey showed that a slight majority of SPD (and ANO) voters considered the former regime as better than the current one (35 let demokracie, 2024, p. 6). As the interviewees' words showed, surveys cannot really capture the more complex ways in which the former regime is remembered and is set up against the current one. More than a strong nostalgia for state socialism, the idea of a “trauma of deindustrialization” (Todorova, 2010, p. 5), where the socio-economic shock is the main focus of grievances, corresponds much more to the interviewees' narratives.

Winners and losers of the transition

Nostalgia for state socialism and criticism of the new system rarely went hand in hand with frustration with one's own socio-economic situation. As a matter of fact, few of the interviewees reported professional or financial difficulties in the past and present, nor did they show particular worries about their personal future. As I already mentioned, most of the interviewees were in their teens or in their early twenties when the country transitioned to a capitalist economy, and none of them reported losing their jobs as a result of the reforms and privatisations. In Czechia, the effects of the transition were less brutal on the labour market than in Poland and the only one who reported experiencing socio-economic hardships in the 1990s was Jiří, who had then just finished his training as a mechanic: while he was thrilled by the revolution, the socio-economic difficulties forced him to go work abroad. He nevertheless

insisted that things were way better than under state socialism and called nostalgic people ‘idiots’ (*hlupáci*). He eventually came back to Czechia and, except for the reasons for his departure abroad, he did not mention any further personal socio-economic issues.

While the 1990s did not come out in the interviews as a difficult time for the participating SPD members personally, socio-economic difficulties did arise for some of them later on in their life. Monika especially reported personal hardships. As a single mother, she had an injury and a serious illness and, with little support from the state and no mercy from the banks, she told me that it was only thanks to the help of friends that she avoided bankruptcy. It was in contrast to this rough time that she argued about the state socialist system’s superiority and denounced the Roma as receiving undeserved support while ‘deserving’ working people like her did not. Petr also mentioned the lack of a strong social security net as a source of frustration, noting that his mother struggled financially after her divorce and there was no help for her from the state, something he set in contrast with state socialist times, when his parents “had basically everything.”²⁶ He added bitterly about today’s situation: “you would have to be on the verge of dying of hunger so that someone would give you something.”²⁷ He also contrasted the situation with Austria, where he often went, and where he considered state social support as much better. Talks of socio-economic difficulties more often resonated when talking about the current situation for young families and the demographic deficit in the country. As the youngest interviewees, being both in their mid-thirties, Tereza and her husband – who was also present during the interview and added some comments here and there – were living examples of the financial challenges of raising children in contemporary Czechia. Even if both had stable jobs as state employees, Tereza noted that they could not afford to have a third child and

buy a family house with a garden. She expressed pessimism about young people's socio-economic perspectives on the job and housing markets.

In the interviewees' accounts, criticism of the socio-economic situation did not often emerge from personal tales of the transition period, but rather developed gradually over the following decades living in the new system. Moreover, the reservations, doubts and disappointments did not frequently come from personal hardships, but rather emerged as a general appraisal of the situation. For the interviewees, 1989 represented a central reference point, with the state socialist regime and the new capitalist liberal democratic regime as two lived experiences they often turned back to in the interviews. This stood in stark contrast to the Polish interviews, who sometimes mentioned the 1989 regime change in conspirational terms, but otherwise had very little to say about state socialism and the immediate post-socialist period. For the much younger Polish interviewees, the intensification of the PO-PiS conflict in the 2010s constituted a much more central reference point, as it usually was the time of their political maturing.

Despite the more or less strong disappointment with post-89 changes, it would not be correct to describe the Czech interviewees as the 'losers' of the revolution. The interviews serve as a reminder that, while the idea that far-right voters and members are socio-economic 'modernisation losers' in Western Europe or 'transition losers' in Eastern Europe has been tenacious, especially in writings on Poland (e.g. Kalb, 2011; Ost, 2005), it has not proven a robust causal factor in neither of the two regions (Bornschier & Kriesi, 2012; Minkenberg & Pytlas, 2013; Mudde, 2007, pp. 204–205; Savage, 2023). When the Czech interviewees talked about socio-economic hardship, it was rather in the sense of 'relative deprivation', about getting less than others – often racialised 'Others' like the Roma – a factor explaining far-right support according to several scholars (Eatwell & Goodwin, 2018; Mrozowicki et al., 2019;

Savage, 2023). Moreover, the widespread feelings of disappointment and anger about the general situation were more often directed at political elites than at the political and socio-economic system itself. Incompetent and corrupt politicians, and the EU, not democracy nor capitalism, were seen as the culprits. This explains, as I show in the next section, why many of the interviewees drifted away from mainstream political parties towards centrist anti-establishments parties like ANO first, rather than towards radical alternatives.

3. From the mainstream to alternatives

The disappointment with the new system progressively creeping in the interviewees' minds mostly translated into a loss of trust in the new political elites that had taken over after November 1989. Looking at the political journeys taken by the interviewed SPD members, it becomes clear that most of them gave their support to the mainstream political parties that alternated in government in the two decades following the revolution. In fact, only two of the interviewees had a history of support for far-right political projects prior to the 2010s. For the rest, it was only in the early to mid-2010s that they turned away from mainstream parties and sought alternatives, in a time of political crisis when new challengers emerged. At that time, some interviewees even stepped into partisan politics, something that almost none of them had ever done in their life. Their break with mainstream politics did not always lead to an immediate enrolment with the far right, as the ANO party first appealed to many of them, but SPD eventually became their political home and, very often, the party through which they gained public office. Thus, contrary to Polish interviewees, the Czechs took long meandering paths through party politics before reaching the far right, drifting from the mainstream to the margins.

Mainstream parties, frustration and apathy

Looking back at their voting history, interviewees mostly recalled supporting mainstream parties and displaying a low level of engagement with politics. Even when it comes to low-intensity involvement in socio-political affairs, such as signing petitions or attending demonstrations, the interviewees often could not recall a single instance of such forms of engagement. Some interviewees can even be described as politically apathetic in earlier periods of their life. Thus, of the 15 interviewees, 11 regularly voted for the two main parties, the left-wing social-democratic ČSSD (7) and the right-wing civic democrats ODS (4), while two did not vote at all in their early adulthood and one voted only in local elections. One interviewee participated in elections and indicated that he switched his loyalty according to programmes and leaders.

As citizens with a low level of engagement in socio-political affairs, the interviewees' electoral behaviour resembled that of most of their fellow citizens in the decades following November 1989, who overwhelmingly voted for the two mainstream parties ODS and ČSSD, as laid out in Chapter 1. Only two of the interviewees, Petr and Jan, showed readiness to support the far right already in the mid-1990s, voting for the far-right Republicans before rallying for the ČSSD in the following elections. While Petr remained evasive on his choice, recalling that he thought that the party “spoke to him” and was “interesting”²⁸, Jan explained that he and his friends voted for the leader Miroslav Sládek “for a laugh” (*ze srandy*) and he minimised the seriousness of his vote: “Like I say, we were 19, we took it like that we liked it that he was making mischief in parliament, right?”²⁹ The fact that Petr and Jan voted for the far right in early adulthood cannot explain why they decided to join a far-right party some 20 years later,

but it nevertheless indicated that they might have already shared some of the ideas, or at least did not necessarily have a problem in supporting such political projects.

While most interviewees sooner or later joined the majority of their fellow citizens in supporting one or the other mainstream party alternating in power, they also gradually felt disappointment and frustration with political elites, as the two main actors collected corruption scandals and struck deals to share political powers and economic interests. Some abstained or skipped elections out of discontent, echoing widely shared feelings in the population as electoral participation dropped after 1998 (*Volební účast*, 2023). Other interviewees never even bothered to vote, to a large extent because of their negative view of political elites. The youngest interviewees, Tereza, came of age in the mid-2000s and saw politicians as “buffoons” (*kašpaři*) who did not speak to her at all. Until her 30s she said “somehow this politics like totally went past me”, something that she saw as characteristic of her generation. Jana confessed that she voted for the first time only in 2013, noting that she had no interest in politics before. Finally, Josef represented a more conscious sort of electoral abstainer, since the former Communist Party member had strong reservations about the dissidents who came to power after the revolution.

Discontent with mainstream political parties led some interviewees to shun elections, but others actively sought alternatives. As an entrepreneur, Martin voted for the right-wing party ODS for a while, then he kept on switching to new right-wing parties, never satisfied. Two interviewees disappointed in the social-democrats sought a more radical alternative in the unreformed communist party (KSČM). Pavel recalled voting for the communists in protest against the privatisations, while Monika, who displayed the highest level of approval for the former regime, recalled switching back and forth between the social-democrats and the

communists “because as I say to myself, well they were magicians, those communists, because, like I say, there were no debts, everyone was... everyone was working, everyone had to work.”³⁰ The KSČM became an important protest party in the 2000s winning 18.5% of votes in the 2002 election (Císař, 2017; *Volby do Poslanecké sněmovny Parlamentu*, n.d.-b). The disappointment and frustration expressed by most of the interviewees reflect the general mood of the population towards the political class in the late 2000s and early 2010s, as public satisfaction with the political situation dropped to historic lows while voter volatility increased as citizens sought alternatives (Havlík, 2015). At one point in early 2013, a survey recorded that only 11% of interviewees trusted the Chamber of Deputies and as few as 3% were generally satisfied with the political situation in the country (Kunštát, 2013). This socio-political crisis helped anti-establishment parties emerge.

Anti-establishment challengers and the ANO gateway

As I explained in Chapter 1, anti-establishment political projects emerged as a reaction to the political crises, such as ANO in the early 2010s, and several of the interviewees reacted positively. Close to half (7) of them voted for ANO in its first electoral bids, convinced by Babiš’s image as a successful and incorruptible manager. The emergence of the ANO movement was so appealing for some of the interviewees that they joined the party, and even ran for office. Three interviewees made their first steps into electoral politics with the ANO movement: Jaroslav, Milan and Petr. Jaroslav joined the ANO movement, because he identified with its name, the Action of dissatisfied citizens, explaining that he thought that ANO would crack down on corruption.³¹ While he did not want to enter into details, Jaroslav said that corruption made him leave the party. Milan had an almost identical experience in ANO as Jaroslav. He remembered perceiving Babiš as “someone who could finally change

something.”³² Some acquaintances pushed him to get involved and he quickly became the movement’s regional leader, but he then became disillusioned with Babiš’s authoritarian leadership and with intestine struggles, and eventually left. As with Jaroslav, the ANO experience was a very bitter one for Milan, and he also thought that it would be his one and only attempt to get involved into politics. Finally, Petr is the third interviewees who jumped into politics with ANO, as he was gradually disappointed with the social-democrats (ČSSD). Working as a self-employed technical worker in a small town near the Austrian border, Petr ran in local elections for ANO without joining the party, and he became disillusioned because he saw the party as doing too little to support working families. In his case, his departure was not caused by a deep disappointment, but rather because he found a better alternative in the SPD, something that will be addressed in the next section.

The popularity of ANO among the interviewees revealed that they were mostly disappointed and angered by the political class, not by the new system that had come into being after November 1989. Indeed, Andrej Babiš’s centrist populism did not in any way challenge the democratic liberal political and capitalist economic order, nor EU/NATO membership, and only promised a cleaner, better governance. While Milan and Jaroslav mostly saw the movement as a real civic initiative to clean up politics, the other ANO supporters saw Babiš as a promising leader because they admired the billionaire as a successful manager (and some still did at the time of the interview). After they were disappointed by their experience in the ANO movement or after feeling that the movement failed to fully deliver on its promises while in power, these interviewees continued to seek alternatives to the mainstream, eventually ending in the far-right margins.

4. Joining the SPD

Since very few of the interviewees had a history of far-right voting or activism, why did they all eventually end up in the far-right party *Úsvit* and/or its successor the SPD? As I show in previous sections, the interviewees' decision can be linked to their growing discontent with mainstream political parties and discontent about post-1989 political and socio-economics affairs. However, it is the emergence of Tomio Okamura as a compelling political alternative that won the interviewees over to the far right. By focusing on the processes, it is possible to identify two waves of recruitment around certain themes: the first around Okamura's emergence as a champion of direct democracy against the political elites, and a critique of the Roma minority and the EU; and the second around the 2015-2016 refugee crisis and Okamura's positioning as the main anti-refugee politician. Finally, contrary to the Polish interviewees, the SPD members's pathways more often showed elements of randomness and contingency, something that might also explain the Czech interviewees' greater ideological diversity.

The Okamura effect

Okamura has been well known since the start of his political career in the early 2010s for his relentless visits and meetings in small towns and cities, and several interviewees traced their enrolment into SPD to attending one of his meetings. For example, long-time election abstainer Josef attended an Okamura meeting in 2010 or 2011 in his provincial city "by coincidence" (*náhodně*) and he realised that he agreed with Okamura's views, especially on direct democracy as a remedy to the ills of the current system. For him, Okamura's views stood in sharp contrast to "all these post-November [1989] parties that were just pulling the wool over the eyes of the people here."³³ While the *Úsvit* party later found by Okamura did not

accept members, Josef started to attend a local club of sympathisers and he then joined SPD in 2015, later becoming an elected city councillor for the party.

While Milan thought about never going back to politics after his disappointing experience with ANO, his in-laws and his mother started to attend Okamura meetings around 2013-2014 and they ‘dragged’ him along. After several meetings, he was won over by Okamura’s ideas, but did not want to play a leading role, he explained. Nevertheless, the *Úsvit* leadership convinced him early on to run in local elections and, while he was unsuccessful, he remained active, later following Okamura in SPD and becoming a local party leader. While the influence of his social circle is undeniable, Milan also underlined the way Okamura’s idea resonated with his experiences. Milan mentioned his own work in the police in the 1990s, when he witnessed corruption, and the numerous political scandals between 2006 and 2013 as the reasons to support Okamura’s idea of material and criminal responsibility for politicians.

After supporting the right-wing ODS party for two decades, the pensioner Václav voted for the far-right *Dělnická Strana sociální spravedlnosti* (Workers’ Party of Social Justice, DSSS) in the early 2010s, despite its neo-Nazi reputation. He explained his choice as the need to see some changes “with those Gypsies, so that someone finally stopped paying them benefits, there was so much going on around them that, like, it boggled the mind, right.”³⁴ Václav then met Tomio Okamura whom he knew from television and who had a stand in the city’s central square around the time of *Úsvit*’s launch. As he underlined, Okamura “talked with everyone”, and Václav felt engaged by Okamura, lauding his intelligence, his charisma and his humility, contrasting it with other politicians who “can’t empathise with a normal person, an ordinary worker.”³⁵ Václav recalled seeing Okamura and other local leaders at different events and becoming convinced: “I’ve come to know that they’re those direct, upright guys, and what’s

important to me is that they're patriots."³⁶ Václav's example of radicalisation some time prior to the emergence of *Úsvit* / SPD shows well how Okamura succeeded in picking up existing nationalist and far-right sentiments – especially antigypsyism – in addition to appealing to those frustrated with political elites. Václav's comment also echoes the masculinist character of Okamura and the SPD's mobilisation, something that I further unpack in Chapter 7.

Turning points and emotions

In 2015-2016, Okamura and his party then surfed the wave of anti-refugee/anti-Muslim mobilisation and Zdeněk remembered that he was won over by Okamura and his right-hand man, Radim Fiala, at a meeting in his city, to which a friend had invited him: "Tomio Okamura appealed to me very much at the meeting. Of course, there was a strong fear of the exodus [*from the Middle East*] of illegal migrants, but then I really liked the Swiss democracy, in other words, direct democracy."³⁷ While there were many groups agitating against refugees in Czechia, helping to shape a strong social and political consensus around their rejection, Okamura and his SPD party were the only far-right force who translated these sentiments in electoral gains (Císař & Navrátil, 2019). While the idea of leader charisma is a bit of a cliché in research on the far right (Eatwell, 2018) and has been disputed as an explanatory factor (Art, 2011, p. 57), it is undeniable that Okamura is a good public speaker and the interviewees' experience shows that he can have a strong persuasive effect on some people.

The so-called 'refugee crisis' was often mentioned by the interviewees as a 'turning point' (*zlomový bod*) setting their path towards enrolment in the SPD. Jana's story illustrates the ways in which the SPD's turn towards anti-refugee/anti-Muslim rhetoric brought in new members. As a young woman, Jana suffered from an abusive male partner who was a Muslim and she later became a voice in the Czech public sphere to warn against Islam's treatment of

women, ascribing her ex-partner's violent behaviour to his faith. When the refugee crisis triggered public debates about Islam, she wanted to share her experience and raise awareness about the alleged threat of Islam in Czechia and, even if she declared that she was not really interested in politics, she saw SPD as the only avenue through which to make a difference. Jana reported getting heavily involved in party activism and she was a top candidate for the party in one of the electoral contests, putting forward her negative experience with Muslims.

Other members also recalled feeling mobilised by the fear of refugees. For Jan, this moment arrived right when he was stuck at home for several months because of a surgery and spent a lot of time online. Not only did he see frightening videos about refugees/Muslims, but he also remembered one evening having a paid advertisement of Okamura and his SPD party pop up while playing an online video game. Remembering Okamura from TV appearances, it caught his attention and he clicked on the link: "I read the ten points, the programme points, right? And I'm like hey, it's like if I wrote it myself, no? I clicked on it, it got me to the website, I spent about two hours reading it all. Well, at about a quarter to two in the morning, I submitted my application [for party membership]."³⁸ As I explain in Chapter 7, Okamura has a strong social media presence and Jan's example shows how it can work to recruit people, especially in a time of perceived crisis.

Miloš stated that he became scared during the refugee crisis, as he saw the EU's effort to impose refugee quotas as a sign that the EU was becoming similar to the state socialist dictatorship, a central reference point for him throughout the interview: "I have a nine-year-old girl, a 13-year-old boy, and I don't want them to grow up... or then spend their adult lives in something that I lived in until I was 16. I just don't want that."³⁹ Although he saw politics as dirty and he saw himself as too soft for it, Miloš framed political engagement as an obligation

towards his children, adding that he did not want to later be ashamed before them for not doing anything. As a teacher, he also felt that he had knowledge in the field of education and that he could have a positive influence on it by putting pressure on the authorities. Miloš's example shows how a mix of ideological and instrumental factors come into play to push him into active party politics, and also how men also use the argument of parenthood to justify involvement in politics. While women often use the argument to justify getting into a 'men's world', in his case it is more likely that he used it to justify his engagement into a 'dirty world'. His words show how a certain 'caring masculinity' can also legitimate activism, with fatherly concerns prevailing over the patriarchal aggressivity stereotypically ascribed to male far-right activists (Scrinzi, 2024, p. 141).

While some of the interviewees reported their membership as driven by enthusiasm or fear, other interviewees reported joining the party in a fit of anger. Although Monika did not recall the details, she told me that at one point she “was blind with rage because of the European Union and Gypsies”⁴⁰, immediately looked up online how she could join SPD and signed up. She also stated that her choice was motivated by the fact that Okamura was being ‘the only one’ speaking out against migration. Pavel, who worked as a blue-collar mid-level worker in a small town, had a similar story, but this time based on memory politics, feeling infuriated when he heard a liberal deputy denying the Soviet Union's role in liberating Czechia in 1945. Although he had voted for the communist party (KSČM), who had been on the forefront of defending a positive vision of the state socialist legacy, Pavel rather turned to SPD to express his frustration. Pavel explained that he was outraged by the distortion of historical facts and added that he “didn't mind Russia” (*mně Rusko nevadí*). His story shows how SPD has been skilfully picking up some of the state socialist rhetoric, including on memory politics, and pro-

Russian sentiments (Havlík & Kluknavská, 2023), and research has indeed shown that it is likely that many former KSČM voters have turned to SPD (*Mapa Voličů*, 2017; Maškarinec & Novotný, 2024).

Political wanderers and compliants

Drawing from Linden and Klandermans's typology of trajectories and activist ideal-types, most of the interviewees are 'converts' to the far right, with little political engagement and few signs of far-right sympathies in the past (2007). A few of the remaining interviewees can be considered as 'wanderers' or 'compliant'. Among the wanderers, the cases of Jaroslav and Petr, who entered politics through ANO but then left for SPD as a better alternative, were already mentioned. The case of Michal showed an even longer political 'wandering', as he was engaged in politics early on as a student, and he joined and founded several groups and parties on the Left before landing a job with a social-democratic ČSSD minister in the late 1990s. After he left the party because of its drift away from 'patriotism', he became involved in local politics focusing on municipal issues. Michal was then contacted and recruited by the SPD, who was looking to make a breakthrough in his big city neighbourhood, and that is how he joined the party. He insisted that it was a 'coincidence', although he liked their 'patriotism' and the idea of direct democracy.

Finally, Tereza and Jiří represent interesting examples of 'compliant', people who "enter activism not because of their own desires, but because of circumstances that they did not always control" (Linden & Klandermans, 2007, p. 185). Working in a white-collar job, Tereza started to attend her boss's SPD meetings to help out with administrative tasks. Spending time at the members' meetings, she changed her opinion on the party:

I was finding out that normal, everyday people go there, that they're not just really, like, just people who are fanatical about something, as they used to say about all those members, like the SPD, or that they don't just care about the migrants, no, because they're really nice, friendly people who want to make a difference, I guess.⁴¹

She then read more about the party programme and decided to join, figuring out that she might as well get the member status since she was already doing the work. For Jiří, it was his daughter who brought him into the party when he experienced an unpleasant situation at work. Working in the municipality's transportation company, he and his colleagues did not appreciate the new director appointed by the municipal council and Jiří wanted to fight back. This is when his daughter who was in SPD convinced him that he should run for city councillor to have a say.

Symptomatic of their rather atypical enrolment stories, Tereza and Jiří also showed more ideological divergences from the party line. While Tereza showed antigypsyist prejudices, she did not have strong views against migration and she distanced herself from the party's conservative positions on gender and sexuality. When it comes to Jiří, he did not exhibit antigypsyist nor anti-migrant prejudices, and he did not support direct democracy. Despite criticising some EU policies, he also added the surprising claim that “there was never anything better than the European Union.”⁴² Tereza and Jiří show the diversity of pathways into the SPD, and also that one does not need to fully agree with SPD to join it, even on some fundamental issues. Blee reports a similar phenomenon with activists in organised racism in the United States, who sometimes “selectively disregard, transform, or choose to violate the very principles that appear central to the mission and agenda of racist groups” (Blee, 2018, p. 138). In Tereza and Jiří's cases, the reason probably also lies within the fact that random life circumstances brought them into SPD. While Tereza's path as a sort of party secretary evokes

some gender stereotypes about women, she reported that it was rather her young age and ability to use modern technology that made her useful to the party. As in *Konfederacja*'s case, the interviewees' paths into SPD were not strongly gendered and this fact confirms the idea that gender does not always matter in all aspects of far-right activism.

'Radicalisation' and the mainstreaming of the far right

As this chapter shows, the interviewed SPD members are hardly exceptional when it comes to their background, life stories and views. Unlike the *Konfederacja* members, they did not report a strong influence from parents and upbringing on their political socialisation, nor did they join political groups at a young age, where their views could have been further shaped, and radicalised. Apart from a few exceptions, the great majority of them had never voted for the far right prior to joining *Úsvit* / the SPD. Instead, their stories often featured a slow conversion, and perhaps even radicalisation, with a particular tipping point in the form of contact with Okamura or the party, in a meeting or online, or with a particular event triggering the final push. As a crucial factor explaining the members' enrolment, I identify the party's ability to maintain a veneer of respectability, to exploit mainstream frames on the most pressing socio-political issues and to channel anger into a credible political alternative.

It is always risky to assign causality of far-right support/membership, since many factors enter into play, and interviewees tend to establish a stable, linear narrative explaining their involvement by highlighting certain elements and erasing others (Kajta, 2020a, pp. 116–117). Ideologically speaking, the interviewees did not starkly stand out from the majority of the population with their disillusion with political elites, their antigypsyist prejudices (Čada, 2012, pp. 72–73; M. Mareš, 2015, p. 215), their anti-EU feelings (Kaniok & Havlík, 2016), or their opposition to refugees and/or Islam (Wondreys, 2021, pp. 727–730). Thus, it is difficult to say

whether the interviewees became more ‘radical’ prior to voting for or joining the SPD. As I argue in this chapter, the interviewees’ membership in SPD owes to a large extent to Okamura and his parties *Úsvit* / SPD’s skilful avoidance of the status of political pariahs in the eyes of many people. Thus, Okamura and his parties managed to exploit and stir up anti-establishment and ethnonationalist feelings while maintaining some distance with traditional far-right symbols and rhetorics. As a proof of their success, none of the interviewees talked about personal problems arising from membership in the SPD, even if the party is often designated as ‘extremist’ in mainstream politics and media. In a way, the interviewees showed how ‘easy’ it was to join the SPD, especially in some social groups like the regional (lower) middle-classes, to which most interviewees belong. Considering the mainstreaming of far-right ideas in Czechia shown in Chapter 1, it is hardly a surprise that the interviewees did not see themselves – and were rarely seen as – as radicals or extremists. Arguably, this is not only the case for the SPD, but also for an increasing number of far-right parties in both Eastern and Western Europe, considering the mainstreaming of their ideas and their growing acceptance (Minkenberg, 2013; Mondon & Winter, 2020b; Pytlas, 2018a).

The rise of Okamura and *Úsvit* / SPD after a long absence of any far-right parliamentary party in Czechia can be best explained by a combination of structural factors and the political entrepreneurs’ agency (Gingrich & Banks, 2006, p. 6). Thus, national and global developments like the cumulation of political scandals and then the ‘refugee crisis’ help explain the interviewees’ turn away from mainstream politics and their willingness to support/join political alternatives. However, years of discontent or frustration creating a fertile ground do not automatically translate in political engagement, and even less in far-right mobilisation. As David Art convincingly argued, ‘deterministic’ explanations based on macro-level factors such

as international or national events cannot provide the reasons for – nor predict – the success of the far right (Art, 2011, p. 5). Indeed, in addition to the ‘demand’ for political alternatives, there is also the question of ‘offer’. This puts the emphasis on the agency of political actors like Babiš’s ANO and Okamura’s *Úsvit*/SPD, who were the ones able to provide compelling avenues to channel discontent, and even for some citizens to join organised politics.

In addition to Okamura and his party’s ability to mobilise and feed the right kind of rhetoric in a time of crises while fending off the accusation of extremism, the interviewees’ stories also highlight “the role of networks in socialization” (Della Porta, 2014, p.266, cited in Kajta, 2020b, p. 136). Thus, in addition to Okamura’s political performance, the ways in which the activists came to encounter him played a critical role in enrolment. Thus, Milan was dragged to an Okamura meeting by his in-laws and his mother. Zdeněk was brought by a friend. Václav met Okamura when walking by *Úsvit*’s stand. Jaroslav had acquaintances in the party. Those are the ‘networks of socialisation’, the ‘individual experiences’, and even the dose of randomness and luck, that make a difference between political passivity and engagement. The same kind of elements played a role in other pathways towards the SPD, such as Tereza’s engagement through helping her boss, or Jiří’s engagement through his daughter at a time when he wanted to express his frustration with a workplace issue.

In some of the other interviewees’ stories, sudden moments proved key in making the jump into organised politics and provide compelling examples about the role of emotions in mobilising activists, with inspiration, enthusiasm, hope, fear or anger as contributing to their decision. Monika got angry and signed up, as did Pavel. While I dispute David Ost’s argument that it is precisely the economic anger of the ‘transition losers’ that was channeled into cultural issues by far-right politics in Poland, I agree with him that “anger is central to politics both as

a diffuse, untargeted sentiment citizens experience, usually economically, and as the emotion political organizers need to capture and channel, which they do by offering up an ‘enemy’ they identify as the source of the problem” (Ost, 2004, p. 229). In the case of the SPD members, anger came out more strongly in the general appraisal of the country, and a lot less in personal stories of economic deprivation, but it was ubiquitous in the interviews. This analysis is not to say that the members are ‘irrational’ or ‘blinded by anger’, but it rather underlines that reason and emotion cannot be entirely separated, and that emotions are always part of social action, emerging in interactions between individuals and social actors (J. Goodwin et al., 2001, p. 9).

Arguably, SPD is one of the Czech parties that works best with channeling and/or triggering anger and, not surprisingly, an overwhelming majority of 67% of SPD voters believed in 2019 that the country had taken the wrong direction since 1989 (Mlejnková, 2024, p. 79). Okamura and SPD have recuperated – and amplified – declinist discourses framing developments in Czechia – and in ‘the West’ – in a starkly negative fashion, a ‘declinism’ which became increasingly present in the Czech public sphere following the financial crisis, euro crisis and domestic political crises between the years 2006 and 2013, and which took a new dimension with the anti-refugee/anti-Muslim movement in 2015-2016 (Slačálek, 2021a; Slačálek & Svobodová, 2018). As I show in Chapter 5, these discourses legitimate the SPD’s project of radical reforms towards national sovereignty, workfare chauvinism and the ‘traditional family’. While the party exploits emotions of disappointment and anger, it also triggers hope and enthusiasm. For example, the hope to fix the political system through direct democracy, as expressed by several interviewees. Or the enthusiasm felt by Jan when he discovered the party programme. Or the inspiration Milan felt from people in his surroundings when he went to his first Okamura meeting. In other words, despite the importance of hate and anger in the far

right, one should not obscure nor underestimate the importance of other, more positive emotions for far-right political engagement (Blee, 2018, pp. 89–90; Graff & Korolczuk, 2022, p. 27; Scrinzi, 2024, p. 116).

Conclusion

Just like the Polish members, the Czech interviewees represented a certain generational experience. However, whereas the *Konfederacja* members mostly came of age and became politically active at the time of the entrenchment of the two-party (PO-PiS) system and the rise of far-right alternatives embodied by the Independence March, the SPD members had come of age around 1989 and only became politically active in the early 2010s, when the two-party (ODS-ČSSD) system was crumbling. Thus, the SPD members represented the ‘Generation of 1989’, and the Velvet Revolution and its aftermath constituted a key reference point for them. Contrary to their *Konfederacja* counterparts, the SPD members were not socialised early into far-right ideology and politics, and only steered towards the margins slowly, after a long process of disillusion with mainstream politics. In the pathway to the SPD membership, while there were different processes, including a certain dose of randomness, the popularity of Okamura and his political skills stood out, contributing to present *Úsvit* / SPD as credible and ‘respectable’ alternatives in which people with – mostly – no far-right background like the interviewed members could join without bearing a strong social stigma. In the SPD, the members could find a platform to channel their emotions and views, and to try to influence public affairs. In this involvement process, as in the Polish case, gender did not stand out as a factor. While it is true that Tomio Okamura and *Úsvit* / SPD benefited from the interviewees’ preexisting views against political elites, the EU and the Roma, he and his parties also actively shaped a compelling narrative around these views and proposed a package of swift, radical

solutions. The party's agency was especially strong in shaping the public's rejection of refugees/Islam in 2015-2016 and in recruiting members around this issue. As I explore in Chapter 5, Okamura and SPD succeeded in moulding anti-establishment, Eurosceptic, antigypsyist and Islamophobic sentiments into an overarching coherent 'declinist' frame of the country to advocate for radical measures combining ethnonationalism, workfare chauvinism and the 'traditional' gender and sexual order.

PART II – IDEOLOGY

Chapter 4: *Konfederacja* – Tax cuts to restore the gender and sexual order of the traditional Polish family

“[T]he history of economic formations cannot be prized apart from the operations of gender, race, and sexuality without obscuring the politics of wealth and income distribution itself” (Cooper, 2017, p. 24).

In its programme succinctly summarised in 2019 by current NN leader Sławomir Mentzen as opposition to Jews, homosexuals, abortions, taxes and the EU, *Konfederacja*’s combination of ethnonationalism, Catholic fundamentalism and economic libertarianism appears clearly. However, ahead of the following 2023 elections, the party’s programme did not talk about Jews, homosexuals and abortions, but rather focused entirely on radical socio-economic reforms to deregulate and privatise the economy, education and healthcare. Did it mean that gender and sexuality were just secondary, instrumental topics for *Konfederacja*? Investigating the gender and sexual order underpinning *Konfederacja*’s ideology, I argue instead that gender and sexuality are central in the party’s project of cultural, economic and political empowerment of the ‘traditional family’ to reconcile ethnonationalist pro-fertility plans with an ultra-libertarian project of state dismantlement by relocating social reproduction within the family. In such a project, the ‘traditional’ gender and sexual regime of inequality is entangled into – and goes hand in hand with – the class-based and the ethnic/racial regimes of inequality. Analysing *Konfederacja*’s ideological project, I expose two of the three ways in which gender

and sexuality matter for the far right: as pervasive to far-right ideology on race/ethnicity and class; and as one of the main dimensions of inequality defended, naturalised and/or promoted by the far right. While the PiS party reacted to the post-1989 neoliberal transformation with the project of a national-conservative pseudo-welfare state, *Konfederacja* has counterattacked with proposals for a radical dismantlement of the state, displacing state authority in favour of an economically, politically and culturally empowered heteronormative/heterosexist ‘traditional family’. In this context, issues of gender and sexuality are not mere instruments in ‘culture wars’, but rather intrinsic aspects of a particular vision of ‘normality’, understood as an ideological project for the benefit of the Polish Catholic middle- and upper-class heteronormative/heterosexist family.

In this chapter, I analyse *Konfederacja*’s activism as an attempt to assert particular forms of inequalities based on certain categories, and thus as “an intersectional struggle over social relations – class, gender, sexuality, religion, and ethnicity” (Sauer, 2020, p. 35). Looking at the party, its representatives and the interviewed members’ framings, and analysing the position of the gender and sexual order in these efforts, I uncover the party’s political project with its continuities, shifts and tensions. In the first section, I show how the alarmist discourse on the breakdown of the ‘traditional family’ and its gender and sexual order is central to *Konfederacja*’s diagnosis of decline, abnormality, victimisation and moral panic; I then move on to the analysis of the party’s prognostic frame centred on a return to ‘nature’ and ‘normality’ with the reassertion of the ‘traditional’ – i.e. heteronormative/heterosexist – gender and sexual order through market deregulation and state power; and finally I show the entanglements of – and tensions between – the gender regime of inequality and other regimes

of inequality such as those based on class and ethnicity/race, and how they help conceptualise the far right and gender and sexuality.

1. The decline of the traditional family as normality under attack

In their somber diagnosis of the current political and socio-economic situation in Poland, *Konfederacja* and its members are overwhelmingly concerned with the gender and sexual order, showing its centrality in the party's ideology. The party and its members resent deep underlying social and cultural changes, such as the rapid secularisation and liberalisation of Polish society (and the wider Global North), and especially what they see as the breakdown of the traditional gender and sexual order, which is allegedly bringing the downfall of European civilisation. As they contend, the 'traditional family' is 'demoralised', i.e. undermined by both cultural and socio-economic encroachment by leftist-liberals and feminists and LGBT+ movements on the one side, and state institutions on the other, putting in danger the nation's future. As I heard from then-leader JKM at a campaign meeting in Lublin in 2019, "by managing the economy, we can fix it in two months [...] however, once people are demoralised, that is really a problem for two generations, it's a fundamental issue."⁴³ This declinist assessment carried out by *Konfederacja*, its leaders and its members is key to understanding their worldview and their paleolibertarian solutions.

The decline of society and its gender and sexual order

While the interviewees saw Poland as less 'spoiled' than Western Europe or 'the West' in general, they still had a gloomy outlook of contemporary Poland, with transformations in the gender and sexual order as one of the most important symptoms. In many instances the interviewees decried left-wing and liberal forces as endangering the 'traditional family' with

their atheism, individualism, materialism and egoism. Mateusz (NN) deplored the spread of individualism by the “left-liberal ideology” and blamed it for low birthrates, and for support for abortion and euthanasia. Several interviewed members denounced the pursuit of material goods to the detriment of family building. “In this race for money, one forgets about what is most important, the family, those non-material values”, said Marcin (RN). Commenting on the feminist protests against the abortion ban that had taken place shortly before the interview, Antoni (NN) said: “with these Women's Strikes, attention was only drawn to the fact that the child is a burden, that the child is even some kind of parasite and in general it is not considered by society as a gift.”⁴⁴ What the members are right about, is that Polish society is rapidly secularising, especially when it comes to the youth, with the majority of Catholic believers on track to become a minority (Mariański et al., 2023; Pacewicz, 2019). The identification of individualism as the root cause of all ills echoes similar comments by far-right activists in Italy (Pasięka, 2022).

In these gloomy visions, the West is considered to be even more ‘spoiled’ than Poland and images of doom concern not only the gender and sexual order, but also the racial order. Noting that Muslim migrants, the Left and LGBT+ rights are taking over in the West, Dominik (RN) claimed that: “Western Europe is dying because it destroyed the values on which it stood.”⁴⁵ Such declinist views on faith, gender, sexuality and race in the West are also reflected in the party’s communication and its leaders’ statements, as in the then-leader Robert Winnicki’s (RN) comment posted on the party’s official Facebook page when the Notre-Dame Cathedral burnt in Paris: “#NotreDame in flames is a symbol of a fading Europe. A Europe of growing gay bars and mosques and demolished monuments and churches. A Europe rich in money but poor in faith, healthy family, patriotism and national feeling”⁴⁶ (Konfederacja, 2019d).

As Moffitt & Tormey noted about the wider political phenomenon of populism, the discourse of crises, breakdowns and threats is a central aspect of populist movements (Moffitt & Tormey, 2014, pp. 391–392), and I would argue that it also concerns the far right in general. These discourses also correspond to the aforementioned ideas of declinism (Slačálek & Svobodová, 2018) and ‘cultural pessimism’ (Gingrich, 2006). As Slačálek and Svobodová write about the Czech anti-refugee/anti-Islam movement, the diagnosis of declinism goes together with the prognosis of brutalisation – the advocacy of brutal, radical measures – and naturalisation – the advocacy of a return to ‘natural’ order, in terms of gender roles but not only – to form an ‘unholy trinity’ (Slačálek & Svobodová, 2018, p. 494). This corresponds to *Konfederacja*’s tendency to frame the situation in catastrophic terms in order to justify its radical policy proposals and, as I show in the next chapter, this framing is also predominant among SPD and its members, albeit with less emphasis on gender and sexuality, and more on race/ethnicity.

From Catholicism to normality

While some of the most religious interviewees rejected gender equality or homosexuality as contrary to their faith, the majority of interviewed members stated that they had no problem with what people did in the privacy of their homes. Yet, they objected to feminist or LGBT+ claims as attacks against ‘normality’, a term widely used by *Konfederacja* and its members to normalise their more or less ultra-conservative worldview. For example, Patrycja (NN) accused the feminist and LGBT+ movements of “trying to impose on us some different patterns of normality, a bit, a bit in contradiction to what has been gained, because for some thousands of years our ancestors fought for there to be this social order and not another.”⁴⁷ She rejected gender non-conforming identities as contrary to humans’ biological essence. Jakub (NN) also saw the ‘normal’ gender order under threat, denouncing the feminisation of men and

the inversion of the gender hierarchy, implying that normality is men's domination over women and that feminists do not strive for equality, but rather for domination over men. *Konfederacja* leaders have expressed similar views, especially JKM, who for example claimed in a 2019 pre-electoral meeting in Lublin that the LGBT+ movement wanted to “smash up the normal society; normal society, that's the normal family, in which the child has a daddy, a mommy.”⁴⁸ In JKM's vision, normality is at times expressed in cultural terms, as the traditional – read ‘heterosexist’ – gender and sexual order, and at times in socio-economic ones, in the form of the naturalised competition of the unregulated market.

In Polish politics, the term of normality was not invented by JKM or *Konfederacja*, but is rather located within wider political and socio-cultural struggles. In the post-89 context, the idea of normality has been used to promote the Western model of liberal democracy, serving as a rallying call to build democracy, introduce capitalism and catch up with ‘the norm’, i.e. the West (Gdula, 2018, p. 28; Holmes & Krastev, 2020). Thus, the liberal democratic hegemony passed as “the politics of normality” in post-89 Poland (Bill & Stanley, 2020, p. 3) and ‘normality’ was promised in the main slogans of the mainstream right-wing PO and centre-left SLD in the 2001 elections (*Wybory parlamentarne w Polsce w*, n.d.). Following the PiS party's return to power in 2015 and its undermining of liberal democracy, mainstream liberal forces led by the PO party also promised to undo the ‘illiberal regime’ as a ‘return to normality’ (SIEĆ NA WYBORY, 2023).

In parallel to this development, though, normality has been claimed by conservative and far-right forces eager to challenge the status quo, including on the question of the gender and sexual order. When the Polish LGBT+ movement started to step out in the public sphere with the LGBT+ *Marsze Równości* (Equality Marches) in the 2000s, they were not only being met

by occasional bans by mainstream parties, like the PiS party, but also by alternative far-right *Marsze Normalności* (Normality Marches) organised by organisations like the MW, then the youth organisation of the LPR, with slogans like ‘*Chłopak, dziewczyna, normalna rodzina*’ (Boy, girl, normal family) (Chetaille, 2013). Though such ‘Normality marches’ have been less frequent, with more counter-demonstrations trying to disrupt the LGBT+ events, they have still taken place in the last years, amongst others organised by *Konfederacja* members (*Marsz Równości, Marsz Normalności i*, 2024). Like most far-right rhetoric, the PiS has picked it up and it has regularly vowed “to defend the normal Polish family” against those who allegedly want to destroy it with LGBT+ rights and sexual education, especially ahead of the 2019 parliamentary elections when the party made this question one of its central campaign issues (*Konwencja PiS. Kaczyński: Chcemy obronić*, 2019).

Several scholars have noted how the Polish far right in the 2000s and 2010s tried to impose a new understanding of ‘normality’ as opposed to ‘abnormality’, establishing a chain of equivalence between what is normal, Polish and heterosexual and what is abnormal, foreign and homosexual (Graff, 2009 in Kociołowicz-Wiśniewska, 2019, p. 116). Through mobilisation, sometimes violent, groups like the MW pushed for a certain understanding of the public sphere as reserved for ‘normal’ – i.e. Catholic, Polish – values, while minorities have a right to exist, but strictly in the private sphere (Kajta, 2013, pp. 72–74). Nowadays, although *Konfederacja* and its members still talk in terms of morality and Catholic teachings, the label of normality/abnormality has become increasingly used. On the one hand, this framing can be seen as answering to the fact that the country is becoming more secular and theological arguments are replaced by – and hidden under – rhetoric based on ‘normality’, ‘nature’, ‘children’s wellbeing’, and on the other hand, it can be seen as an attempt to de-stigmatise the

party. This attempt comes out clearly in a *Konfederacja* social media post ahead of the 2023 parliamentary election, where it lists rather banal postulates (“you can eat meat”, “you can have a car”, etc.) followed by the words: “For the world, that’s the ‘radical right’. For us it’s normality” (Konfederacja, 2023d). Symptomatic of this framing’s appeal among the far right, the Czech SPD has also deployed the argument of normality, and like *Konfederacja* it has used it in a very flexible way, whether against anti-Covid-19 measures or, more recently, environmental measures.

The politics of victimisation, moral panics and resentment

In this discourse on normality, *Konfederacja* and its members thus normalise and naturalise their hierarchies, their regimes of inequality, and reject the idea that their ideas are radical or extremist. In the interviews, the members rather framed themselves – and the whole of society – as victims of – and defending themselves against – different groups questioning and destroying normality, “smashing up family life”, as Elżbieta (*Korona*) put it. This perception of victimisation played an important role in many of the members’ framing of reality and served as a key argument to defend their worldviews. In her interview, Natalia (NN) thus presented herself and like-minded Poles as under attack. She assured me that she had nothing against homosexuals, but she denounced the presence of vulgar and offensive clothing and behaviour at LGBT+ marches and claimed that LGBT+ activists “are already coming in our homes with their boots and want to educate our children.”⁴⁹ Natalia repeatedly used the argument of her children’s protection as legitimising her views, clearly positioning herself, her children and wider society as threatened. This framing of victimisation also came out in a 2020 protest organised by the RN and MW in Krakow, called ‘Enough with rainbow oppression!’⁵⁰, which opposed the alleged imposition of ‘rainbow ideology’, i.e. ‘LGBT+ ideology’ (Młodzież

Wszechpolska - Kraków, 2020). In such framings, the aggressor-victim paradigm is inverted: the members present themselves as tolerant and as victims of intolerance by aggressive minorities, while the question of minority discrimination gets sidelined (Wodak, 2015).

Victimisation discourses about certain groups is central to the far right's appeal in many countries and can take the form of 'moral panics', i.e. "a condition, episode, person or group of persons emerges to become defined as a threat to societal values and interests" (Cohen, 2011, p. 1). Importantly, the threat is presented in moral terms, meaning that it touches on what is considered sacred or essential to society (Thompson, 1998, p. 8). The existence of a 'moral panic' is especially obvious in the idea that feminists and LGBT+ movements are 'indoctrinating' and 'demoralising' children, as many members claimed in the interviews. As pure, vulnerable and sacred, children and their wellbeing serve as the ultimate argument to reject the LGBT+ movement and/or feminists as self-defence, and the argument has been widely used in the global 'anti-gender movement', especially in Poland (Graff & Korolczuk, 2022, p. 72). In these discourses against 'gender ideology', 'LGBT ideology', 'paedophilia', the 'LGBT lobby', *Konfederacja* and its representatives are among the many 'moral entrepreneurs' who identify a threat and a threatening group – the "folk devils" – and use inflammatory language, sketching catastrophic scenarios to trigger a form of mass reaction from the public (Cohen, 2011). It is not relevant whether those entrepreneurs are cynical manipulators or convinced zealots (Thompson, 1998, pp. 8–9) and it is certainly not my intention to weight the level of sincerity in my interviewees' words; what matters is the ways in which the sacred status of children serves to trigger a moral panic and identify folk devils, thus legitimising discriminatory behaviour and views as defence against an aggression, and mobilising support.

Discourses of victimisation also found their expression in a more intimate way for Piotr and Antoni (both NN), who lamented the fact that it was difficult for conservative, ‘family-minded’ men to find a suitable female partner in contemporary Poland. Thus, Piotr accused the mainstream culture of ‘attacking his values’: “It’s a handicap for me privately if the whole culture everywhere tries to force into women that having a family is bad, that it’s enslavement for them.”⁵¹ According to Antoni (NN), a man in his early twenties, socio-cultural changes in the West, and also in Poland, have led to a grave mental health crisis among women. He thought that this affected men’s ability to realise their need of “natural realisation, of family creation.”⁵² He told me that he found it hard to find a “good woman, who would be a good mother, who would fit as a candidate for wife”⁵³, clarifying that it was about having the right values to raise up children, not necessarily being a housewife. While these complaints show some resemblance to the self-victimisation adopted by participants in *incel* (involuntary celibate) discourses, they focus less on the sexual, and are thus rather examples of broader antifeminist views (Ging, 2019). Similarly to *incel* discourses, though, they exemplify the wider self-victimisation of White men experiencing the loss of privileges as an attack, something that Michael Kimmel has called ‘aggrieved entitlement’ (2017) and has provided a breeding ground for far-right radicalisation (Miller-Idriss, 2022).

Discourses on victimisation are frequently employed in *Konfederacja* discourses and are part of the party’s attempt to build a positive common identity. As it is often the case, the claim to victimhood constitutes a claim to moral superiority and purity (Helms, 2013). However, in the party’s narrative, far from being passive ‘victims’, *Konfederacja*’s representatives become a force of resistance pushing back against the ‘bad guys’, victims-turned-heroes, a widespread framing in social movements (Jasper, 2007). As Eva Illouz writes in the context of the Israeli

far right – which she euphemistically calls ‘populism’ – the status of victim and the attached emotion of resentment are powerful factors in the far right’s social and political dynamics (2023). As she remarks, the politics of victimhood have been promoted by the left-liberal camp in the last decades to advance women’s rights or minority rights, but this tactic has since then been taken over by majority groups who now wield their own victim status as a way to foster group identity and make their own demands. In the context of contemporary U.S. American politics, the mobilisation of victimhood has also attracted scholarly attention, pointing out the ways in which President Donald Trump presents White America as “victimized and powerless, converting their anxieties [...] into investments in a specific, masculinized, and White Idea of a precarious America, sentiments that masquerade as aggressive solidarity with the downtrodden” (Johnson, 2017, pp. 246–247). This analysis also applies to the ways in which victimisation works in the words of *Konfederacja* and its members, who not only claim to protect themselves, but also claim to protect ‘normal society’.

2. The counter-revolutionary gender and sexual order

Attached to *Konfederacja*’s diagnostic framing of crisis and breakdown – amongst others of the gender and sexual order – is the call for mobilisation against the ‘enemy’, the image of the EU-backed leftist-liberal multicultural welfare state with its women’s and LGBT+ rights. Promising to ‘bring back normality’ (*przywrócić normalność*), *Konfederacja* proposes its own ‘prognostic framing’ – an anti-egalitarian vision of social order mixing ethnonationalism, Catholic fundamentalism and ultra-libertarian economics. As I argue in this section, the far-right ideological project hidden behind the idea of ‘normality’ represents a radical authoritarian reassertion of inequalities, with an unequal – i.e. heterosexist – gender and sexual order, embodied by the Polish ‘traditional family’, as the core of society. *Konfederacja*’s

political project illustrates the importance of gender and sexuality in far-right ideology as entangled with other dimensions, with other regimes of inequality.

Reasserting the traditional family

In *Konfederacja*'s claims of defending normality against various threats, the protection and affirmation of the 'family' – meaning the heteronormative 'traditional family' – plays a central role. Presenting this family form as the fundament of the nation and society, but also as threatened by state encroachment on the one side, and cultural depreciation on the other, the party proposes extensive tax breaks, the elimination of welfare measures, the supremacy of parental rights, and the privatisation of education and culture as ways to empower heteronormative families economically, politically and culturally. Thus, the party's vow to weaken the state's authority over society does not mean the end of social authority, on the contrary, but rather the reinforcement of other sources of authority, and first and foremost that of the 'traditional family'.

By raising the banner of the 'family', *Konfederacja* follows the example of previous far-right projects in contemporary Poland, the most telling example being the far-right political party *Liga Polskich Rodzin* (League of Polish Families) which acted as PiS's minor government coalition partner in 2006-2007 and also included the aforementioned MW, today part of *Konfederacja* as the youth branch of the RN (Pankowski, 2010). As much of far-right rhetoric, the LRR's discourse on the family was picked up by the PiS, which defended its welfare measures in the name of the Polish family (Gwiazda, 2021; Slačálek, 2021c) and regularly vowed "to defend the normal Polish family" against LGBT+ and feminist activists (e.g. *Konwencja PiS. Kaczyński: Chcemy obronić*, 2019).

While *Konfederacja* and its members shared the PiS's diagnosis concerning the family, they strongly disagreed with its policies to correct the situation, and most especially with PiS's flagship 500+ child benefit programme, which granted parents 500 Polish złoty (approximately 115 EUR) per child per month. Apart from some rare voices recognising the need for child benefits, albeit only for those in need, the interviewed members castigated the programme as a vote-buying scheme, and as spoiling families and society at large. Antoni (NN) claimed that the benefits mostly support “pathologies” (*patologie*), which he explained in terms of “defective” families with problems of alcoholism, domestic violence and bad education. According to Łukasz (NN), welfare programmes do not strengthen the family, but rather make it lazier (“*ja rozleniwimy*”) and create a dependency on state funds, something he warned could serve as a tool to control people. Paweł, a man in his mid-twenties leading an urban branch of NN perhaps best summarised *Konfederacja*'s point of view on the state and the family:

the moment we have a welfare state, a state that wants to raise, for example, children instead of us, instead of parents, taking over more and more of the functions of parents... then people don't feel that they need that family. [...] The traditional family can function well when the state does not interfere in it, right? When the family can function freely, raise its children freely and realise its goals, and then people really feel that they can realise themselves through the family.⁵⁴

As an example, he cited the pension system, which replaced the traditional need to have children in order to be taken care of in old age, an example that four other interviewed members also mentioned. The party members thus seek to restore the ancient – and idealised – family-based solidarity, replacing the state-enforced social solidarity for all. Fiscal and institutional measures proposed by *Konfederacja* seek to economically, politically and culturally empower the ‘traditional family’, to the detriment of individuals, ‘defective’ families, non-conforming families and the larger social body that is society.

In this vision, the tax cuts are not framed solely as a mean of personal enrichment and material comfort, but come with a strong anti-statist message asserting individuals and families' autonomy, and claim to be the real solution to the demographic slump. "Every honest working citizen deserves to enjoy the fruits of their labour, to be able to support their family and to not live at the mercy of the state" claimed one of *Konfederacja*'s numerous Facebook posts advertising the party's promised tax breaks ahead of the 2019 national parliamentary elections (Konfederacja, 2019f). In the interviews, the members spoke strongly against taxation. Patryk (NN) raged against income tax as a "punishment for working" and called value-added tax (VAT) a "criminal tax", stating that his taxes are financing wasteful government expenditures instead of financing "something for [his] child or for [his] wife." Tax cuts or suppressions for families with children are presented by the members not only as a question of justice, but also as an efficient approach. Jakub (NN) enthusiastically sketched a future in which taxes would be halved, or even abolished, claiming that a libertarian economy would guarantee an "unprecedented" development, permanent work, high incomes and, unlike state benefits, stability, thus allowing people to have more children. Reminiscent of Viktor Orbán's regime in Hungary, a system based on tax breaks would more probably benefit middle- and upper-class reproduction at the detriment of 'defective', poorer families (Fodor, 2022; Geva, 2021, pp. 14–15; Rathgeb, 2024).

According to the interviewed members, the education system must not educate children according to social principles and values as defined by the democratically-elected government, but rather exclusively according to parental preferences. This conviction is often contrasted to left-liberal views, which allegedly posit that children are the state's property. Thus, Damian (NN) presented the family as a "carrier of civilisational values", together with the Catholic

Church and the education system, and he explained that the Left has been trying to take over educational institutions and marginalise the family by claiming children as property of the state, not parents: “those are simply attempts to break up this chain of value transmission from generation to generation.”⁵⁵ This logic is not only at work in *Konfederacja*’s refusal of sexual education in schools, but also in a wholesale rejection of state interference in family matters. Thus, *Konfederacja* has also associated with the anti-vaccination movement arguing against the compulsory vaccination of children and has repeatedly supported ‘light corporal punishment’ to children as parents’ rights, while rejecting the state’s meddling in such affairs (e.g. Chudy, 2023). The core principle of *Konfederacja*’s approach to family matters is its autonomy from state and society, something that should be reinforced by a reduction of the state to the benefit of the political, economic and cultural empowerment of the family – albeit only in its heteronormative form.

Catholicism, normality and the naturalisation of gender roles

Asserting the value and importance of the ‘traditional family’, the interviewed members not only frequently highlighted the importance of its heteronormative character – often explicitly rejecting homosexuality or homosexual families as ‘abnormal’ – but also often showed a more or less open inclination or nostalgia for its explicitly patriarchal form, with the father as breadwinner at its head. Thus, the restoration of the socio-economic, political and cultural power of the ‘traditional family’ carries a more or less explicit restoration and defence of a particular heterosexist gender and sexual order, with men predominating over women, and heterosexuals over non-heterosexuals. This order is justified by various – and sometimes intertwined – reasons invoking Catholicism, normality and nature, and is far from being restricted to the family.

The idea of the male breadwinner heading the family was expressed in very open ways in a few interviews. The strongest proponents of this form of patriarchal family was Karol (RN), who had a fundamentalist Catholic vision and asserted the man's role as head of the family as part of a god-given natural order: "There is no difference in terms of value: man is not better than a woman who is not better than men. But there is a natural hierarchy." He went on to explain that the wife's and children's submission to the father was for their own protection. His views did not only apply to the family and he lamented that, in general, men were becoming effeminate while women were managing men, claiming that pushing women into top management positions is 'unnatural' since women are meant to realise themselves through motherhood. Karol's words show that the reasoning can mix natural – biological – and cultural reasons, be it the Catholic faith, national tradition or simply 'normality'. Such ideas were also present in the NN faction, for example in the interview with Mateusz, who explained his party's conservative vision with the following words: "we see the role of the woman traditionally as it has been since the dawn of time, that the woman was at home, bringing up the children and it was the man who worked and should... and did support the family."⁵⁶ Some of the female interviewees also expressed similar ideas, like Magdalena (NN) who claimed that men in the party were highly respectful of women by offering the following example: "it often comes out in small talk that men are the head of the family, that they must to a certain extent take responsibility for their women."⁵⁷ In this sense, for many of the interviewed members, both male and female, the male breadwinner / female homemaker model remains an ideal.

In other interviews, the advocacy of the male breadwinner – female homemaker model was expressed indirectly through the rejection of the current double-earner family model

widespread in Global North neoliberal systems. According to Elżbieta (*Korona*), a middle-age woman working in the banking sector, the individualism and egoism allegedly promoted by left-liberal forces and feminists has disrupted the gender order and has spoiled women, convincing them to pursue a career instead of building a family. Claiming that a ‘normal woman’ – unlike ‘liberated women’ – wants children and a family, Elżbieta claimed that women had received too many rights and were made to be like men, in contradiction with ‘nature’. She lamented the end of the male breadwinner model and considered women’s participation in the work force as a ‘muzzle’ (*kaganiec*):

We were told that we would be independent in this way and it turned out that men's wages [i.e. family wages] were taken away, because sometime before the war, a family, an ordinary worker could support his family, the woman didn't have to work, and now the husband's salary and the wife's salary don't quite match the family expenses.

In her statement, Elżbieta showed the kind of nostalgia for a past gender regime present among some *Konfederacja* members. While she did not refer to this sort of idealised past, Natalia (NN) also noted that women in Poland were currently forced to go to work in order to make ends meet and she presented low taxes and a highest income for the husband as a possibility to give women the choice to stay home. In these views, the reestablishment of the single-earner family wage through drastic tax cuts is presented as real freedom for women. This shift from the conservative advocacy of women’s domestic role towards a liberal rhetoric against ‘forced’ wage work and in favour of the ‘freedom to choose’ has also been noted in the study of other far-right parties (Akkerman, 2015; Scrinzi, 2024, pp. 26; 55). As I show in Chapter 6, the general attitude of *Konfederacja* female members is to look at issues of gender and sexual (in)equality through the “lens of liberal individualism”, as among French and Italian female far-right members (Scrinzi, 2024, p. 117).

In her interview, Elżbieta also expressed a certain disillusion with the liberal feminist promise of emancipation through participation in the wage economy, lamenting the double burden of professional and domestic work that it implied. She pictured women as having been cheated by feminism, an ideology allegedly imposed by feminists and contradicting women's nature. Although she favoured economic libertarianism, Elżbieta also criticised international corporations, accusing them of “destroying people” by overworking them and preventing them from founding families. Interestingly, while she did not go so far as to criticise capitalism, she denounced the absurd standards facing women in the neoliberal gender regime. Her words show what Gabriele Dietze calls ‘emancipation fatigue’, the disillusionment with neoliberal feminism and the double burden of career and family (Dietze, 2020, pp. 148–153).

Elżbieta's views also show that paleolibertarianism can nicely combine a shallow critique of globalised neoliberalism (‘the international corporations’), on the one hand, and national ultra-libertarian economics, on the other, since the latter would allegedly enable the emancipation of men as breadwinners and women as homemakers. Elżbieta is a vivid example of the ways in which ultra-conservative standpoints draw from criticism of the current neoliberal system, as Korolczuk and Graff have argued (2022, p. 34). While the authors were right to point out that most groups in ‘the anti-gender movement’ reject neoliberal economics, they did not engage with the depth of this rejection, which, I would argue, is often more symbolic and superficial than substantive. Indeed, Elżbieta's words reflect more the frequent tendency among the far right to criticise globalisation while supporting the capitalist system on the national level (Rydgren, 2013).

Even when the members did not insist on the patriarchal nature of the family, specifying that each heterosexual couple should choose its own arrangements, they often reasserted a

naturalised gender division as inevitable by turning culture into biology. For example, Piotr (NN) denied that *Konfederacja* would like to chain women to the kitchen stove, as the media allegedly claimed, and he said that he shared domestic tasks with his wife. Nevertheless, he added: “I think, as a conservative, that different people are better suited to different things. And apart from that, I realise that if my wife has a baby one day, well, it's kind of like physically she's going to take care of it more, because she's going to breastfeed it, right?”⁵⁸ Talking about women’s low participation in Polish politics, Patrycja (NN) explained it in terms of childrearing responsibilities, but also naturalised it in terms of biology, sarcastically commenting that “there are some things that biologically we can’t get past, such as the fact that a woman has to give birth to a child, a man can’t do it.”⁵⁹ In these cases, the biological is made to both determine and legitimate the social, a common manner to defend gender inequality as natural (Connell, 2005, pp. 45–52). In Poland like elsewhere, such naturalisation of women’s role as primary caregivers on the basis of their basic biological abilities has been an important driver of gender inequalities, in the household and on the job market (Suwada, 2021b, p. 98). In its rebellion against the current form of neoliberalism, *Konfederacja* and its members thus embrace – albeit not always consistently and explicitly – a ‘return to nature’ in the form of re-familialisation / re-patriarchalisation and unregulated market competition. In such a vision echoing an analysis of the Czech anti-refugee movement, the remedy to social decline resides in a return to ‘nature’, in which both gender- and class-based inequalities are accepted as natural (Slačálek & Svobodová, 2018).

The ambivalent use of state power: enforcing nature and changing culture

While the party and its members expressed more or less explicitly heteronormative and heterosexist preferences, especially when it comes to family forms, they also claimed to

respect private matters and *Konfederacja* has been using the language of liberalism and free choice in its policy proposals. To a large extent, the party proposes to let the ‘free hand of the market’ fix the gender and sexual order, disengaging the state and putting back power in the hands of citizens as consumers. Nevertheless, the interviewed members and the party representatives have championed rather different approaches that expose the internal tensions of the paleolibertarian project, caught between its ultra-libertarian socio-economics and its ultra-conservative moral order. The question of state power and its repressive use comes out as the main point of contention.

Part of its efforts to fight against the ‘depravation’ of the ‘normal’ gender and sexual order, *Konfederacja* advocates economic ultra-liberalism, including the dismantling of affirmative action and anti-discrimination laws. Thus, in its most elaborate constitutional document, the ‘New Order’ (*Nowy Porządek*) constitutional project of the party’s 2020 presidential candidate Krzysztof Bosak, *Konfederacja* proposed to give full liberty in the selection of employees and full contractual liberty in the economic sphere (Komitet Wyborczy Kandydata na Prezydenta RP Krzysztofa Bosaka, 2020, p. 24). These steps would not only make existing anti-discriminatory laws null, but it would also allow brutal economic exploitation, with the removal of minimum wage or work hours limits. Along the same lines, Patrycja told me that she understood employers who would select a young man over a young woman, thinking about the possibility of pregnancy and childcare responsibilities. Talking about women in the KORWiN faction (now NN) in a YouTube video, two leading female activists denied the existence of discrimination in the workplace and the gender pay gap, presenting it as the result of ‘women’s choices’ and reflecting the aforementioned ‘liberal individualism’ (KORWiN vs UE i SEJM, 2020). The party has also repeatedly spoken out against ‘gender quotas’ on

management boards and in politics as a form of discrimination that was not only morally wrong but also detrimental to women themselves (CEPERolkV6, 2019; Konfederacja, 2023a, p. 42), an argument widespread among the European far right (Spierings, 2020, p. 44). Thus, under the banner of ‘freedom’, *Konfederacja* wants to remove all obstacles towards the preservation – and even reaffirmation – of unequal gender roles in the public sphere.

According to *Konfederacja*’s programme, the allegedly harmful influence of left-liberal, feminist or LGBT+ groups would be strongly curtailed by state disengagement and the empowerment of parents and the privatisation of education and culture. Parents would have full power about what would be taught in schools, and the privatised and decentralised financing of education and culture through ‘vouchers’ would allow parents – and, in the case of culture, citizens in general – to choose what they want, “instead of indoctrination and the promotion of harmful ideologies at the taxpayer’s expense” (Konfederacja, 2019b, p. 12). Thus, the state would still fund education and culture, but citizens as consumers would be the ones directly choosing schools and cultural activities, with the alleged goal of fostering representativity and competition. Poland’s leading anti-abortion activist Kaja Godek explained very well the goal of this approach when she was still part of *Konfederacja* at its beginnings in early 2019: “If we withdrew government, municipal and EU subsidies for organisations that promote homosexual ideologies, they would collapse. No normal person sends money to such organisations, they are unnecessary for ordinary people”⁶⁰ (Konfederacja, 2019c). Godek pits the ‘normal’ and ‘ordinary’ people against the presumably abnormal homosexuals, expressing the conviction that the latter will not be able to have the same power on the ‘free marketplace of ideas’ ruled solely by the preferences of citizens-as-consumers instead of state subsidies. These plans show how *Konfederacja* attempts to commodify fields of public intervention and

remove the economy from democratic debates, something described as the “de-democratization of capitalism” characteristic of neoliberalism (Joppke, 2021, p. 24).

During the interviews, I asked the members about their view of school privatisation, noting that the choices of the parents might not correspond to *Konfederacja*’s preferences. While some interviewees had a consistent libertarian approach and accepted whatever the market – i.e. the parents – would choose, other disagreed. Antoni (NN) approved of privatisation as a transitory measure, but he saw the role of the state in controlling what values schools transmit and he stated that “schools with bad values should be outlawed”. Talking about the normalisation of LGBT sexual orientations among the youth, Adam (RN) also saw a need for intervention as a question of national sovereignty, of defending Poland from Western influences. “We will also have to somehow control what is displayed, what is promoted as a country, so we will be able to control some of the waves there”, he said, talking about the waves of feminist and LGBT+ activism. Several of the members also lamented the alleged promotion of childless or single-child families in the media, and said that it would be important to promote more the large traditional family, with some of them seeing the state as best equipped to lead such cultural counterattacks.

In its official programmes, *Konfederacja* also reflects this ambivalent approach to liberty in matters of gender and sexuality. In the aforementioned ‘New Order’ constitutional project, the party clearly aims at firmly enshrining the cisheteronormative gender and sexual order in the constitution. One of the ‘constitutional theses’ is entitled “Christian ethics as fundament of the legal order”⁶¹ and contains this paragraph:

The principles of Roman law, natural law derived from classical philosophy, Christian ethics and the original Polish ideological and legal tradition form the

civilisational foundation for the creation of legal norms. Basing the law, institutions and culture of the new order on these values will make it possible to remove the worst features of the present disorder: instability of the law, uncertainty as to the direction of its evolution and ideological conflicts undermining almost every area of the life of the state and society.⁶² (Komitet Wyborczy Kandydata na Prezydenta RP Krzysztofa Bosaka, 2020, p. 19)

With the three following ‘constitutional theses’ in the programme proposing to enshrine a strictly heteronormative definition of marriage, a binary understanding of gender as biological sex and a full ban on abortions, it is clear how ‘natural law’ and ‘Christian ethics’ are understood by *Konfederacja*. Marcin (RN) also used the term ‘natural law’ in his definition of what ‘normality’ should be, contrasting it with what he called ‘gender ideology’, which he explained as a subjective choice of gender identification, and Elżbieta (*Korona*) used and explained ‘normality’ as a stand against abortion. In an interview before the second round of the presidential election, Bosak used both Catholicism and the “natural social order” (*naturalny ład społeczny*) as arguments against homosexuality and LGBT+ rights, underlining that ‘practicing’ homosexuality is “wrong” / “evil” (*zło*) (Suchecka & Jadczyk, 2020). This mixture of theological and biological arguments refers to the Vatican’s crusade against LGBT+ rights and ‘gender’, in which the idea of a natural moral law representing the “transcendent nature of the sexual order” is central (Garbagnoli, 2016, p. 189). As Melinda Cooper asserts, these ideas resemble contemporary efforts in the United States by Christian fundamentalists advocating against women’s and LGBT+ rights in the name of a divine natural law (Cooper, 2017, pp. 291–292). Implicit in this ‘constitutional thesis’ is the authoritarian striving to remove any questioning of the gender and sexual order from parliamentary debates. This comes out explicitly in the words of then-leader of the RN faction Robert Winnicki at a 2019 pre-electoral meeting in Rzeszów, where he vowed to “expel LGBT from the public sphere” (eMisjaTv, 2019).

This temptation to use state power to realise ideals and counter opponents and their views also transpired in the party's positions in parliament. In 2021, seven of the eleven *Konfederacja* deputies backed a law project banning any questioning of marriage and civil unions as heterosexual, any demonstrations 'propagating' non-heterosexual orientations and LGBT+ rights, and any 'potentially offensive' use of religious symbols (*Sejm skierował do dalszych prac*, 2021). A year earlier, most of them had also supported a law project effectively banning any sexual education or talk of minors' sexuality (*Głosowanie nr 8 na 10. posiedzeniu Sejmu*, 2020; *Sejm: projekt inicjatywy 'Stop pedofilii'*, 2020), thus clashing with the party's professed ideal to let parents choose. On other occasions, *Konfederacja* leaders such as Grzegorz Braun called for the criminalisation of sodomy with prison sentences (*Grzegorz Braun chce karać za homoseksualizm*, 2019) – a crusade currently led by 'new natural lawyers' in the United States (Bamforth & Richards, 2008, pp. 1–2) – and Sławomir Mentzen spoke out in favour of laws banning offences against 'religious feelings' (Olejarczyk, 2023). While the mixture of state repression in the cultural sphere and widespread state disengagement in the socio-economic sphere is not contradictory, but rather intrinsic to paleolibertarianism, many of the aforementioned statements, plans and actions of *Konfederacja* leaders run contrary to the party's rhetoric of liberalism on personal civic liberties, freedom of demonstration, freedom of expression and parental rights. To a large extent, *Konfederacja*'s discourse on freedom corresponds to the 'far-right newspeak' (McAdams, 2024), which uses liberal rhetoric against liberal democracy, but *Konfederacja* also has an ambivalent, authoritarian approach towards opponents. As Korolczuk and Graff note about 'anti-gender movements', they "stress their reverence for democratic methods such as mass mobilization, citizens' initiatives or referenda, but [...] oppose the very idea of democratic deliberation over the 'natural order of things':

traditional gender roles, marriage, filiation, reproduction and parental authority” (Graff & Korolczuk, 2022, p. 97). Similarly, the Czech anti-refugee/anti-Islam movement claimed to defend liberal values, but also advocated illiberal methods to do so (Slačálek & Svobodová, 2018).

3. Connecting the dots: gender, class and ethnicity/race

Closely intertwined with questions of gender and sexuality are questions of class and race. Indeed, *Konfederacja*’s project links different regimes of inequality to assert the power of the middle- and upper-class White Polish Catholic heterosexual male, at the expense of all the others. Based on a belief in the ‘normality’ or ‘naturalness’ of inequalities, the party foresees unbridled market mechanisms and repressive state power to implement an ideological project with particular gender, class and ethnic/racial regimes of inequality in order to save the nation from its demographic, socio-economic and cultural decline. In this section, I present an intersectional analysis of the different regimes of inequality articulated in *Konfederacja*’s vision.

The class politics of the neoliberal and paleolibertarian gender regimes

The potential impact of *Konfederacja*’s vision for the Polish gender regime is not hard to fathom, since it implies a reinforcement of gender roles in both the domestic and public spheres through a radical re-familialisation of care, and even a ‘repatriarchalisation’ (Stubbs & Lendvai-Bainton, 2020, p. 3). While *Konfederacja* vows to establish something like a ‘neo-traditional’ gender regime – i.e. providing “a favourable climate for women to become mothers and housewives” (De Lange & Mügge, 2015, p. 71) – its radical plan to unleash the unbridled forces of the market, and dismantle the state and its institutions is more likely to

gravely increase gender and class inequalities. Indeed, its ideal of the male breadwinner single-earner heterosexual family would most probably be reserved for the middle- and upper-classes, while others would be left behind without legal protection and state support. Despite occasional inflammatory remarks by Janusz Korwin-Mikke or other party representatives, *Konfederacja* does not advocate for the return to a domestic gender regime in which gender inequality is enshrined in legislation, with women mostly confined to the private sphere and legally subordinated to their husband, but its plans nevertheless reveal a real intention to undo many of the measures that have enabled women's presence in the public sphere as citizens and wage workers, like anti-discrimination laws. Such a paleolibertarian 'neo-traditional' gender regime would go beyond the PiS's 'pseudo-welfare' neoliberal gender regime in re-familialisation and would have dire consequences for gender and class inequalities in Poland.

Exploiting discontent with neoliberal capitalism, and especially the 'crisis of care' (Fraser, 2016), the PiS party came back to power in 2015 by promoting the project of a welfare state buttressed by nationalist and conservative arguments on national solidarity and the heteronormative gender and sexual order. While welfare programmes such as the flagship 500+ measure alleviated child poverty and somewhat reduced wealth inequalities, it has not boosted fertility rates, it has not turned Poland in a welfare state and it has certainly not contributed to gender equality (Baranowski, 2023; Shields, 2021). On the contrary, the PiS has built a 'pseudo-social welfare' supporting a neoliberal vision where cash payments to families support a form of familism and legitimate the state's absence in providing robust social services (Baranowski, 2023, p. 276; Meardi & Guardiancich, 2022). It has thus supported familism, defined as "policies, which encourage care, especially childcare, to be carried out within the family" (Fodor, 2022, p. 44), amongst others by lowering women's retirement age

to 60 under the pretext of allowing them to care more for their grandchildren (Meardi & Guardiancich, 2022, p. 13). While PiS did not question women's participation in the wage economy, it did little to help working mothers (Szelewa & Polakowski, 2020) and it did not tackle underinvestment in key sectors with a strong female workforce, such as education, healthcare and social services (Stubbs & Lendvai-Bainton, 2020, pp. 13–14). Beyond family policy, the PiS did little to address other aspects of gender inequality, such as gender inequalities on the job market or gender-based violence, and it has largely dismissed feminist claims as 'gender ideology' (Gwiazda, 2021). Last but not least, it successfully pushed for an even stricter ban on abortions, depriving more women of their basic reproductive rights and leading to the death of several women (Ptak, 2023).

Similarly to PiS, *Konfederacja* expresses a reaction against the Polish neoliberal state and its deficient institutions but, in contrast to the PiS, it rejects most state institutions and economic interventions. Its plans, if realised, would most certainly usher in an even greater level of familialism. as radical tax cuts, widespread privatisations and the dismantlement of state services, social reproduction would force families without high financial means to rely even more on themselves, and especially on women who remain the main caretakers in heterosexual couples (Suwada, 2021a, p. 55). Moreover, the undoing of anti-discriminatory laws and gender-based affirmative action would hit women, and especially working mothers, further pushing them back into the domestic sphere. Arguably, many women would find themselves in a similar position to women in Viktor Orbán's Hungary, where they have to work in order to receive any support, but still have to carry the double burden of work and family, leading, on the one hand, to an underclass of poor working women and, on the other hand, the institutionalisation of a 'motherhood penalty' for middle-class women on a labour market

without arrangements (Fodor, 2022, pp. 48–53). In *Konfederacja*'s paleolibertarian gender regime, both gender and class inequalities would be further aggravated by the absence of Orbán's neoliberal state-funded policies, which do provide some kind of support for most employed and married heterosexual couples with two children or more. While *Konfederacja* dangles the dream of upper middle-class Western lifestyle in front of voters' eyes, the reality of an ultra-libertarian economic system is more likely to overwhelmingly benefit a small fraction of 'deserving' rich and create a growing number of 'undeserving' poor, as the liberalisation of Western economies since the 1980s has shown (Alvaredo et al., 2018; Ostry et al., 2016; Piketty, 2013). Thus, in *Konfederacja*'s paleolibertarian gender regime, the deserving ones would be able to fully profit from their winnings, and to potentially embrace a male breadwinner or one-earner family model, or to outsource part of caring duties to private providers, but the 'undeserving' would be driven back into familialism, most probably with women carrying the double burden.

In *Konfederacja*'s vision, the embrace of inequality is central, and its proposed gender regime not only foresees the reassertion of gender inequality, but also that of class-based inequalities. Janusz Korwin-Mikke has been famous for his opposition to all welfare measures and even for his social Darwinism directed against poor people, people with handicaps or drug addicts (Kącki, 2023). While few party representatives have advocated for the same brutal social Darwinist solutions, such thinking is reflected in *Konfederacja*'s programmes which, in addition to tax cuts, foresee the end or reduction of almost all welfare measures. Interrogated on plans to cancel unemployment benefits, *Konfederacja*'s then-press secretary Anna Bryłka (RN) confirmed, commenting: "Everyone needs to be able to take care of themselves and every able-bodied person must work"⁶³ (Klauziński, 2023). Attacking the Left on the housing

crisis, Mentzen commented on social media: “The brutal truth is that you should have studied, worked and saved. If you had learned to paint walls, weld, drive a truck, you wouldn’t be living with your parents. Unfortunately, instead of working, you prefer to take away from those who wanted to take responsibility for their own lives”⁶⁴ (Mentzen, 2021). Ahead of the 2023 elections, leader Sławomir Mentzen (NN) stood at a rally with the saying: “Everyone is the architect of his own fortune”⁶⁵ projected on the background (Solska, 2023), something embodying the party’s vision of inequalities as merely the result of each and everyone’s qualities, efforts and decisions. In this vision, there is no place for structural or systemic issues, and without the state and its taxes, each and everyone – especially each and every man – can work hard and succeed. As I further analyse in Chapter 6, this worldview fits well with Birgit Sauer’s argument that the far right is skilfully drawing from the ‘masculinist affective subjectivities’ created by neoliberal affective governmentality, including self-entrepreneurship and competition (Sauer, 2020, p. 33).

In their book on anti-gender politics, Graff and Korolczuk argue that anti-genderism is a form of conservative resistance to the cultural and economic aspects of neoliberalism, in a context where feminism has largely taken a neoliberal shape (2022). As they write, anti-gender movements and actors respond to – and exploit – fears and anxieties related to cultural and socio-economic changes, posing as an antidote “the view of the ‘traditional’ family as a nexus of solidarity, the last frontier of social cohesion, a defence against rampant individualism and consumerism” (2022, p. 124). They are right to note that the PiS party and most European political actors mobilising around anti-genderism have criticised neoliberal socio-economics, unlike many similar U.S. American actors (2022, p. 32). Thus, the PiS’s pseudo social welfare state, while running short of turning its back on neoliberalism and settling the ‘crisis of care’,

has offered some form of relief to lower-class and middle-class families – even if it has somewhat reinforced familialism – and has offered a form of ideological recognition to its conservative voter base by waging its culture wars (Baranowski, 2023, p. 278). However, while *Konfederacja* shares part of the cultural critique of neoliberalism deployed by European far-right parties like the PiS, and some of their economic critique – like the might of international corporations – it sees the solution not in a return of state intervention, but rather in an even more radical capitalist alternative: paleolibertarianism. The party exploits distrust towards – and dissatisfaction with – state institutions as well as widespread beliefs in the free market to buttress its paleolibertarian alternative, amongst others relying on the aforementioned ‘masculinist affective subjectivities’ from masculine ideals associated with exerting control, resisting control and eliciting deference in relation to women and other men (Ralph-Morrow, 2022, p. 29; Schrock & Schwalbe, 2009, p. 287).

This link between the socio-economic system enabling family autonomy and a certain ‘masculinist affective subjectivity’ came out in some interviews. Thus, for Karol (RN), tax cuts instead of welfare benefits mean that: “you also give honour to, you know, the father to help him support, you know, his own family, but instead, but you don’t steal from him and give it to him. You know, it’s nothing where you degrade this, this man, you know, the whole purpose of the father is to support the family.” Although he did not insist on the male breadwinner, Kacper (NN) saw parents’ socio-economic empowerment as a question of normalcy and a return to dignity: “the restoration of normality is the restoration of dignity [...] dignity is to be able to simply support yourself, support your family, with your own money, with your own work.”⁶⁶ The quotes show the idea of the male breadwinner’s or the parents’ socio-economic family autonomy and self-reliance as central to honour and dignity, in

accordance with neoliberal canons, and in contrast to welfare benefits. The ways in which this socio-economic worldview intersects with far-right political beliefs has been addressed in previous research on Poland (Mrozowicki et al., 2019, p. 232), but scholars have not sufficiently recognised its gendered aspects.

In contrast to Sauer's idea that this neoliberal discourse on self-reliance implies a rejection of solidarity, I rather argue that *Konfederacja*'s paleolibertarianism replaces the compulsory mechanisms of social solidarity with a strong ethos of family and national solidarity. In this sense, the masculinist affective subjectivity promoted by the party draws from neoliberalism's principle of entrepreneurial competition and risk, but it also resists the absolute individualism of the free market by reinstating the heteronormative/heterosexist family as a locus of solidarity shielded from commodification. Of course, this is only valid for the 'right' families, and there is indeed a rejection of any socially- or state-enforced responsibility towards others. This view can be linked to the 'family egoism' analysed in the 2000s as a characteristic of Polish society plagued by low levels of social trust after the brutal transition to a capitalist economy and liberal democracy (Pankowski, 2010, p. 74). In this framework, duty towards the larger national community does not disappear, but it takes the form of the abstract image of the nation embodied by a minimalist state in charge of protecting borders and defending the homeland. In this sense, *Konfederacja* is not just neoliberalism in a new package, but rather a post-neoliberal alternative, in the same spirit as Orbán's system, despite the differences (Geva, 2021).

The family against migration and the 'Great Replacement'

Just like *Konfederacja*'s gender regime of inequality interacts with a certain socio-economic order promoting hierarchies, so does the question of race/ethnicity loom large over

Konfederacja's paleolibertarian project. Indeed, as the interviews have shown and as many political discourses explicitly express, what is at stake with the traditional gender and sexual order is not only patriarchy, but also the question of demography, with the threat of the 'Great Replacement' hanging over the country like a sword of Damocles. As Poland has increasingly become a country of immigration, fears about the country's ethnic/racial homogeneity and hierarchy have (re)surfaced, and *Konfederacja* has become the most outspoken parliamentary voice against migrants and refugees, with some of its discourses embracing racial/ethnic homogeneity. The interviews also showed how the regime of racial inequality comes into dialogue with the other regimes of inequality, based on gender and class, showing complementarity, but also some tensions.

Despite the persistent importance of antisemitism among some *Konfederacja* leaders and members, Jews have been replaced by new threats, especially Muslims or, more recently, the Ukrainians. During the interviews, comments on demography and migration were intimately linked. For example, Maciej (NN) saw the increase of the birthrate as essential for Poles' survival: "we're dying out and, let's say, the Hindus, or Muslims, Arabs or Africans multiply and just like that, with the force of things they'll just dominate, if we won't... we won't have children...."⁶⁷ Patryk (NN) argued that it would be better not to accept Muslim migrants saying: "in this demographic race, however, Poles don't stand a chance against Muslims, because we don't have the culture to have many wives and eight children each."⁶⁸ Many saw this process as already happening in the West. Thus, blaming the low birthrate in Poland on the individualism coming from the West, Marcin (RN) immediately linked it to migration, noting that 'native' people in Western Europe are too obsessed by their career and material wellbeing to found families, while Muslims or Romas are replacing them through higher natality. Several

of the members painted a bleak picture of Western Europe as overrun by migrants and as a warning for Poland. Although they did not talk about migration in conspiratorial tones, many of the interviewees echoed the 'Great Replacement Theory' popular among the Western far right, which warns of a replacement of Europe's native inhabitants with non-European migrants (Zúquete, 2018).

While in most interviews, the links between a reinforcement of the 'traditional family' and the need to avoid a 'Great Replacement' were more implicit than explicit, they come out very clearly in some statements by JKM. According to him, the Great Replacement will happen because the undermining of 'masculine' virtues like aggression and risk-taking has turned Europe from coloniser to colonised. In his usual provocative style, he has repeatedly announced a Muslim invasion of Europe, and has even welcomed it as a better solution than the 'EU anti-civilisation' (Głozak, 2015). According to him, the link between, on the one hand, democracy and equality – and especially gender equality – and, on the other hand, the great replacement by Muslims/Arabs is a direct one: “men must rule, and women must obey them. And this is, of course, in the interests of women – if they don't want to end up in harems”⁶⁹ (*Korwin-Mikke: w interesie kobiet*, 2020; Stelmach, 2020). He had already made such rhetorical jumps in the past, saying in 2016 that the EU cultivated weakness, contrary to Arabs, meaning that “if we do nothing, in 20 years our mothers and daughters will end up in harems”⁷⁰ (Łukasiewicz, 2016). On the same occasion, he also told his audience that the way to fight 'islamisation' was to have a lot of children, bragging that he had eight. The image of White women ending up as slaves to Arab/Muslim men has a long history in Orientalist stereotypes and has been recently used by the German far-right party *Alternative für Deutschland* (Alternative for Germany, AfD) (Miller-Idriss, 2022, p. 178). Such visions of the

decline of an atheist and ‘effeminate’ Occident have also been abounding in Poland for a long time and have not been confined to the far right (Graff, 2010). They have been juxtaposed to the threat of a religious and ‘masculine’ Orient in Polish Islamophobic discourses, where Western conservative and far-right views such as Samuel Huntingdon’s ‘clash of civilisations’ have been widely reproduced (Bobako, 2017, pp. 311–371). Similarly to many *Konfederacja* representatives, Huntington blamed the demise of the traditional family and ‘deviant’ sexuality for White America’s demographic loss to other racial groups and migrants (Bialasiewicz, 2006, p. 716). As Korwin-Mikke and *Konfederacja*’s rhetoric show, the ‘clash of civilisations’ takes shape in debates about biological reproduction in Poland as well, “with women’s bodies becoming the new battleground for the preservation of the identity of the West” (Bialasiewicz, 2006, p. 702).

The neoliberalism–nationalism nexus and ‘cultural racism’

At the time of the interviews, the interviewees showed more ambivalence about migration than expected from far-right party members, from a flat refusal to great openness, exhibiting tensions between nationalism and libertarianism in the party ranks. Several interviewed members stuck to the socio-economic aspects of migration, declaring willingness to accept anyone ready to work and live peacefully in Poland. Despite insisting on national reproduction, Patrycja (NN) also asserted that she had absolutely no problem with migrants and foreigners: “If you're making a living and you're not coming to benefit from, say, my... my state social systems, then it's all right, great.”⁷¹ For Łukasz (NN), although he noted that Christians were culturally closer, it did not matter what the migrants’ religion was, as long as they were ready to work and would not live off of state benefits. Showing how ethnicity/race and class can interact in interesting ways, Antoni (NN) contrasted the positive example of

Arab, Afghan, Asian and Vietnamese migrants, who allegedly came to work and built their own businesses, to Ukrainians, who allegedly had too many social benefits and were being hostile to Poles.

Sometimes, as among the Czech interviewees, the anti-Muslim bias came out in the division made by the interviewees between the working migrant and the dependent refugee. Thus, Patrycja said that she opposed the welcoming of refugees in 2015-6 because they would have allegedly lived off of state benefits. Łukasz also made the same distinction. Cultural and socio-economic matters sometimes merged, as in Magdalena's (NN) argument that the Middle-Eastern refugees did not respect Polish traditions and religion, wanted to impose their rules, and did not want to work. These statements echo the words of Korwin-Mikke in 2015 as a EU deputy, who characterised the 'refugee crisis' as "flooding Europe with human trash that does not want to work"⁷², a statement he was later disciplined for (*Korwin-Mikke w PE*, 2015; Łukasiewicz, 2016). The interaction between socio-economic and racial/ethnic arguments exemplify what Christian Joppke called the "neoliberalism–nationalism nexus", i.e. the contradicting, yet complementary discourses on the individual migrant's worth and merit, on the one hand, and on the national community's ethnic/racial homogeneity, on the other hand (2021). According to the neoliberal logic, migrants bringing in some economic value are welcome, while those who are suspected of being economic burdens are not; while according to the logic of nationalism, other racial/ethnic groups threaten the nation. Scholar Krzysztof Jaskułowski points out a similar phenomenon in his sociological account of Polish views on immigration, noting that "the migrants' hierarchy reflects not only the logic of cultural nationalism but also the logic of a modernising and neoliberal discourse that emphasises the productivity, economic usefulness and human capital of migrants" (Jaskułowski, 2019, p. 68).

As I explain further, entire groups of migrants/refugees can be racialised as social burdens, showing the interplay of race and class in discourses on migration.

When it comes to the most important group of foreigners in Poland, Ukrainians, this nexus also comes out in an interesting way. At first, *Konfederacja* did not mobilise against them to a great extent, even if some of its representatives – mostly from the RN wing – criticised the import of cheap Ukrainian migrant workers or played on historical memory, citing the WWII massacres by Ukrainian nationalists against Poles living in contemporary Western Ukraine. During the interview process in 2020-2021, the Ukrainian population in Poland had reached a high number, well over a million (Olender, 2021), but only four of the interviewees expressed concerns. Noting that he thought the waiter serving us at the restaurant was Ukrainian, Karol (RN) expressed discontent and he claimed that six million Ukrainians were already living in Poland. Jakub (NN) even foresaw the prospect of Ukrainians overflowing Poland and becoming the majority ethnic group. Only after the 2022 full-scale invasion and the arrival of a large number of Ukrainian refugees, with about a million refugees settling in Poland (Lipczyński, 2024), did *Konfederacja* start to mobilise more strongly around this issue. While not representing the coalition's official position, Grzegorz Braun immediately called for the border to be closed to refugees and the *Korona* wing especially started to stir up ethnic and cultural fears, declaring its opposition to the 'Ukrainisation of Poland' (*ukrainizacja Polski*). In July 2022, *Korona* released a report warning against the 'erosion of the ethnic-cultural structure' of Poland because of Ukrainian migration and calling on to preserve Poland's post-WWII ethnic homogeneity as "the foundation of the country's stability, the guarantee of Poles' security and our country's most important competitive advantage"⁷³ (Stop ukrainizacji Polski, 2022, p. 38).

While the RN and the *Korona* factions expressed cultural and demographic fears about Ukrainians, their rhetoric did not garner the support of the NN wing, and thus did not become the official *Konfederacja* party line. Moreover, their attempts to mobilise crowds around this topic failed (Tilles, 2022). However, a consensus did form in the party around the refusal of socio-economic rights for refugees and *Konfederacja* started to attack Ukrainian refugees as social burdens. Moreover, *Konfederacja* portrayed Ukrainians as ungrateful of Poland's strong humanitarian, diplomatic and military support, and strongly supported Polish farmers and truckers protesting against what they saw as unfair competition from Ukraine. Mixing its anti-tax libertarianism with economic chauvinism and nationalist geopolitics, 'Zero social [support] for Ukrainians' (*zero socjalu dla Ukraińców*) became one of the *Konfederacja*'s five electoral promises for the 2023 parliamentary campaign (Konfederacja, 2023e), and it attracted one of the crowd's biggest roars of approval at an October 2023 campaign meeting I attended in Warsaw. I contend that widespread ideas about cultural and ethnic/racial proximity between Poles and Ukrainians, as well as the wave of solidarity with Ukraine following Russia's full-scale invasion, meant that framing Ukrainian refugees as a socio-economic threat was an easier way to garner larger popular support.

On the one hand, the party has not taken a strong stance against migration in its programmes, rather expressing support for limited, controlled migration (Konfederacja, 2019b, p. 15); voicing opposition to illegal migration (Konfederacja, 2023a); or contending that Polish citizenship should only be granted as a "particular recognition" based on "full assimilation" (Komitet Wyborczy Kandydata na Prezydenta RP Krzysztofa Bosaka, 2020, p. 27). On the other hand, the party has often resorted to a harder anti-migrant line in its everyday communication. Moreover, during the 2015-2016 'refugee crisis', the different *Konfederacja*

wings had already displayed rabid anti-refugee and anti-Muslim sentiments, and this hard line returned to attack the PiS government's migration policy in the early 2020s, when *Konfederacja* concentrated on the fact that many migrant workers came from Muslim-majority countries. In July 2023 co-leader Krzysztof Bosak even called on to block all immigration from Muslim-majority countries (Czermiński, 2023; Konfederacja, 2023b). In the Summer of 2021, *Konfederacja* supported the harsh and violent response by the PiS government against extra-European refugees on the Belarusian border and some *Konfederacja* politicians have later advocated for the use of firearms against the refugees (*Recepta na problemy na polskiej*, 2024). This brutalisation of language against migrants also came to the surface in a social media post by one of the interviewed members, in which he rejoiced over the drowning of several dozens migrants trying to reach the EU.

On the topic of migration, *Konfederacja* has increasingly talked about cultural cohesion – in addition to security and social benefits – emphasising more the idea that migrants from ‘culturally foreign’ countries with ‘different levels of civilisation’ would lead to “the cultural disintegration of societies and the weakening of the position of one's own people in one's own country”⁷⁴ (Bosak, 2024). In an August 2024 interview, *Konfederacja* co-leader from the NN faction Sławomir Mentzen said that he had changed his mind on migration, arguing that economic benefits are out-weighted by the automatically increasing costs of criminality and social services caused by migrants from “wild/savage countries”, from “culturally foreign countries”⁷⁵ (Giedron, 2024). The emphasis on cultural arguments show that *Konfederacja*'s discourse has come closer to the ‘new racism’, also called ‘cultural racism’, which uses a rhetoric of cultural differences rather than biological ones, and has become widespread in the Global North (Barker, 1981; Gilroy, 1987; S. Hall, 1996). Such a form of racism is more a

change of rhetoric than a substantive change in approaches, since it rests on ‘cultural fundamentalism’, a vision of culture as homogeneous, intrinsic to a people and biologically reproduced (Stolcke, 1995), a vision of “culture almost biologized by its proximity to ‘race’” (Gilroy, 1987, p. 61). It is often accompanied by a ‘ethnopluralist’ vision of the world, “which does not posit a racial hierarchy but holds that the mixing of ethnic groups creates insurmountable problems” (Art, 2011). While many scholars of the far right seem to accept at face value the far right’s espousal of this ‘non-racist’ ethnopluralist rhetoric (e.g. Art, 2011; Eatwell, 2018), others have questioned the allegedly non-racist and non-hierarchical character of these views (e.g. Pasieka, 2024, pp. 129–130). In any case, Mentzen’s derogative comments about ‘wild/savage countries’ shows that the more or less open rhetoric of national or ‘European civilisational’ superiority has not disappeared. When *Konfederacja* labels as ‘culturally foreign’ all extra-European migrants, and designates them all as both cultural and socio-economic threats, the overlapping logics of race, class and culture stand out. Moreover, while it still relies on Polish ethnonationalist discourses based on the figure of the *Polak-katolik* – and still uses antisemitism – *Konfederacja* has also started to wield European civilisational discourses backed by secular and liberal arguments, as deployed by the Czech SPD and many Western European far-right parties (Brubaker, 2017; Slačálek & Svobodová, 2018). Thus, while the interviewed members did not widely use ‘femonationalist’ arguments of gender or sexual equality against migrants, *Konfederacja* and its representatives have increasingly done so since 2023, especially through its female representatives, as I show in Chapter 6. In the last years, it seems like criticism of migration has become more dominant in the *Konfederacja* coalition, with the ethnonationalist hardliners winning over their more

libertarian colleagues, and opposition to migration and asylum was one of *Konfederacja*'s top campaign topics ahead of the 2024 EU Parliament elections.

Conclusion

As I have shown, *Konfederacja*'s paleolibertarian vision stems from a declinist vision of society – and Europe/the West in general – in which the 'normal' gender and sexual order and its proponents are under attack. As a solution, the party proposes the cultural, economic and political empowerment of an ethnonational community of middle- and upper-class, heteronormative/heterosexist families against a series of threats – leftist-liberals, feminists, LGBT+ people and migrants. Rejecting both the individualistic egoism of neoliberal capitalism and the egalitarian solidarity of the welfare state, *Konfederacja* and its members champion instead the 'traditional family', egoistic towards society and foreigners, but solidary towards its own kin. As I have argued, the project rests more or less overtly on a 'neo-traditional gender regime', with its heteronormative/heterosexist gender and sexual order, and with the heterosexual male breadwinner on top of the pyramid. Thus, in addition to the exclusion of non-heterosexuals and a certain repatriarchalisation of the gender regime, the emancipation promised to the 'traditional family' is skewed towards the middle- and upper-classes, who are more likely to fare well in an ultra-liberalised economy. Finally, this project seeks to boost the ethnic group's demography in the face of mass migration, answering to the party's ethnonationalist tendencies, which are not equally shared by all representatives and members, but have been increasingly present, especially wrapped in the language of cultural cohesion and socio-economic stability. Thus, as my analysis shows, *Konfederacja*'s ideological project exemplifies the importance of gender and sexuality in the far right in two ways: as pervasive in its vision of social reproduction with its socio-economic and

racial/ethnic aspects; and as one of the main dimensions of inequality to defend, naturalise and/or promote.

In its embrace of heterosexism, ultra-libertarian economics, ethnonationalism and Catholic fundamentalism, *Konfederacja* presents a striking example of the centrality of inequality as the ideological core of far-right politics by promoting a starkly anti-egalitarian vision across several co-constitutive dimensions. Interestingly, in *Konfederacja*'s paleolibertarian ideological project, it is not 'nativism' that occupies the central position, as the influential definition of the far right as conceptualised by Cas Mudde would have it (2007), but rather inequality in general. In the case of *Konfederacja*, and especially its NN wing, the dimension of gender and sexuality and the socio-economic dimension have been more prominent than the ethnic/racial/national, even if they are all intertwined. As I show in the next chapter on the example of the SPD, not all far-right parties express this anti-egalitarian agenda in the same configuration, and with the same intensity along all dimensions, especially not along the socio-economic one. Finally, parties tend to change their emphasis and radicalism, and it is worth noting that *Konfederacja* has shown a tendency to move towards a more 'modern' approach by embracing the language of liberty, abandoning explicit misogynistic rhetoric, shifting from a staunch Catholic approach to a discourse on nature and normality, and replacing 'race' with 'culture'. Thus, *Konfederacja* seems to be increasingly moving towards the kind of far-right pseudo-liberal 'newspeak' more widespread in the Global North and also visible in the form of the Czech SPD, as I show in the next chapter.

Chapter 5: SPD – Defending the normal world of the Czech working family

“We are of the opinion that one of the priority investments must be supporting working families with children, because there is no other guarantee for the future of our country than children from Czech families that are led by their parents towards national pride, a positive relationship to education and work, and respect for the elderly. We do not want parents to bring up their children according to EU manuals and to suppress their masculine and feminine roles, but to develop their sound judgement.”⁷⁶ (Rozvoral, 2020)

This 2020 social media post by SPD deputy Radek Rozvoral reposted on the official party page contains in a nutshell the party’s ideological vision of the ‘normal world’, with the Czech ‘working family’ at the centre, tying together ethnonationalism, workfarism and conservative gender roles. Although *Úsvit* / SPD started off as a political project directed against political elites and the Roma minority, it gradually thickened its programme with the adoption of anti-refugee/migrant and anti-Muslim discourses, and the embrace of the ‘traditional family’ against ‘gender ideology’. Drawing from a narrative of national and civilisational decline, SPD advocates a return to the nation-state, a work-based society and the ‘traditional’ gender and sexual order. In this ideological project, a generally conservative approach to gender and sexuality dominates in a ‘common sense’ understanding of these topics, something that is framed in party communication as ‘the defence of the normal world’. As I argue in this chapter, gender and sexuality are pervasive in the party’s core themes of fatherland, work and

family, bringing together the cultural, ethnic/racial, economic and social aspects of the party's ideology in an authoritarian and hierarchical political project with the ethnic Czech 'traditional' working family on top of the pyramid. Thus, while the heterosexist gender and sexual order undergirding this vision does not stand out as strongly as in the Polish case, the case of the SPD also shows that gender and sexuality are spread throughout – and tightly entangled within – multiple dimensions of inequality such as race and class.

In this chapter, I first focus on the ethnonationalist and workfarist ideological tenets at the roots of *Úsvit* / SPD's emergence, and especially at their entanglement with discourses on social reproduction and their gendered aspects, first against the Roma and later against extra-European (Muslim) migrants/refugees. I show how the party's discourse on work targets the Roma and relies on a racialised vision of social reproduction pitting the healthy White family against the dysfunctional Roma family, something that later extended to anti-migrant/anti-refugee discourses, especially against Muslims. In the second section, I show how the party's 'traditional family' discourse ties together its ethnonational vision of society, its authoritarian approach to work and its belated embrace of 'tradition' against 'gender ideology'. Even if the party and the interviewed members displayed a certain degree of tolerance for 'homonormativity', they defended the current heterosexist status quo and its inequalities. Finally, I address the presence of anti-Western tropes in SPD 'anti-gender' rhetoric, challenging the idea that anti-genderism in the SPD (and *Konfederacja*) stems from resentment towards East-West geopolitical and cultural power inequalities.

1. The supremacy of the White working family

Although Tomio Okamura and his *Úsvit* party heavily drew from anti-establishment sentiments and the flagship idea of direct democracy – decision-making through direct popular vote as a remedy to the ills of liberal democracy – to step into the political scene in the early 2010s, ethnonationalist rhetoric was also central at the very beginning. First directed against the Roma minority, then against extra-European (Muslim) migrants/refugees and the EU, and more recently against Ukrainians, this rhetoric has always been tightly linked to a workfare chauvinistic vision with more or less explicitly gendered and sexualised aspects. Drawing from a moralistic racialised discourse on work, SPD presents the vision of an authoritarian ethnonationalist community based on the current unequal heterosexist gender and sexual order.

Hard work against the Roma

Born to a Japanese-Korean father and a Czech mother, Tomio Okamura became a successful businessman and media personality in the 2000s. He built an image of self-made man – with strong masculinist aspects, as I unpack in Chapter 7 – who pulled himself up by his own bootstraps, starting with hard manual labour and succeeding through relentless work. As scholars Ondřej Císař and Jiří Navrátil remarked, Okamura benefited from the neo-liberal capitalist *Zeitgeist* following the fall of communism and could “skilfully exploit an important political narrative that had defined individual success as the defining moment in a person's general worth” (Císař & Navrátil, 2019, p. 187). In the late 2000s, Okamura increasingly intervened in socio-political affairs, taking advantage of blogging platforms and emerging social media. Under the pretext of saying things as they are, he took gradually more radical positions, especially against the Roma, at a time when racial tensions were running high between the ‘White’ majority and the Roma minority.

In his attacks against the Roma, Okamura rarely openly espoused the far right's racial theses, but rather emphasised the ideas of work, fairness and free speech. Thus, right from the beginning, Okamura used the aforementioned 'far-right newspeak' to defend ethnonationalist and authoritarian views. Moreover, he often took cover behind his mixed racial background to dodge any accusation of racism, pointing out that he himself had been the victim of racism and that his goal was precisely to stop the rise of racism by urging the Roma to drop their 'unadaptable' lifestyle (e.g. Hechtová, 2011). Despite experiencing racism himself, Okamura writes in his 2010 (auto)biographical book that Czechia is a tolerant society and that minorities have to show that they give more than they take (Novák Večerníček & Okamura, 2010, p. 180). The title itself 'The Czech Dream' seems to refer to the 'American Dream' – the idea that anyone with a strong work ethic and talent can 'make it' in the United States – and is a flattering reference to Czechia. In another interview from 2011, Okamura made it clear that he refused to discuss racism in Czechia as a systemic obstacle: "To anyone who complains about being offended for racial reasons, my advice to all minorities who complain about being pushed away is simple – start working with all your might"⁷⁷ (Šebek, 2011). In short, he was quick to turn his discourse about individual success against the 'unadaptables' and/or the Roma, whom he made responsible for their own misery.

As a central theme in the post-1989 Czech political discourse, the concept of work represented a crucial battlefield in a political struggle mostly focused on socio-economic issues, where different conceptions of 'work' marked the right-left ODS-ČSSD bipartisan rivalry, and later distinguished populist challengers (Kim, 2020). While the ANO party mostly used work to boost its leader's image as a successful, hard-working businessman taking on lazy politicians, *Úsvit* targeted both politicians and marginalised social groups, the latter being demonised as

‘*nepřizpůsobiví*’ (‘unadaptables’) and more or less openly racialised as Roma. The use of the attribute ‘unadaptables’ to attack socially excluded groups, and especially the Roma, emerged in the 2000s and established itself in the public sphere as mainstream politicians popularised the term during the aforementioned interracial tensions in the late 2000s (Malík, 2011; M. Mareš, 2015). Despite their contemporary forms, these views drew from a long history of antigypsyism – racism against the Roma – in Czechia, amongst others the view that the Roma are ‘ineducable’ (Shmidt & Jaworsky, 2020; Sokolová, 2008; Walach, 2020).

In *Úsvit* / SPD discourses, work by itself constitutes a defining marker of an individual’s – or a whole group’s – quality, an important dividing line in the politics of belonging. Thus, SPD presents itself as the representative of the nationally-understood socio-economic interests of the working majority, of a largely defined middle class to be protected by the state (*Politický dlouhodobý program SPD*, n.d.). Contrary to *Konfederacja*’s enthusiastic embrace of entrepreneurship, SPD includes all economically active ‘decent people’ and excludes the unemployed as ‘parasites’. The SPD’s socio-economic rhetoric is thus devoid of class divisions, and reflects the widespread discarding of ‘class talk’ in Czechia and in the wider post-socialist context (Kalb, 2011, p. 31; Slačálek & Svobodová, 2017, p. 46). Similarly to many far-right parties in Central and Eastern Europe (Minkenberg & Pytlas, 2013), and in Europe in general (Rydgren, 2013), the ‘classless appeal’ of the SPD’s socio-economic programme serves a certain nationalist unitary purpose by erasing differences among social groups and focusing grievances on ‘unadaptables’ in the form of a more or less explicitly racialised opposition between White Czechs and the Roma (Císař & Navrátil, 2019, p. 187).

While scholars have rightfully linked SPD discourses on work to neoliberalism, such as Seongcheol Kim calling it ‘hyper-neoliberal welfare chauvinism’ (2020), I argue that the party

also relies on older, moralistic conceptions of work. Indeed, unlike *Konfederacja*, SPD does not really promote the neoliberal “self-governing subject achieving not only economic independence from the state, but also, in the highest order, always maximizing her economic potential” (Matejskova, 2013, p. 987), but instead defines work as a duty towards society, to be supported and to be rewarded by the state, and not only through market mechanisms. More than the glorification of the entrepreneurial spirit, SPD rhetoric and the interviewed members rather reflected the kind of emphasis on “the dignity of a simple, honest life built around self-reliance on hard work and common sense” found among Swiss far-right voters (Zollinger, 2024, p. 157). As Koen Damhuis and Linus Westheuser argue, ‘moral intuitions’ such as ‘common sense’ thinking are often more important than ideology for political behaviour among most people, and the authors identify a fundamental divide between right-wing particularist and left-wing universalist ‘common sense’, in which “work-centered reciprocity and ‘earned esteem’” stand in contrast to the “ideal of ‘broadening of one’s horizons’” (Damhuis & Westheuser, 2024, p. 1198). This description fits well the SPD interviewees, who rarely expressed their views in terms of ideology, and more often used ‘commonsensical’ moralistic categories to articulate their discourses on hard work and legitimate authoritarian measures against unadaptables / the Roma. Even more than many Czechs (P. Mareš & Katrňák, 2010), SPD and its members have a particularly authoritarian and moralistic relationship to work and to work ethics.

Such ‘common sense’ thinking might also explain why the interviewed members sometimes combined generalisations about ‘unadaptable’ Roma with the rejection of any absolute conflation between ‘unadaptables’ and ‘Roma’. For many interviewees, the idea that Roma constituted the overwhelming majority of ‘unadaptables’ was a simple fact that needed to be

faced, even though they also acknowledged that not all Romas were ‘unadaptables’. Yet, the degree of racialisation in the interviewees’ words greatly differed, from explicit rejection to explicit racialisation. In some cases, the interviewees even combined both approaches, like Milan, who underlined that there were also White people who adopted an ‘unadaptable’ lifestyle, calling them “White Romas” (*bílí Romové*). In his words, not all Roma are unadaptables, but all unadaptables can be associated with the Roma. The interviewees often gave positive examples of working, decent Roma as a proof that it was not about racism, and rather about equality, fairness and justice. While the interviewees’ views demonstrate willingness to distinguish between different members of a group, and can be taken to be genuine, they might have also deployed what Václav Walach calls the ‘decent Gypsy’, a figure that seems to undo stereotypes, but can actually reinforce them by being framed as the exception confirming the rule (2020). The nuanced views in some of the interviewees’ words show how moralistic and authoritarian discourses on work can overlap with racist stereotypes without completely fusing, thus enabling the party and its activists to convey – voluntarily or not – stigmatising messages in which racism is easily deniable. By drawing from this ‘common sense’ approach to work and from liberal principles such as non-discrimination and free speech, SPD also shows how this ‘far-right newspeak’ can be deployed to stigmatise while also avoiding more explicit forms of racism.

On the other hand, several interviewees voiced explicitly racist antigypsyist views without hesitation. Thus, about half of the interviewees openly equated ‘unadaptables’ with the Roma and several of them expressed a strong aversion for the Roma, as welfare scroungers and idlers. For Václav, “Gypsies” were the reason why he voted for the a marginal right-wing extremist party – *Dělnická strana sociální spravedlnosti* (The Workers' Party of Social Justice,

DSSS) – in 2012, thinking that it could contribute to stopping social benefits for the Roma. Traveling with me by tram through his medium-size city, Václav pointed out some “Gypsy” houses with strong disdain in his voice. I had a similar experience with Jana, when she came to pick me up at the local train station. On the way to her home, I mentioned recently visiting a nearby town, to which she reacted “Yuck, it’s full of Gypsies there!”⁷⁸ For them, the Roma seemed to trigger a physical repulsion, reminiscent of the idea of disgust as one of the four central emotions of the Israeli far right in the words of scholar Eva Illouz (2023).

The decent Czech family vs the unadaptable Roma family

In the SPD’s frame pitting ‘decent citizens’ against ‘unadaptables’, vividly illustrated by the SPD’s 2017 slogan “Money for decent people, not for parasites”⁷⁹, the party targets the Roma minority in more or less explicit terms, as the 2017 programme shows:

It is unacceptable for us to continue to tolerate a system that creates a layer of people who are no longer interested in working, who do not know words like duty and responsibility and who terrorize their surroundings with crime. [...] Only those who lead a proper life and bring up their children properly deserve support.⁸⁰
(Svoboda a přímá demokracie - SPD, 2017)

While any traces of racial bias can be denied with such phrasing, it gathers all existing stereotypes about the Roma in Czechia (and elsewhere), as unwilling to work, prone to commit crimes, leading an unruly lifestyle, not raising their children properly, and benefitting from preferable treatment and high housing benefits (Stejskalová, 2012). Similarly to the racialised imagery of the term ‘migrants’, the SPD’s social media images on ‘unadaptables’ clearly represent the Roma as those ‘parasites’, such as in the frequently used picture of a brown-skinned man with his bare chest covered with tattoos smiling to the camera and holding his two thumbs up, in front of a crowd of brown-skinned children (e.g. Okamura, 2019f), a highly stereotypical picture of Roma denoting carelessness, insolence and hyper-fertility,

which originates from Wikipedia and actually depicts Roma people in Bulgaria (Kukova, 2007). With its sweeping allegations against the whole Roma population, SPD can rely on the public ‘common sense’, where widespread antigypsyist stereotypes and hatred are deeply entrenched (Bancroft, 2001; Stejskalová, 2012; Tuček, 2023; Walach, 2020). Political crusades against social benefit abusers, with the Roma more or less openly targeted, have been led by many mainstream politicians and are not confined to the far right (e.g. Ryšavý & Samko, 2023), but SPD never misses an occasion to accuse mainstream parties of inaction. In this sense, the party’s racialised discourse on work draws from its anti-establishment rhetoric, as SPD accuses irresponsible politicians – and also, sometimes, EU institutions, or NGOs – of supporting ‘unadaptables’ and/or the Roma.

Drawing from the idea of gender as “the structure of social relations that centres on the reproductive arena, and the set of practices that bring reproductive distinctions between bodies into social processes” (Connell, 2009, p. 11), it appears clearly that the discourse on the Roma is deeply gendered. Indeed, social reproduction occupies a central role in the party’s antigypsyist framings which not only denounces them as work-shy and/or criminals, but also as dysfunctional, overfertile families who are unable or unwilling to raise up their children and send them to school. Since his start in politics, Okamura repeatedly attacked social programmes for enticing people to cheat and be lazy, more or less openly associating welfare beneficiaries with the Roma minority. Although his attacks on the Roma rarely differentiate between Roma men and women, he more specifically targets Roma mothers in a 2013 social media post with a link to a blogpost:

“My opinion on our current system of welfare payments: Mothers who otherwise would not have children are giving birth over and over again and treating children as a profitable business, with most of the mothers with low intellect, no work

habits, and bringing into the world and raising the next generation of parasites. Our welfare system is purposely breeding people to be lazy and cheats and teaching them to parasitise the system.”⁸¹ (Okamura, 2013b)

In his blogpost, he refers to the work of U.S. American political scientist Charles Murray (Okamura, 2013a) and his ‘scientific racist’ theories about race-based genetic differences in intelligence (Dennis, 1995) that have been repeatedly cited in antigypsyist arguments in Czechia (Shmidt & Jaworsky, 2020, pp. 19–20). The gendered racist image of the over-fertile Roma woman who gives birth to increase her benefits and neglects her children is a well-known antigypsyist trope in East Central Europe and also resembles the stereotype of the African-American ‘welfare queen’ (Čanigová & Souralová, 2024; Kóczé, 2020a). However, other strongly gender-specific stereotypes about Roma men as sexual predators and/or Roma women as baby-snatchers reported from Italy are not prevalent in Czechia (Woodcock, 2010).

While the image of the Roma woman as a welfare swindler came back in some of the interviews and can be considered as implicitly shared by many of those harbouring antigypsyist stereotypes, it is rare for SPD to specifically target Roma women and men in such a gender-specific way. More frequently, the whole Roma family or the whole Roma community is presented as a dysfunctional, unhealthy environment which breeds idleness, cheating and criminality. Moreover, Roma people’s fertility is considered as excessive, and even as a national threat, as Okamura put it himself in a 2015 video, where he cited “the steep growth of the Roma population” and “immigrants” as the two biggest security risks for the country, arguing that the Roma are a socio-economic burden because of their criminality and reliance on welfare (Okamura, 2015c). Amongst his frequently repeated solutions, Okamura pleaded for the conditionality of welfare benefits to those who send their children to school and also advocated for the compulsory early enrolment of Roma children in kindergartens to

teach them proper Czech and hygiene habits. As he often does, Okamura wrapped his rhetoric in the language of fairness and equality, even arguing that these measures were in the Roma people's best interest. Amongst others, he claimed that Roma children would benefit from early kindergarten to avoid being placed in special schools, not addressing the fact that placing Roma children in special schools mostly serves the goal of racial segregation in Czechia (Cashman, 2017; Messing, 2017). Like Okamura, some of the interviewees justified authoritarian measures towards Roma families as a kind of 'care' for Roma children, something that I consider as a third variant of what Diana Mulinari and Anders Neergaard call 'care racism', beyond the authors' two variants: the idea of racism as caring in priority for one's own ethnic/racial group and the idea of racism as caring for migrants' possibility to return to their home country (Mulinari & Neergaard, 2014).

In the interviews, the question of the family and social reproduction was central to discourses on work and 'unadaptables' / the Roma, where the good Czech (White) family was pitted against the 'unadaptable' dysfunctional Roma family. Echoing Okamura's alarming comments about Roma fertility, Jaroslav talked about the Roma under the thinly disguised term of 'unadaptables', saying:

Unfortunately, even there the welfare system allows them to basically catch up with our demographic curve, because they don't really have a problem with having eight or ten children, two or three of them disabled, because there's more money for that. So for them, children have become basically a means of production. Yeah, and yet a means of production that does not create more value. They never went to work, they don't do anything, or most of them.⁸²

In his statement, in addition to the antigypsyist tropes of the dysfunctional Roma family, the idea of a Great Replacement of the White majority looms, this time in the context of higher Roma natality, and not Muslim migration. Pavel put it very bluntly in his interview, framing it

in demographic terms: “the birth rate of normal people, like, Czechs, has stopped being supported and the birth rate of minorities has started being supported.”⁸³ This explicitly racialising framing of White Czechs as the ‘normal people’, in contrast to the Roma (and others), reproduces not only the idea of whiteness as normality, but also the idea that the Roma are foreigners who do not belong within the nation, a frequent antigypsyist trope in Czechia and elsewhere (Bancroft, 2001, pp. 150–151; Crețan et al., 2022, p. 85; Slačálek & Svobodová, 2017, p. 39). Railing against “Gypsies” Monika denounced that “there’s almost no support for White families, but, actually those, for those idlers, those Gypsies, right.”⁸⁴ She went on to lament the lack of social support after she had an accident and became gravely ill. She contrasted that with the allegedly high social benefits received by the Roma, an idea often repeated by the interviewed members and regularly triggering scandals, something that SPD widely exploits (Okamura, 2023c; Pika, 2023). Several other respondents even claimed that social benefits were reserved to the “Blacks” – as some called the Roma – and not ‘Whites’, sometimes backing their claims with personal experiences. While Monika and some of the other members do not suffer from poverty, they seemed to experience feelings of ‘relative deprivation’, considering themselves, their relatives or their group to be unjustly treated by the system and left-behind in comparison to others (Rydgren, 2013, p. 7). This idea of ‘relative deprivation’, whether as a socio-economic or racial group, has been identified as one of the factors driving voters towards far-right parties, and also seemed to have played a role in the case of some of the interviewed SPD members (Eatwell & Goodwin, 2018; Whiteley et al., 2021).

Bad migrants, good migrants

In addition to the Roma minority, the discourse on work also served as an argument against refugees/migrants, especially in the wake of the 2015-2016 ‘refugee crisis’, when the word ‘migrant’ or ‘refugee’ came to represent Muslims and/or people coming from the Middle-East and Africa. In its 2013 programme, *Úsvit* already expressed its opposition to the arrival of “unadaptable immigrants” and “religious fanatics” (*Program Hnutí*, 2013), showing the combination of socio-economic and cultural arguments. In these discourses and in the interviews, the emphasis on social reproduction and the family do not always stand out as much as in the case of the Roma, but gender-specific aspects are more explicitly articulated, especially in the case of refugees/migrants from African and/or Muslim-majority countries.

Before the refugee crisis, and before migration became a political topic in Czechia, Okamura already warned about immigrants as a potential threat, amongst others making it a central campaign topic for *Úsvit* during the 2014 EU elections but garnering little support (Klang, 2014). Thus, in 2015, Okamura eagerly seized the opportunity to surf the anti-refugee wave and he doubled down on his anti-migration and anti-Muslim rhetoric. He extended his existing anti-establishment discourse on politicians supporting parasites by accusing Czech politicians of ‘treason’ for accepting refugees who would allegedly become a burden for the social system and a security threat (Okamura, 2015b). Describing the refugees as “young men”, Okamura denounced that as both economically useless and as dangerous: “they are not able to do anything, they will just loiter and rape our women”⁸⁵ (Okamura, 2015b). The gender-specific stereotype of the male Muslim/African refugee/migrant as not only a socio-economic burden, but also a criminal and a sexual predator threatening ‘our native women’ is systematically used by Okamura in his rhetoric, often with images of masses of aggressive Black or Brown men

(e.g. Okamura, 2016b). This frame, in turn, enables Okamura and his party to present themselves as courageous, masculine protectors of their fellow citizens, and especially of native women, a widespread gendered trope in nationalism and the far right (Anthias & Yuval-Davis, 1989; Ralph-Morrow, 2022; Scrinzi, 2024). Drawing from these arguments, Okamura also attacked pro-refugee and feminist activists of blindness or hypocrisy in their support of – presumably male – refugees/migrants, portrayed as misogynistic and/or rapists (Okamura, 2015e, 2015f, 2016f). The idea of Muslim men as misogynistic and prone to domestic and sexual violence is central to anti-refugee/migrant and Islamophobic discourses in SPD and it resembles the ‘femonationalism’ embraced by, amongst others, Western far-right parties – the use of feminist arguments against allegedly misogynistic foreigners (Farris, 2017).

In the interviews, socio-economic and gendered arguments were also entangled when discussing migration. Pointing out that the refugees (from 2015-2016) were young Muslim men who allegedly wanted to go to Germany to live off benefits and who did not respect local laws, Jan contrasted them to Vietnamese or Eastern European migrants in Czechia, saying: “They just behave decently, they work here, right, fine, right? But, I really don’t want to read a manual on how to beat a woman, right?”⁸⁶ While it is not clear which manual he is referring to, his words illustrate well the frequent slippages between welfare scrounging, criminality and gender-specific sexual/domestic violence in the interviewees’ answers about extra-European refugees/migrants, often presumed to be Muslim men. While she did not insist on socio-economic aspects, Jana had the most developed discourse on Islam’s allegedly embedded misogyny, as someone who spent years in a violent abusive relationship with a Muslim man who justified his acts through his religion. According to her, her experience reflected the reality of all Muslims and the essence of Islam, and she made it her goal to raise awareness

about this. In her interview, Monika reacted to the mention of refugees by telling about a video she saw about a Muslim man in Germany who had two or three wives and many children, and was living off benefits, echoing classic antigypsyist tropes, but with the anti-Muslim trope of polygyny on top of that as a proof of Muslim's allegedly extreme patriarchal customs. The interviewees' words show how central the gendered aspects of anti-Muslim stereotypes and racism are and echo wider tendencies in the Global North and beyond, with the gendering of racism – i.e. targeting differently Muslim men and women – and the racialisation of sexism – i.e. sexism framed as mainly stemming from Muslim men (Farris, 2017; Scrinzi, 2024).

As in the case of *Konfederacja* discussed in the previous chapter, the socio-economic aspect of migration is often presented as the defining one in the interviews, dividing migrants between the good hard-working and the bad work-shy ones. Most SPD members underlined their readiness to accept any hardworking migrant as proof refuting accusations of xenophobia or racism, but on the other hand they tended to accept or reject entire racial groups on the basis of their alleged readiness to work. In this sense, socio-economic arguments buttressed by cultural aspects become pretexts to build a hierarchy of racial/ethnic groups and to advocate for discriminatory practices. As in the case of *Konfederacja*, this idea of culture often turns into racist arguments, as culture is biologised to become an intrinsic characteristic. In one case, biological racialisation even came out bluntly in Michal's claim that Muslims in Europe were unable to succeed on the job market because of a 'lower intellect' and 'a minor genetic difference' which made them less capable and less hard-working than Europeans, and eventually made them turn to radical islamism.⁸⁷ As Okamura's aforementioned comment about Roma mothers, Michal's invocation of genetics shows that classical biological racism still persists in far-right rhetoric despite the rhetorical turn towards the aforementioned

‘cultural racism’. These views echo the arguments of a 2010 German best-selling book by Thilo Sarrazin, a prominent Social Democrat who came out against immigration using racist biological and cultural arguments and paved the way for the subsequent rise of the German AfD (Meiering, 2022, p. 180; Schneider, 2024, p. 10).

More than a cunning way to castigate entire racial groups such as the Roma, Middle-Easterners and Africans, the insistence on work in the interviews often seemed to come from a visceral disdain towards the unemployed. Some of the interviewees went as far as expressing support for a return of the socialist-time obligation to work under threat of incarceration, showing not only the far right’s authoritarian tendencies, but also the selective nostalgia towards the former regime. In this universe revolving around employment as the central characteristic of social value, individuals can somewhat transgress their racial/ethnic category, as in the members’ positive words about hard-working Roma and Muslims and, inversely, in condemnations of ‘unadaptable’ White Czechs. Jana even claimed that she did not discriminate by underlining to me that she was also ‘pissed’ (*nasraná*) at her own son for being work-shy. Thus, despite the importance of racialising tendencies, as in the divide between Blacks (Roma) and Whites (ethnic Czech) or in Milan’s description of White ‘unadaptables’ as ‘White Roma’, the framework of race and whiteness cannot subsume the dynamic interaction between race/ethnicity, gender and socio-economic class in the SPD’s workfare chauvinism. This is further proven by the case of Ukrainians, whom SPD started targeting with similar stereotypes as it has been using against the Roma following the massive arrival to Czechia of Ukrainian refugees fleeing the full-scale Russian offensive launched in February 2022 (Havlík & Kluknavská, 2023). Although the party had not targeted Ukrainians often in the past, and most of the interviewees spoke positively about them as hard-working, SPD started mobilising

against them, denouncing the cost of social benefits for them, accusing the government of putting Ukrainians first, pointing out the rise of crimes committed by Ukrainians – especially young men (Okamura, 2024e) – and promising “not one cent more for Ukrainians! Zero! Money for Czech citizens”⁸⁸ (Okamura, 2024d), an appeal echoing that of *Konfederacja* in the previous chapter. This framing shows how far-right political entrepreneurs like Tomio Okamura use ethnic/racial categories to frame and address socio-economic issues of redistribution and other social anxieties, mostly capitalising on the idea of ‘relative deprivation’, i.e. the idea that (White) Czechs are disadvantaged compared to the Roma, Ukrainians or other racialised Others. As scholars analysing welfare chauvinism in Central and Eastern Europe have pointed out, “economic insecurity is evaluated in relational terms with a particular emphasis on how economic changes alter the ethnic group hierarchy” (Savage, 2023, p. 16; see also Bustikova, 2013), and this can also help explain shifts over time in relationship to certain groups, like the Ukrainians.

2. The ‘traditional family’: tying together gender, sexuality, race and class

In its struggle against ‘unadaptables’ and ‘migrants’, SPD progressively embraced the idea of the ‘traditional family’, which ties together the ethnonationalist discourse, the moralist conception of work and a conservative view of gender and sexuality. While SPD discourse on the family originally started as a simple extension of its discourse on work, pitting the healthy employed (White) family against the parasitic unemployed (Roma) family, the party then gradually added more cultural aspects and embraced more defined conservative positions starting from 2018, when it raised the banner of the fight against ‘gender ideology’ to defend the unequal gender and sexual order with its heterosexist arrangements. In the members’

interviews, this idea of the working family deserving more state support also dominated, while the party's cultural discourses on the downfall of tradition did not resonate as much, with the members expressing mixed, albeit generally conservative views on LGBT+ rights.

‘Family First’

While conservative views on the family had occasionally appeared in Okamura's discourses, they did not stand out in *Úsvit*. Ahead of the 2017 parliamentary elections, however, they were anchored at the top of the SPD party programme, in the introduction's second paragraph:

We support the traditional values of our society and consider the functioning family to be its core. The family deserves protection and support. We consider the traditional union of a man and a woman to be the foundation of the family. We reject the promotion and support of views and behaviours that threaten the functioning of families and the education of children within the family⁸⁹ (Svoboda a přímá demokracie - SPD, 2017).

Despite this insistence on the ‘traditional family’ in the text, the programme did not contain concrete legislative proposals on cultural matters, such as the constitutional anchoring of heteronormative marriage promoted by ‘anti-genderist’ actors in other countries (Graff & Korolczuk, 2022, p. 97). Promising “Money for working families and pensioners. Not for immigrants, not for parasites”⁹⁰, in the form of tax breaks and advantageous state loans reserved for families where at least one of the parents is employed and both have a clean criminal record, the 2017 SPD programme instead pursued the same thinly disguised antigypsyist socio-economic policies, with the anti-migrant discourse on top of that. Thus, the SPD's ‘traditional family’ discourse was first and foremost an extension of its racialised discourse on work and social reproduction. Even after the party embraced more explicitly conservative ‘family values’ in 2018, its *Rodina na 1. místě* (Family First) programme launched in December 2019 kept the emphasis on socio-economic (and its more or less

explicitly racialised) aspects. However, the party more often framed family support as a matter of ethnonational reproduction. Thus, promoting his ‘Family First’ programme, Okamura stated that it was better to support “Czech working families instead of immigrants” and warned that otherwise “we will perish as a nation and fail economically”⁹¹ (Okamura, 2019e). More recently, following news of a drop in births in 2024, Okamura claimed that “the Czech nation is dying out because of the government of [Prime Minister Petr] Fiala”⁹² and pledged better financial support for ‘working families’ (Okamura, 2025).

In the interviews, the interviewed members mostly saw family matters as socio-economic, and very few of them resorted to the kind of socio-cultural arguments deployed by *Konfederacja* members. Thus, contrary to the Polish case, there was almost no mention of the heterosexist family construction of the male breadwinner / female homemaker. The absence of comments on family arrangements might come from the fact that there is little to no debate in Czech politics about current gender roles and family policies, which more or less explicitly place the emphasis on women’s mothering role, with very long parental – effectively maternity – leaves buttressed by a traditional discourse on motherhood and enforced through the scarcity of nursery schools, something that has boosted the gender pay gap (Hašková & Dudová, 2021; Pertold-Gebicka, 2020; Saxonberg & Hašková, 2012; Saxonberg & Sirovátka, 2020; Zajíčková et al., 2021). SPD policies mostly support this kind of model and Okamura regularly reproduces the ‘heteronormative antifeminist frame’ (Off, 2023), insisting in Mothers’ or Women’s Day messages on the idea of essential and complementary gender differences that position women mostly as mothers, and attacking feminists for considering women identical to men (Okamura, 2017a, 2017b, 2019b, 2020b). His vision of complementarity between men and women is thus pitted against the feminists’ vision of “innate equality” (Akkerman, 2015,

p. 57). In short, based on the aforementioned categorisation put forward by De Lange and Mügge (2015, p. 71), SPD belongs to far-right parties that represent a ‘modern traditional’ view of the family – combining traditional views on women’s childrearing role with the acceptance of formal gender equality and women’s presence in the wage economy – in contrast to the kind of ‘neo-traditional’ gender regime represented by *Konfederacja*.

Interrogated about the country’s relatively low fertility rate, the interviewed members mostly pointed out the lack of proper social support and/or denounced a social system made for the numerous and unemployed ‘unadaptable’ / Roma family. They thus backed the SPD’s vision of a state for (White Czech) working families, where welfare chauvinism – the belief that welfare benefits should only be for the ethnic/racial majority (Savage, 2023, p. 2) – is mixed with a radical form of workfare – a social system conditioned on employment (Peck, 2003, p. 76) – something I call ‘workfare chauvinism’. While the party and its members conceded that people with handicaps and unemployed people in-between jobs should get some help, they otherwise refused the idea of benefits for people who are not engaged in the wage economy. Through the conditionality on work and clean criminal records, SPD can present itself as the champion of the Czech ‘decent’ working people as a large classless group, and also more or less explicitly target the Roma minority while also denying any racist intent. In this sense, the SPD’s approach resembles more the policies of Viktor Orbán in Hungary, a form of “demographic nationalist disciplining” (Melegh, 2016, p. 96) with clear ‘racialised effects’ against the Roma (Geva, 2021, p. 14), than the universal family benefits of the PiS party in Poland, or *Konfederacja*’s paleolibertarianism. The SPD’s family policies show the party’s paradoxical relationship to neoliberalism. On the one hand, SPD refuses privatisations, promotes state interventionism in many domains and does not emphasise the individualistic, self-entrepreneur

ethos of the “neo-liberal political rationality” (W. Brown, 2003, p. 3). Yet, on the other hand, its socio-economic policies mostly consist of loans and tax cuts, are based on the end of welfare as an entitlement and do not question domestic capitalist relations. In this sense, the SPD’s socio-economic policies follow the general anti-egalitarian logic of the far right, but more as a defence and naturalisation of the current hierarchy than a radical push for greater inequalities. If implemented, the SPD’s policies might resemble the kind of post-neoliberalism seen in Hungary, labeled ‘ordonationalism’ by Dorit Geva, meaning the return of the authoritarian nation-state favouring domestic capital accumulation for a small clique and promoting (White) middle-class reproduction through financialisation (2021, p. 5).

Unlike its Polish counterparts, SPD does not reject state social programmes, but rather vows to channel them towards ‘decent’ (*slušné*) working families. In this sense, SPD is close to the social protectionist and welfare chauvinist position defended by most European far-right parties, who tend to use socio-economic policies to serve their socio-cultural agenda, with its gendered and racialised aspects (Mudde, 2007; Norocel et al., 2020; Rathgeb, 2024). SPD is also representative of far-right parties ‘overpromising’ left and right, defending the welfare system – for working families – but also vowing to lower taxes (Mudde, 2007, p. 137). Like others in its party family, SPD criticises globalisation while supporting the capitalist system on the national level (Rydgren, 2013). Thus, the party’s socio-economic position is not as ambiguous as it may seem, as it is deeply entangled with its inegalitarian racial/ethnic and gendered agenda, and aims to maintain the status quo of unequal social relations among the Czech white majority, without questioning the country’s unequal economic structure and its oligarchic character (Slačálek & Šitera, 2021). In addition to its racialised and gendered aspects, the SPD’s vision of socio-economic affairs also reflects an authoritarian approach to

work. As I analyse in the next section, the SPD's ideological project of the sovereign fatherland for the (White) Czech working people has been increasingly articulated together with the concept of the family, with a growing emphasis on its 'traditional' heteronormative character.

The normal world against 'gender'

While prior to 2018 SPD had already attached the rhetoric of the 'traditional family' to its socio-economic project for 'working families' and had occasionally targeted sexual and gender minorities, it only started its crusade against 'gender' in the Spring of 2018, when Czechia experienced its first major anti-gender 'culture war' around the ratification of the aforementioned Istanbul Convention (Svatoňová, 2021). While Tomio Okamura and his party had not raised the spectre of 'gender' before, barely ever mentioning it in their communication, and SPD had not protested when the convention had been signed by the centre-left Czech government in 2016, they became some of the treaty's fiercest parliamentary opponents when the issue of ratification came up in May 2018. In a Facebook post entitled 'Attack on the family', Okamura stated the following:

The Istanbul Convention introduces into the legal system the ideological myths and aspirations of neo-Marxists. It is about genderism and the attempt to control the functioning of the family. It exposes the family to the control of non-profit organisations that are supposed to implement and control neo-Marxist postulates. The unilateral absolutisation of certain myths about male violence or the absolutisation of children's rights over their parents is a de facto attempt to break up the family and its natural order. In the context of the Istanbul Convention, SPD supports the refusal of the Czech bishops. This is an insidious attack on the family and Christian values. It paves the way for denunciation, the destruction of families, the ideological censorship of education and the removal of children. It is a path to neo-Marxist totalitarianism.⁹³ (Okamura, 2018c)

It later emerged that an SPD deputy assistant named Ivana Schneiderová had been one of the figureheads of the mobilisation against the Convention, setting up the organisation *Tradiční*

česká rodina (Traditional Czech Family) and gathering thousands of signatures against what she denounced in parliament, where she was invited to speak, as “the genocide of the family”, and the “genocide of the nation”⁹⁴ (Bartoníček, 2018). Whereas similar discourses had been quite widespread in other European countries prior to 2018 – already being the dominant view among conservatives in Poland in 2014 (Gwiazda, 2021, p. 588) – it took more time in Czechia, perhaps because the Czech Catholic Church picked up the struggle against ‘gender ideology’ only in May 2018, years after its Polish or Slovak counterparts (Svatoňová, 2021, p. 141). In discourses by top Czech Catholic representatives as well as in statements by the SPD, the declinist and alarmist accents came out strongly in what scholar Eva Svatoňová has described as a deliberate attempt to trigger a ‘moral panic’ (2021, p. 137). While it is unclear to what extent someone like Schneiderová played a key role in launching the SPD’s crusade against gender, or whether SPD reacted more to the Church’s intervention, the result was that the party rode this new conservative wave to profile itself as the champions of the traditional family against the government and ideological opponents. As David Paternotte and Roman Kuhar note, the emergence of national anti-gender movements is often linked to concrete events (2017, pp. 265–266), and in the Czech case the ratification of the Istanbul Convention served as a trigger, a ‘political and discursive opportunity’ that SPD skilfully shaped and seized to promote itself and its ideology.

While Okamura did not immediately use the label ‘gender ideology’ so widely used in Poland and elsewhere around the world, he picked it up in late 2018 and multiplied interventions about ‘gender’ (Okamura, 2018f; Rozvoral, 2018). Thus, in December 2018, Okamura intervened on transgender issues for the first time, denouncing government plans to allow children from the age of 12 to change their gender, something he called “perverted”

(*zvracené*), and asked: “Are we going to ‘rape’ children in the name of gender ideology?”⁹⁵ (Okamura, 2018f). While Okamura uses the widespread image of the “innocent and endangered child” at the centre of transnational anti-gender mobilisation (Paternotte & Kuhar, 2017, p. 265), he does not argue against gender transition *per se*. Many of the posts denounced ‘scandalous’ and ‘extravagant’ ideas and images of queerness and non-binary and transgender identities, often coming from the West, and presented them as representative of a dangerous slippery slope, which starts with the questioning of gender stereotypes about men and women and ends with the radical deconstruction of gender, as the Orbán government did in Hungary (Kováts, 2020, pp. 91–92). The late and sudden embrace of the struggle against ‘gender ideology’ by SPD in 2018 vividly illustrates the idea of the alliance between the anti-gender movement and the far right as an “opportunistic synergy”, whereby both groups profit from and instrumentalise this connection (Graff & Korolczuk, 2022, pp. 82–83). However, ‘opportunism’ does not mean randomness or cynicism, as the SPD’s rhetoric and frames have been adapted to anti-genderism, but the ideological underpinning has remained stable in terms of a defence of the status quo in the gender and sexual order, with its existing inequalities. Thus, when Okamura opposed gender quotas in corporate boards, denouncing positive discrimination and claiming that he and SPD “are for the equality of men and women in legal terms, but [...] reject social engineering and gender neo-Marxism”⁹⁶ (Okamura, 2022b), he illustrated the party’s position based on the acceptance of formal, legal gender equality between men and women and the rejection of policies to enact real, substantive equality for men, women, and sexual and gender minorities.

From 2019 on, the idea of “the normal world” as defended by SPD came to occupy a central role in party communication to capture the SPD’s stench defence of the status quo in socio-

cultural affairs, and especially in the gender and sexual order. The idea of ‘the normal world’ had been popularised by rival far-right politician Václav Klaus Jr. to denounce ‘progressive’ approaches to gender or schooling. Similarly to terms like ‘sunny people’, ‘neo-Marxists’ and ‘globalists’ Okamura and SPD successfully picked up the term for their crusades. Much like its Polish counterparts, SPD started presenting itself as defending normality against the imposition of new ideas, and Okamura and SPD often took advantage of anything that could be presented as excessive or scandalous. This tendency has been especially obvious when it comes to the multiplicity of genders and transgender issues, which have been largely caricatured in party communication. For example, in November 2019, Okamura posted the picture of a “Czech gender activist” and commented on the activist’s claim that there were more than 40 genders:

I don’t know about you, but I think there are only two sexes – male and female. [smiley emoji] I’ve never seen any other [smiley emoji] And I think normal people with common sense think so too. A normal family is dad and mom, not parent A and parent B as the neo-Marxists impose. And little girls play with dolls, not boys. SPD defends a normal world for normal people. Defend it with us! [wink emoji]⁹⁷ (Okamura, 2019d)

In this post, the emojis and the tone indicate that the goal is more to subject an ideological opponent to mockery and trigger laughter than to sensationalise; derision and outrage being some of the most common emotions in Okamura’s social media posts. As Eva Svatoňová notes about another Czech anti-gender group, the use of humour serves both as a communication strategy to spread messages and as a disciplinary tool against sexual and gender minorities, often under the guise of ‘rebellious’ against political correctness and the establishment (Svatoňová, 2022). The topic of transgender people has been regularly used by Okamura to attack ‘gender ideology’ as contrary to ‘normality’ and ‘common sense’, and he alternates between mockery, as in the previous post, and outrage, as in posts denouncing the ‘unfair’

participation of (allegedly) transgender women in women's sports, a long-time crusade of the U.S. American far right that has reached Europe (Carlisle, 2022; Okamura, 2024c; Treisman, 2024).

Through the idea of 'normality' and the 'normal world', the party rarely attacked gender and sexual minorities frontally, but rather presented itself as occupying the critical defensive position of 'common sense' against 'aggressive' activist groups and their attempts to challenge the status quo by 'imposing' social and/or institutional changes. For example, while Okamura supported the Prague Pride LGBTQ+ annual event before entering politics (*Prague Pride – deviance, nebo ochrana*, 2012; *Rozhovor: Tomio Okamura*, 2012), he then started criticising the display of sexual identity, or the way some participants dressed (Okamura, 2014c, 2016c), and finally he and his party regularly attacked the festival under various pretexts. In 2020, Okamura took offence to the EU Commission's support for the event, calling it meddling in national affairs and a proof of support for the "sunny-people's gender homosexualist ideology"⁹⁸ (Okamura, 2020d). Adding the disclaimer that SPD refused the persecution of homosexuals, he went on to write that:

The SPD movement defends traditional values and the normal world for normal people and clearly opposes totalitarian political correctness, multiculturalism, perverse gender theory, positive discrimination, and the promotion of the ideology of homosexuality, which demands privileges and adoration for homosexuals. We will do everything we can to prevent similar perversions as in the 'liberal-democratic' West from happening here. Please defend the normal world with us.⁹⁹

By making a difference between homosexuality and the 'ideology of homosexuality', and claiming that 'homosexuality' demanded privileges and adoration, Okamura used a similar framing as in Poland (where 'LGBT ideology' is the chosen term) by reversing the perpetrator-victim relationship, thus presenting the majority as persecuted by the minority. Also, typical

for far-right parties who might accept some level of gender and/or sexual inequality, and in a similar way to some *Konfederacja* members, SPD uses the language of liberalism to reject affirmative action or minority rights as ‘discrimination’ and ‘privileges’ (Gwiazda, 2021; Linders et al., 2023; Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2015; Pettersson, 2017).

Okamura and SPD often articulated their discourse against ‘gender ideology’ with their ethnonationalist and workfare views. In addition to the aforementioned ‘femonationalist’ frames, Okamura started in 2019 to systematically add a ‘homonationalist’ framing to his social media posts about LGBT+ people and ‘gender ideology’, claiming that the actual concern of LGBT+ activists should be the danger of Islam, which allegedly murders homosexuals (Okamura, 2019c). Those frames on Islam/Muslims and women/homosexuals echo the rhetoric of many far-right parties in the Global North (Berg, 2019; Farris, 2012; Linders et al., 2023; Puar, 2007). However, I would rather call the SPD’s position the ‘racialisation of sexism’ (Hamel, 2005) or rather the ‘racialisation of (hetero)sexism’ (Scrinzi, 2024, p. 2) because SPD does not proudly claim the achievement of equal gender and sexual rights as part of Czech identity, as some far-right parties, especially in Northern and Western Europe, do (Dietze & Roth, 2020; Meret & Siim, 2013; Mulinari & Neergaard, 2014). The SPD’s framing is thus limited to a selective focus on sexism and homophobia by those racialised as Black/Brown/Muslim, and does not proudly embrace gender and sexual equality, perhaps because feminism became a ‘swear word’ in Czechia after 1989 (Heitlinger, 1996; Holý, 1996, p. 180; Svatoňová, 2021, p. 139). SPD discourses on LGBT+ rights and ‘gender ideology’ also serve to buttress the party’s anti-establishment and anti-EU discourses – framing plans for gender and sexual equality as promoted by political elites, imposed by the EU or imported from the West – and its discourse on work – by attacking NGOs or social

science faculties, including gender studies, as parasitic institutions living off the hardworking people's taxes (Okamura, 2018e), a framing also identified among other Czech far-right actors (Slačálek & Svobodová, 2018, p. 490).

While SPD enthusiastically embraced its position of defender of the 'traditional family' and of 'normality' in culture wars on gender and sexuality, it would be an exaggeration to claim that the party has made those topics its main priority. The discourse on family did indeed become much more present with the 'Family First' plan, but the plan mostly focused on socio-economics, rather than cultural aspects, constituting more an expansion of the party's moralistic (and racialising) discourse on the 'working family' than an enthusiastic adherence to ultra-conservatism. A close quantitative and qualitative analysis of Facebook posts on the SPD's official page over six months between September 2019 and February 2020 shows that posts explicitly targeting 'gender ideology' and women's and LGBT+ rights appeared only 10 times in the 644 posts published between September 13, 2019 and February 23, 2020. To compare, the topic of 'migration and Islam' appeared 175 times, the topic of 'EU & national sovereignty' 107 times, and the topic of the 'unadaptables' was featured in 46 posts (*Svoboda a přímá demokracie - SPD*, n.d.). Despite the rarity of explicit talk about women's rights and LGBT+ rights, I have shown that the SPD's discourse on work, family and social reproduction, with its more or less explicitly racialised and heteronormative character play a crucial role in articulating the party's ideological pillars of fatherland, work and family, especially in the image of the traditional Czech White working family framed in opposition to the dysfunctional Roma family, misogynistic migrants, and 'perverted gender ideology', all supported by domestic political elites and the West/the EU.

The ‘common sense’ of homonormativity

In the interviews, the members’ positions on gender and sexuality were often less conservative than the official party line. Contrary to most of the Polish participants, the SPD members did not stand out as particularly interested in questions of feminism or LGBT+ rights and usually addressed such issues only when I asked them directly. Presenting himself as “a conservative traditionalist, a patriot” (“konzervativní tradicionalista, vlastenec”), Jaroslav was one of the few interlocutors who justified his the SPD membership through an embrace of the ‘traditional family’ and he provided a telling example of SPD family rhetoric bringing together cultural and socio-economic aspects:

I still maintain that the foundation of the state is the family and the family is made up of a man and a woman. None of those 60 sexes. This family raises children. After all, a boy is a boy, a girl is a girl. They take care of them. They raise healthy... they go to work, they pay taxes. Well, unfortunately, today it's slowly becoming a minority because it's... those who don't work are better off than those who do. And that. And it's not just a Czech issue, I think, it's elsewhere. The traditional family format is breaking down across Europe.¹⁰⁰

In his statement echoing Rozvoral’s quote in this chapter’s introduction, the heteronormative family, social reproduction, the gender binary, proper education, work and criticism of unemployment benefits come together in a vision of lost normality and civilisational decline. While the overwhelming majority of interviewed members did not devote a lot of attention to issues of gender identity and sexuality, a few of them made similar comments like ‘none of those 60 sexes’, revealing a kind of ‘common sense’ approach to these topics typical not only of the SPD, but of many far-right actors in the Global North (Graff & Korolczuk, 2022, p. 20; Spierings, 2020).

Among the interviewees, Jaroslav was probably the only one to express an open disdain for homosexuals, but many more repeated the party’s arguments about alleged ‘excesses’ by

LGBT+ groups and activists. Thus, although Zdeněk said that he would support giving all the rights to homosexual couples, including the one to have children, he did not like the ways LGBT+ groups acted in public: “It seems to me that they're trying to explain to us that this minority just sort of suddenly has more than the majority.”¹⁰¹ Jana also repeated this idea, and she deplored that public monies funded the Prague Pride instead of going to some orphanage, an argument also deployed by Okamura in his social media posts. Even those members who showed full or almost full support for LGBT+ rights had reservations about public displays such as the Prague Pride, sometimes arguing that their homosexual friends did not like it and/or that it harmed homosexuals’ image. In the case of Monika, who had a rather ‘tolerant’ position, such as supporting adoption rights for homosexual couples, ‘normal’ homosexual couples were pitted against people standing outside the gender binary: “I have nothing against a [homosexual] couple adopting like that. I don't have a problem with this, I don't have a problem with normal people like this, but for them to invent, I don't know, 190 sexes, that's nonsense, after all.”¹⁰² She also added that she felt strongly disturbed by some behaviour that can be described as non-gender conforming. Her position as well as much of the rhetoric of the SPD and its members reflected the relative tolerance for homosexuals in Czechia (Grim, 2023) and tended to show a displacement of the limit of tolerance towards the “new homonormativity” embraced by large parts of the far right in the Global North, i.e. a position that “does not contest dominant heteronormative assumptions and institutions, but upholds and sustains them, while promising the possibility of a demobilized gay constituency and a privatized, depoliticized gay culture anchored in domesticity and consumption” (Duggan, 2002, p. 179). In this sense, several SPD members accepted homosexuals as an invisible group

without political demands and confined to the privacy of the domestic realm, but some had reservations about queer, non-binary or transgender people.

Thus, both for those who sided with a more traditionalist approach to questions of family, gender and sexuality, and for those who had more tolerant positions, the biggest point of contention was the multiplicity of gender identities standing out of the gender binary. For them, the issue of homosexual couples and families was thus lumped together with debates on multiple non-normative gender identities, triggering some form of general rejection of ‘abnormality’ in the name of tradition or nature. The members tended to express opposition to gender non-conforming identities as representative of a radical social deconstructionist conceptualisation of gender, like Miloš, who got rather wound up talking about this topic, and railed against the idea that there were ‘46 sexes’ (*46 pohlaví*). He said: “that's the monstrosity, where I just feel like the world is going crazy, like. It's just this total destruction of those original, like, cultural values of this normal world's fundament.”¹⁰³ His words largely reflect the SPD's idea of declinism, of the normal world's decay, as it is frequently framed in party communication, even though the interviewed members rarely associated it with the need to return to the ‘traditional family’. The idea that certain facts on sex and gender that they do not recognise as scientific or objective are imposed on them, and that special rights should be awarded on the basis of these facts, triggered opposition, and even a strong emotional response among several interviewees. In general, the members tended to be less radical than the party, although their views partially followed the party's communication, which targets more alleged ‘excesses’ and ‘follies’ than follow a strict ideology, uses the topics to attack political opponents, and defends the status quo in questions of gender and sexuality through a vague rhetoric of ‘normal world’.

While several scholars have linked the far right's diverse positions on gender and sexuality to its adoption of populism or of a populist style, pitting the popular 'common sense' against the elitist 'social engineering' (Off, 2023; Spierings, 2020), I rather argue that SPD – or *Konfederacja*'s – positions reflect their ideology core of authoritarian anti-egalitarianism. Even though the gender and sexual order differs in each country in its forms and degrees of inequalities, far-right actors promote, defend or naturalise these inequalities, often by proposing authoritarian measures. In the case of the SPD, with its more tolerant outlook than *Konfederacja*, its parliamentary record on law projects striving for more gender and sexual equality shows that it defends the status quo. Thus, while most of the mainstream Czech parties remain divided on those issues, SPD has shown a steadfast opposition against gender and sexual equality, confirming my thesis that the far right is the most anti-egalitarian political actor in questions of gender and sexuality, in its national context, and in comparison to the rest of the political scene. In addition to its rejection of the Istanbul Convention, SPD was the only party rejecting additional rights for same-gender registered partnerships *en bloc* in 2024, with all 17 SPD deputies present voting 'no' (*Hlasování Poslanecké sněmovny - 94/42, 2024*). SPD has also been vehemently rejecting the idea of adoption for same-gender couples, arguing on the basis of tradition, nature and science, with some SPD deputies expressing opposition to the destruction of the pillars of 'Western Christian civilisation', warning against the nation's disappearance and highlighting higher Muslim fertility (*Středa 7. Února 2024, Stenozáznam, 2024*). Thus, similarly to *Konfederacja* and to other far-right parties like the German AfD, the SPD family discourse can be said to tie together an ethnonationalist vision of the country, with a naturalised and hierarchical heterosexist gender and sexual order (Berg, 2019, p. 84).

An Eastern revolt against Western colonialism?

As I have shown in this chapter, and in the previous one, both SPD and *Konfederacja* draw from the counter-example of ‘the West’ to reject challenges to the more or less explicitly heterosexist gender and sexual order in Czechia and Poland. To do so, they often use examples of ‘feminism/gender ideology gone crazy’ from Global North countries to depict ‘the West’ or ‘Europe’ as in decline, to attack the Western model of liberal democracy and to denounce the pro-Western political establishment (Beauduin, 2024; Slačálek, 2021a). In these narratives, Czechia and Poland are framed in various ways: as part of this declining Europe/West, as those who can still – and should – avoid the West’s fate, or as the true representatives of the European civilisation that has been abandoned by ‘the West’. Furthermore, SPD and *Konfederacja* sometimes denounce plans about women’s and/or LGBT+ rights as EU meddling in domestic affairs or as foreign Western imports, at times framing those policies as ‘colonialism’. In line with a growing body of scholarly literature arguing that the surge of the ‘Eastern European’ far right expresses identitarian and even racial resentment against a paternalistic West (Bobako, 2017; Böröcz & Sarkar, 2017; Kalmar, 2022; Krastev & Holmes, 2018; Sayyid, 2018), some scholars focusing on anti-gender mobilisation in East Central Europe have identified unequal West-East relations as a central factor (e.g. Kulpa, 2014), with Eszter Kováts going as far as to argue that “for the context of East-Central Europe, ‘gender’ symbolizes the hierarchical relationship between West and East” (Kováts, 2021, p. 87). In an alternative version of the argument, Korolczuk and Graff contend that anti-colonial rhetoric is the ‘ideological glue’ bringing together the broad global anti-genderist coalition, with post-socialist Central and Eastern Europe presented as an ‘unsoiled’ Europe resisting to Western domination and decay (Graff & Korolczuk, 2022; Korolczuk & Graff, 2018).

While I launched into my research with the intention to build on these ideas, I did not find strong evidence about the importance of the anti-colonial East vs West framing. Even though the two parties under study sometimes used this framing, it was rare. Neither did these kinds of views and feelings stand out in the interviews with the *Konfederacja* and SPD members. In some of the aforementioned anti-genderist posts by Okamura, gender or sexual equality policies are sometimes denounced as coming from the West or the EU and as meddling in internal national affairs, but without drawing from a narrative of Western domination or colonialism. More often, anti-genderist posts targeted the Czech political elites or local LGBT+ activists, without any accusation of Western colonisation. In the interviews, some members from both parties lamented geopolitical and socio-economic control by the EU and some powerful Western countries, like Germany or the United States, but they usually framed it in the classic way any nationalist would: as infringements against the ideal of full national sovereignty. Jana was the only one to express the kind of regional resentment addressed by the aforementioned literature, when she said that Czechia was a colony of the EU and recalled that, when she lived in Germany, Germans often treated her badly because she came from ‘the East’. Apart from that, the interviewees did not express feelings of national or civilisational inferiority and resentment towards the West, and rather described the West as in decline, as a warning, and as a model to avoid.

Although I do not dispute that anti-gender movements in East Central Europe have emerged in the context of unequal geopolitical, cultural and economic relations between Western and Eastern Europe, I side with Paternotte and Kuhar in concluding that the “the East-West divide does not offer a particularly useful lens to study these mobilizations” (2017, p. 253). Thus, the rhetoric of Western colonialism is only one of the many different ‘anti-genderist’ frames used

by political entrepreneurs to convince local and international audiences, but it is far from being the main one. As I have shown in this chapter and the previous one, *Konfederacja* and SPD use various arguments against feminism, LGBT+ movements and ‘gender ideology’, deploying nationalist, religious (in the case of *Konfederacja*), biological and/or ‘common sense’ rhetoric, and they draw from a wide variety of frames, such as national sovereignty, historical narratives, anti-elitism, children’s wellbeing, freedom, democracy, etc. If the West-East relationship of inequality was indeed central, I would expect it to come out systematically both in the parties’ rhetoric and in their members’ statements. Yet, it does not. Finally, it must be said that not only has the ‘anti-colonial frame’ against ‘gender ideology’ been formulated by Western European activists, as Kováts acknowledges (Kováts, 2021, p. 79), but anti-genderist actors in Western Europe have also at times used it, as in (West) Germany (Villa, 2017) or in Italy (Garbagnoli, 2017), or used similar arguments, as the French discourse denouncing ‘gender’ as a U.S. American import (Geva, 2019). Hence, I rather consider the frame of Western colonialism to be a “discursive manoeuvre”, as Svatoňová did in the context of the Czech anti-genderist movement (2021, p. 140), which might resonate more in the region, but is not the motor of anti-gender movements in the region, nor the root factor of far-right mobilisation. In a similar fashion, the wide use of the anti-communist frame to denounce ‘gender ideology’ – called ‘neo-Marxist’ by SPD and ‘communist’, ‘leftist’, ‘Marxist’ or ‘cultural Marxism’ (*marksizm kulturowy*) by *Konfederacja* – might resonate more in Central and Eastern Europe, with its experience of socialist dictatorship, but the frame of ‘cultural Marxism’ actually comes from the USA and has been widely used in Western Europe as well (Jamin, 2014). Thus, while frames are not innocent, random choices made by political actors and deserve scholarly attention, regional or national peculiarities should not distract from the

focus on a common ideological core of anti-genderist and far-right movements, which I hold to be an anti-egalitarian vision of the gender and sexual order.

Conclusion

Tying the ideals of fatherland, work and family together, the SPD has presented itself as a champion of the ‘traditional working family’ in opposition to a series of enemies, from the Roma minority to the ‘globalist elites’ and its ‘neo-Marxist’ ‘sunny people’ helpers. In addition to being pervasive in the rhetoric of the healthy Czech (White) working family pitted against the dysfunctional ‘unadaptable’ Roma or Muslim family, gender and sexuality appear more explicitly in the opposition to ‘gender ideology’ and the defence of the Czech ‘modern traditional’ heterosexist gender and sexual order, and its inequalities. While SPD does not embrace gender and sexual equality as a national achievement, it does wield it against migrants, and especially those from Muslim-majority countries, like many far-right parties in the Global North do. Even though SPD does not show the same virulent homophobia, nor present the heterosexist family as a replacement of the state as in *Konfederacja*’s case, it has merged the ‘working family’ and the ‘traditional family’ in a discourse on the defence of the ‘normal world’, i.e. the sovereign ethnic nation-state and its workfare chauvinist regime for ‘decent’ (White) heteronormative working families. Rather than questioning gender and sexual norms in society, like *Konfederacja* does, SPD mostly defends the status quo of formal gender equality and a certain ‘homonormative’ tolerance for homosexuals, but rejects any demands by feminist and LGBT+ movements for substantial equality, and attacks any challenge to an essentialist vision of two binary biological sexes as ‘gender ideology’. While SPD members did not often repeat the rhetoric on the traditional family, and even proved more tolerant than the party leadership on this matter, they also expressed a strong rejection of non-normative

gender identities. Regardless of differences in opinions and levels of tolerance, SPD, just like *Konfederacja*, occupies the most anti-egalitarian position on matters of gender and sexuality within its local context.

PART III – MOBILISATION

Chapter 6: *Konfederacja*'s masculinist counter-hegemony and female activists' double bind

“Those performances of masculinity that citizens accept as appropriate serve to legitimate the actors’ claim to power”
(Ferree, 2020, p. 900).

As *Konfederacja*'s main pre-electoral convention was coming to an end in a Warsaw conference hall in September 2019, the forty-one top candidates of all the regional electoral lists were called on stage for a group photo, laying bare the almost complete absence of top female candidates. The party had obviously prepared for this, however, and I could see some female party members already lining up to step on the stage when the presenter invited “the [female] representatives of women among us for a group picture”. As they took the stage, secondary female candidate and former beauty pageant contestant Roksana Oraniec came to stand in the front row in the centre, next to then-leader Janusz Korwin-Mikke (JKM), and posed for the cameras. While women's position in the party cannot be limited to such decorative role, this unflattering scene revealed the strongly male and masculinist character of *Konfederacja*, where there are few female members and even fewer female leaders.

In Part II, I showed that gender and sexuality mattered in far right ideology as pervasive to discourses on race/ethnicity and class, and as one of the far right's main dimensions of anti-egalitarianism. In this Part III, I lay out the third way in which gender and sexuality are crucial

for the far-right: in the gendered and sexualised performances enacted by the far right to gain legitimacy and mobilise the public. Drawing from the concepts of gender hegemony and masculinism, I argue that *Konfederacja* is a vivid example of the far right as a masculinist identitarian movement with a masculinist political style and party structures. I use here ‘masculinism’ as “an ideological expression of excessive masculine values, symbolisation of masculine hegemony, and male-centred view of social relationships” (Kreisky, 2014, p. 16). Compared to the shifting ‘hegemonic masculinity’, ‘masculinism’ is resolutely heterosexist and anti-modern, and can thus represent a certain challenge to ‘hegemonic masculinity’ in many contexts (Kreisky, 2014, p. 18).

In the Polish context, I contend that, with its masculinist embodiment and character, *Konfederacja* represents a certain gender counter-hegemony, which is constrained by, draws from and challenges the Polish gender hegemony. In the first section, I lay out how the party’s masculinist character in rhetoric and style both draws from and challenges hegemonic masculinity. I then explain how this masculinist character naturalises women’s absence from politics and their subordinate position in the public sphere, leading to an important deficit in women’s representation and power within the party. Indeed, this masculinist character places female members in a ‘double bind’ between the feminine requirement of presentation and the masculinist expectation of mobilisation. However, as I show in the last section, despite its naturalisation of gender inequalities and its refusal of parity measures, the gender hegemony has also created pressure on *Konfederacja* to change its overly masculine – and misogynistic – image, which has created an opening for women and led to the recent emergence of a female leader like Ewa Zajączkowska-Hernik.

1. *Konfederacja* as masculinist identity politics

While JKM did not represent the whole *Konfederacja* coalition in loudly advocating for patriarchy, the party has been united in promoting a heterosexist political project, representing masculinist values drawing from hegemonic masculinity and embodying a particular masculinist style of doing politics. In addition to the heterosexist tendencies in its ideological project presented in Chapter 4, *Konfederacja* has tapped into the repertoires of traditional and modern kinds of hegemonic masculinity to deploy a rhetoric and style of resistance, autonomy, aggressiveness and authoritarianism. In representing and embodying this sort of masculinist counter-hegemony, it has been particularly successful in appealing to young heterosexual men – Polish and Catholic, to be sure – but it has also been forced to adapt to the current Polish gender hegemony, and its more modern and gender-equal aspects.

Konfederacja as a ‘men’s party’

While *Konfederacja* representatives have rarely been as blunt as JKM in their advocacy of patriarchy, and have sometimes even distanced themselves from his views on women, the coalition’s paleolibertarian ideology is a counter-hegemonic project which implicitly supports the idea of the supremacy of the Polish Catholic heterosexual male breadwinner. It is thus unsurprising that *Konfederacja*’s mobilisation targets first and foremost (young) heterosexual males with a wide array of masculinist views, messages, images and performances that both challenge and draw from masculine hegemony, understood here as ‘the idealised quality content of the category man’ (Schippers, 2007, p. 90). In the Polish context, this idealised quality content of masculinity especially draws from two sets of masculine values: the masculinity of the Polish brotherhood of patriots (Ostrowska, 2004) and the more recent businessman masculinity of neoliberal capitalism (Szcześniak, 2016), i.e. similar to Michael

Kimmel's 'marketplace masculinity' (Kimmel, 1994, p. 123). However, these established, more explicitly masculinist models are being completed and challenged by other ones, and most importantly by a more recent one that can be described as "modern masculinity", characterised by a greater emphasis on men's nurturing roles and on gender and sexual equality (Bogdanowska-Jakubowska, 2017, p. 80).

The first set of hegemonic masculine values comes from the traditional Polish masculinity of nationalist resistance fighters and patriotic martyrs. As Elżbieta Ostrowska convincingly argued, Poland's 19th century romantic nationalist movement largely drew from the vision of the lost country as a mother – linked to the figure of the Virgin Mary – with the brotherhood of fighting male patriots as her faithful sons (Ostrowska, 2004). In this vision women and homosexuals are rejected as disturbing and endangering the homosocial bond (Janion, 2020, p. 273; Ostrowska, 2004, p. 223). In later patriotic struggles such as World War II, Polish women's military engagement was reluctantly accepted, but with a clear division between the 'masculine' military front and the 'feminine' logistical rear, which contributed to the subsequent erasing of women's military contribution (Grzebalska, 2016). Based on these writings, scholars of contemporary Polish politics have drawn attention to the performance of these masculinist tropes in the rise of the far right since the 2000s: in the LPR's mobilisation against women's reproductive rights and LGBT+ rights (Graff, 2009), in the yearly Independence Marches (Śmieja, 2021), in football fan clubs (Kossakowski et al., 2020) and in so-called 'patriotic rap' (Majewski, 2021). Thus, among the groups who would later on built the ultra-nationalist RN wing of *Konfederacja*, this cult of the brotherhood of patriotic warriors has persisted. As feminist scholarship notes, this masculinist ideal-type corresponds to heterosexist tendencies in nationalism, with men taking the leading, protective role and

women the subordinate, vulnerable one (Anthias & Yuval-Davis, 1989; McClintock, 1993; Mosse, 1985; Nagel, 1998; Peterson, 1999).

In the current *Konfederacja* coalition, this cult finds its expression in ‘military remasculinisation’, which glorifies the national past and draws from the masculinised imaginary of WWII resistance fighters (Grzebalska, 2016; Śmieja, 2021). In this imaginary, the idea of men of honour ready to die for the homeland occupies the central position, with the idea of protecting women and children as explicit or implicit. Thus, the masculine values of “obligatory heterosexuality, physical fitness, sense of honour, power, control over women” identified by Bogna Kociołowicz-Wiśniewska in her study of several Polish far-right groups (including the MW and RN) closely correspond to Connell’s description of hegemonic masculinity in other settings (Kociołowicz-Wiśniewska, 2019, p. 73). I would add that this militarised masculinity also expresses itself in a conception of politics along the lines of a war-like Schmittian friend-foe reading, with ‘patriots’ facing ‘traitors’ on the national level, and brutal competition in international relations, and where the phantasm of absolute national sovereignty and border securitisation reflect the idea of the autonomous and decisive masculine agent (Löffler, 2020, p. 20). In *Konfederacja* communication, this war-like masculinist rhetoric appears in the coalition’s claims to be the sole anti-system force challenging the political establishment – the ‘band of four’ – and this is reflected in its messages framing its activism as a “battle for Freedom and Independence” (*Konfederacja*, 2019e), its supporters as an “army of Poles”, and its parliamentary group as the “11 gunslingers”¹⁰⁴ (*Konfederacja*, 2019a).

In addition to this militarised masculinity, *Konfederacja*’s masculinist ‘identity politics’ also idealises the figure of the entrepreneurial male breadwinner heading his autonomous

‘traditional family’ and competing on the free market unhindered by society and state power. The idealised quality content of this unfettered entrepreneurial male breadwinner is akin to that of the ‘marketplace man’ identified by Michael Kimmel as embodying U.S. American hegemonic masculinity since the 19th century: aggression and competition on the marketplace in the pursuit of wealth, power and status (Kimmel, 1994, pp. 123–124). In this vision of masculinity, real men are strong, successful, capable, reliable, in control (Kimmel, 1994, p. 125). In the Polish context, Maria Szcześniak has demonstrated the validity of such analysis, showing the rise of the figure of the male businessman in the making of the Polish middle class after 1989, with women relegated to secondary positions, such as the one of the secretary (Szcześniak, 2016, pp. 123–125).

Konfederacja often presents itself as the champion and defender of entrepreneurs, presented as heroic combatants in a hostile environment of high taxes and overwhelming bureaucracy. In the party, the topic of entrepreneurship is almost exclusively represented by male representatives and the current coalition’s co-leader Sławomir Mentzen embodies this image of the young, daring, successful male entrepreneur, as the owner of several businesses and a tireless critique of the fiscal system. As I laid out in Chapter 4, he regularly repeats the idea of ‘hard work’ and ‘individual responsibility’ as the keys to success, rejecting arguments of systemic obstacles and unequal opportunities. In one of his 2023 appearances during his regular speaking tours *Piwo z Mentzenem* (Beer with Mentzen), he advised young people who want to be successful and rich to ‘study, work and drink alcohol’, specifying that drinking helps to meet the right people for future business (Matusiak, 2023). In addition to alcohol drinking being highly associated with men in Poland (Pavlova et al., 2014; Popova et al., 2007), drinking to meet people for future business contacts can be connected to the

homosocial world, where masculine enactment by men for other men is key to asserting one's masculinity and social status (Kimmel, 1994). In one of the many humoristic *memes* used by the party on its social media platforms, the male character of the entrepreneur comes out more explicitly: a three-part sequence from the film *Passengers* shows a woman (Jennifer Lawrence) saying "I love daring men", to which the man (Chris Pratt) answers "I run a business in Poland"¹⁰⁵, and the woman then kisses him passionately (*Prowadzenie firmy w Polsce - wyzwanie*, n.d.). The meme's businessman hero – and *Konfederacja*'s target audience – is among those 'daring men' attracting pretty women and this frame reflects the aforementioned idea of 'masculinist affective subjectivity' (Sauer, 2020, p. 33).

The centrality of homosociality, especially in the vision of the militarised masculinity, also finds its expression in the party's leadership and structures, in the absolute domination of male leaders and in the coalition's overarching decision-making body, the '*Rada liderów*' (Leaders' Council), where a woman has never been included. In the case of *Konfederacja*, the ostentatious rejection of homosexuality seems to confirm the views of scholar Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, who claimed that homophobia was a crucial aspect of bourgeois homosociality, as it served to repudiate any suspicion of erotic bonds between men (Sedgwick, 1985). As mentioned before, Polish scholars Maria Janion (2020) and Elżbieta Ostrowska (2004) also saw this rejection as central to homosocial Polish romantic patriotism. In a 2019 social media post, RN leader Bosak vividly illustrated homosexuality's threat to homosociality by denouncing advertisements showing male homosexual couples and commenting: "LGBT propaganda [...] also deals a blow to healthy male friendships by triggering mental associations of homosexuality"¹⁰⁶ (Bosak, 2019). In this post, Bosak lamented that male friendship and proximity – homosociality – would now be increasingly perceived as potential

homosexuality, something particularly threatening to the overwhelmingly male environment of the far right.

These two rich sets of masculine values – the military masculinity and marketplace masculinity – do not necessarily contradict each other, and rather show a large extent of overlap; and *Konfederacja* has largely drawn from both. However, they are differently activated by the different coalition wings, with the RN and *Korona* more often drawing from the militarised masculinity of romanticised Polish history and the libertarian NN mostly glorifying the competitive male entrepreneur. Both masculinities rest on the idea of the aggressive and competitive male, though, whether it is on the battlefield or on the marketplace. In both cases, the emphasis rests on the masculine ideal of the autonomous agent, whether as the rebellious soldier, the nation unrestrained by international institutions, or the entrepreneur unhindered by the state. Moreover, both masculine ideal-types share an attachment to the brotherhood and male homosociality, to be kept pure of any suspicion of homosexuality through rabid homophobia. In both cases, women are relegated to secondary roles, from the military nurse to the business secretary. As the next subsection shows, *Konfederacja* has not simply taken over those masculinist repertoires, but has also adapted them, to fit the parliamentary decorum and also to respond to what I would argue is a pressure from modernising masculinity trends. The party has thus made some compromises to avoid stigmatisation, with the ‘militarised’ rebellious masculinity of the Independence Marches and football stadiums counter-balanced by the more controlled styles of businessman or parliamentary masculinity.

Politics as brutal masculine domination

Konfederacja's masculinist style needs to be understood in the particular context of Polish politics, which has been marked by a brutalisation of the public sphere. As I wrote in Chapter 1, the PiS-PO/KO duel starting in the mid-2000s led to an increasingly confrontational style, with the PiS denouncing PO/KO for national treason and corruption and the PO/KO accusing PiS of destroying democracy and driving the country out of the EU. The political debate in the public sphere became antagonistic and even aggressive, turning into an identity-based struggle between two irreconcilable sides that can only be settled by total destruction of the foe (Marzęcki, 2012, p. 286). This dynamic has been worsened by the global trend of the mediatization of politics, which submits politics to media dynamics (Mazzoleni, 2014; Schulz, 2004) and pushes politicians to increasingly rely on spectacular content appreciated by the media and their viewers (Mazzoleni & Schulz, 1999). In Poland, this mediatization has contributed to the brutalization of politics in Poland under the PiS-PO/KO duopoly (Dawidowicz, 2014), with TV and internet talk shows often turning into shouting contests. In this context, the registry available for women is further limited because of existing gendered expectations towards them, with the result that women are less likely to be able – and willing – to take part in such debates (Banaś, 2017, p. 8).

In this context, the Polish far right has used war-like mobilization and rhetoric to compete in the public sphere. For example, the aforementioned Independence March heavily draws from the masculinist repertoire of football hooligans and has often included clashes with the police, journalists or opponents, even though organizers have been trying – with relative success – to soften its image and present itself as an event for families (Śmieja, 2021; Witkowski, 2023a). Although *Konfederacja* has mostly avoided physical violence and tried to project an image of

parliamentary respectability, its representatives show the tendency to assert masculinism through the use of ‘manhood acts’, i.e. acts by which “males distinguish themselves from females/women and thus establish their eligibility for gender-based privilege” (Schrock & Schwalbe, 2009, p. 287). While Douglas Schrock and Michael Schwalbe insist that certain acts only constitute manhood acts according to the context, Elizabeth Ralph-Morrow fruitfully uses their insights for the study of the English far right by summarising manhood acts as acts that exert control, resist control and elicit deference in relation to women and other men (Ralph-Morrow, 2022, p. 29). In the case of *Konfederacja*, much of the speeches and acts do constitute claims of masculinist domination over feminised enemies, and are thus ‘manhood acts’. It is not the fact that men say those words and commit those acts that makes them ‘masculinist’, but rather the ways in which they assert dominance – or control – over other men and over women.

While the party’s masculinist style is not frequently claimed in an explicit manner, deputy Jacek Wilk (NN) did boast about *Konfederacja*’s masculinity in two social media posts from April 2021. Explaining the party’s high support among young men in a survey, he stated: “It’s simple: we’re the only masculine party in Poland”¹⁰⁷ (Wilk, 2021b). He added in brackets that it did not mean a party only for men, writing that “we are supported by women who appreciate the masculine style of politics – indispensable especially in uncertain times”¹⁰⁸ (Wilk, 2021b), reflecting implicitly the protecting man / vulnerable woman dichotomy. Asked to elaborate what he meant by ‘masculine style’, he answered with the following list: “determined – aggressive – not afraid of risks – decisive – incisive and (on many issues) uncompromising”¹⁰⁹ (Wilk, 2021a). In addition to demonstrating a surprisingly comprehensive understanding of the

kinds of masculinity performed by the party, Wilk showed in his messages that *Konfederacja*'s 'masculine' identity is a badge that some of its representatives claim and wear with pride.

According to *Konfederacja*'s approach drawing from military and marketplace masculinities, politics is a battlefield – not an arena of discussion and compromises – with the opponents as enemies to be totally defeated. The party's performance is highly representative of this, with an aggressive in-your-face rhetoric and communication style. Betting heavily on social media, the party and its representatives have showcased their 'fight' as the domination and destruction of their opponents. In short videos, the party brags about 'dominating' and 'winning' debates, 'crushing' the government's plans, 'laying bare the ignorance' of opponents. The posts use a form of tabloid language such as "Don't miss it! Dr Slawomir Mentzen gave a factual performance on TVP [public TV] and completely dominated the debate!"¹¹⁰ (*Konfederacja*, 2019h), or "You can't miss that! There has never been such a factual knockout as the one realized by [...] Jakub Kulesza against the Left"¹¹¹ (*Konfederacja*, 2019g). This kind of style has been particularly efficient on social media, whose algorithms tend to reward provocative content generating interaction, something that anti-establishment parties have widely exploited, including on the far right (Maly, 2022, p. 9). Before *Konfederacja*'s Facebook page was closed down because of anti-vaccine disinformation in January 2022, it was by far the most popular among all Polish political parties with over 650,000 followers. The page was reopened in 2023.

Konfederacja's masculinist political style does not mean that its representatives are boorish and loud. Instead, its representatives usually mix sharp and radical rhetoric with a rather calm composure in debates and speeches, something the party likes to underline, and to contrast with opponents, as in this comment on Kulesza's aforementioned 'factual knockout' against

left-wing female deputy Wanda Nowicka: “On the one hand, the calm, composure and factual arguments of our deputy, and on the other, the nerves, attacks and lack of knowledge of Wanda Nowicka”¹¹² (Konfederacja, 2019g). *Konfederacja* representatives frequently brag about speaking and acting ‘*merytorycznie*’ (factually, substantively), and they contrast it with their opponents’ alleged ideological biases, emotions and attacks. The party thus largely draws from social stereotypes that present men as rational and in control, compared to women as irrational and emotional, something that came out in the interviews. As Łukasz (NN) bluntly explained, also claiming ‘the masculine style’: “We absolutely follow the masculine style, which is pragmatism, cold thinking, not playing on emotions and substantive discussion with the opponent, but exposing ourselves to the economy, to conservative issues.”¹¹³ He contrasted this style with women, who ‘by nature’ want to be taken care of, and thus vote for the welfare state. According to Karol (RN) god entrusted the nation to men’s care, and ‘objective truths’ like nationhood and virtues like patriotism “are more masculine kind of traits”. These views of masculine/feminine political styles mostly came out in the denigration of feminists, whom Karol saw not as ‘real women’, but rather as “older girls that just won't mature into women”, claiming that they were ‘wounded girls’ who had lacked a ‘good father figure’. Elżbieta saw women at the *Women’s Strike* feminist protests as “a bunch of degenerate girls”¹¹⁴ who were being manipulated and committed acts of vandalism. Magdalena (NN) saw these protests as yet another proof of women’s natural tendency to approach things ‘emotionally’ and not factually. Thus, the members – both male and female – often reproduced a hierarchical and essentialised gendered division of politics according to the masculine free market / nationalism vs the feminine welfare state / feminism, and the masculine rational style vs the feminine emotional style. This thinking reflects broader gendered dichotomies, such as the

public/private and the mind/body, which has been used to reject women's role in politics, as out of place and too emotional (Campus, 2013; Pateman, 1988). In *Konfederacja*'s paleolibertarian version, it also echoes the gendered aspects of U.S. American right-wing discourses on capitalism and welfare, with the masculinised 'makers', the capitalist risk-taking winners, pitted against the feminised 'takers', the welfare-dependent (Ferree, 2020; Fraser & Gordon, 1994).

While many *Konfederacja* leaders represent an assertive yet restrained masculinity, perhaps as an effort to avoid the more marginal and stigmatising militarised masculinity of the football hooligan, it does not mean that the party completely relinquished this kind of repertoire. Thus, *Korona* leader Grzegorz Braun has frequently used direct action tactics involving physical confrontations. During the pandemic, while the *Konfederacja* coalition itself did not organise events, Braun became a participant in illegal demonstrations against anti-pandemic measures early on, trying to use his parliamentary immunity to fend off the police (Braun, 2020). He then started to use his parliamentary privileges to stage interventions in institutions in order to denounce anti-pandemic measures and vaccination, bursting into institutions and cabinets (Lechowicz-Dyl, 2022). He also refused measures such as the sanitary mask in the parliament, which led to his frequent exclusion from debates and to high fines (*Braun słono zapłaci za nienoszenie*, 2021). Braun also made headlines for telling the health minister from the parliament podium that the minister 'will hang' because of his decisions during the pandemic (*Grzegorz Braun do Adama Niedzielskiego*, 2021). In the interviews, Elżbieta commended these actions, saying that "Braun has a lot of personal courage"¹¹⁵ and that they convinced her to join his *Korona* party. More recently, Braun made international headlines when he used a fire extinguisher to put out candles lit in the Polish Parliament for the Jewish holiday of

Hanukkah, later explaining his antisemitic gesture as opposition to “racist, tribal, savage, Talmudic worship” (Mokrzanowska, 2023).

Keeping the balance between counter-hegemony and hegemony

Konfederacja’s counter-hegemonic project, both as an ideological project and as it is embodied in its style, especially in its gendered aspects, must be understood in the Polish context, which has been affected by the PiS’s own counter-hegemonic far-right project (Bohle et al., 2024), but has not translated into a complete political, economic and socio-cultural transformation of the country on far-right ideological bases. Hence, to look at it in Antonio Gramsci’s terms, the political thinker behind the concept of hegemony, *Konfederacja* still has to pursue its ‘war of position’ – “which is the penetration of civil society and a slow displacement of previously held views in society” – before it can embark on a ‘war of manoeuvre’ – “a frontal and speedy attack on existing state institutions” (Bohle et al., 2024, p. 1781). As Gramsci underlines, to conduct such a war of position, counter-hegemonic forces must not only cultivate their own ‘organic intellectuals’, but also “penetrate the cultural, moral and ideological spheres, and appeal to people’s common sense” (Bohle et al., 2024, p. 1781). In terms of political style and its gendered aspects, it means that *Konfederacja* must also take into account existing and evolving social norms, amongst others the transformation of traditionally hegemonic models of masculinity and femininity, influenced by various pressures, including by ‘modern masculinity’.

Thus, even in the aggressive stunts by Braun or others, it is interesting to note that the party does not fully draw from the ‘low’ repertoire, i.e. the socio- and politico-cultural “ways of relating to people” that are widespread among the popular classes (Ostiguy, 2009, p. 5). Indeed, *Konfederacja* and its leaders do not really share the ‘low repertoire’ (Ostiguy, 2009) of

other European far-right parties, who use slang and vulgar language, and a colourful style. Even an extremist representative like Grzegorz Braun cultivates a distinguished image, with great care to wear formal clothes and to use an elevated, even archaic language. Thus, the party's representatives often use inflammatory and politically incorrect language, but rarely with the vulgarisms and verbal outbursts known from other European far-right parties like the Italian *Lega* (Bellè, 2016). This does not mean that the party always remains on the 'high repertoire' though, and the party has drawn from youth popular culture in its performances – and especially its masculinist aspects – whether during a viral internet 'rap challenge' (Kosman, 2022), during Sławomir Mentzen's beer tours or during the 2023 parliamentary campaign, when *Konfederacja* meetings featured heavy rock n' roll music, a motorcycle, pyrotechnics and internet memes. Mentzen even posted some videos while evidently drunk after one of his beer meetings and joked about being on a two-week bender during his beer tour, drawing from the masculine drinking culture (Matusiak, 2023). In a way, *Konfederacja* can be said to be performing a certain balancing act between performances of masculinity, very much like British far-right leader Nigel Farage, who is said to be "reconciling populist 'city masculinity' and polite 'gent masculinity'" (Starck, 2020, p. 51).

Ahead of the 2023 parliamentary elections, the party seemed to attempt to refine this balance by 'modernising' its image, amongst other things by toning down its masculinist rhetoric and style. Along with the focus on economic affairs and the relegation of cultural issues to the background, the new party leadership thus tried to exit the margins and enter the mainstream by betting on a more moderate rhetoric and style. During the 2023 campaign, NN leader Sławomir Mentzen even claimed that his party was 'gay-friendly', saying that the tax on inheritance and gifts between non-family members was a 'tax on gays' and arguing that his

plans to get rid of it would be mostly beneficial for homosexuals, who cannot be considered relatives under Polish law (Młodzi dla Wolności, 2023; Różycka, 2023). Thus, instead of favouring the legalisation of same-gender partnerships or marriages, Mentzen wielded tax cuts as a replacement for equal rights, making an appeal reminding of the aforementioned ‘new homonormativity’. On the other hand, *Korona* leader Grzegorz Braun has never stopped railing against sexual minorities as ‘sodomites’ (*sodomici*) and ‘perverts’ (*zboczeńcy*) (e.g. *Braun ukarany przez Parlament Europejski*, 2025). Within the party, the tensions between those favouring a more strategic rhetoric and a ‘slick’ mainstream style – somewhat less masculinist – and those who want to pursue an aggressive rhetoric and militarised masculinist style have shown how difficult *Konfederacja*’s balancing game is. The new generation of leaders embodied by Sławomir Mentzen and Krzysztof Bosak – who is especially skilful in wrapping radicalism in a veil of respectability – pushed through their strategy of ‘modernisation’, and somewhat hid the more ‘scandalous’ leaders like JKM and Grzegorz Braun during the 2023 parliamentary electoral race (*Motocykl, pirotechnika, prezentacja hasła wyborczego*, 2023), but the latter could not be entirely kept out of the spotlights, especially given the popularity they enjoy among the core electorate (Baranowska, 2023). Moreover, as *Konfederacja* rose in the polls, there was greater media attention to the party’s most radical positions and scandalous statements.

In the end, the balancing act did not succeed and *Konfederacja* only marginally improved its result from 2019. This led to internal quarrels, amongst others with JKM publicly denouncing the strategy, and also railing against women in politics after he was himself overtaken on the party list by a woman, Karina Bosak, a lawyer working in the ultra-conservative *Ordo Iuris* institute and the wife of RN leader Krzysztof Bosak. Eventually, JKM was kicked out of the

party and *Konfederacja* has continued with its image moderation. The party's striving to keep a balance between its radical core electorate and the mainstream not only translates into a moderation of rhetoric, but also into attempts to embody a masculinity that draws from tropes of hegemonic masculinity but does not overflow into the stigmatised, 'toxic masculinity' (Daddow & Hertner, 2021) of the extremist. *Konfederacja* has thus been trying to draw from the marketplace and military masculinities, with enough assertiveness to impose itself on the brutal Polish political scene, but with enough self-control and respectability not to be pushed to the margins. In this sense, it is both challenging the gender hegemony by pulling it back towards masculinist – i.e. heterosexist – models of masculinity and femininity, and also adapting to changing social norms such as those of 'modern masculinity'.

Konfederacja as the voice of masculinity

Despite attempts to embody a more moderate masculinity, the party's rise was undermined by increased public scrutiny exposing the party representatives most extreme elements and statements, ruining its image of 'normality' (Szczurbiak, 2024). Moreover, in the case of campaign leader Sławomir Mentzen, his casual, confident communication, his 'American-style' meetings involving fireworks and rock'n roll, and his routine full of jokes and internet memes projected on a stage screen might have failed to present the right image as a credible statesman for anyone beyond the core (male, young) *Konfederacja* electorate. While the disappointing result cannot be solely explained by Mentzen's performance of masculinity, I contend that the mixture of an image of masculinism in the party and the leader's performance more akin to a provocative youthful male stand-up comedian than to a 'respectable' – read male, mature – politician did not help the party. Indeed, if "[t]hose performances of masculinity that citizens accept as appropriate serve to legitimate the actors' claim to power"

(Ferree, 2020, p. 900), then Mentzen's performance overshot the mark. Especially in contrast to the PiS party, whose far-right politics fit much more within mainstream social norms – including on masculinity – and are supported by as many men as women, often from the older, and more electorally active age groups (*PiS z głosami rolników i*, 2023).

It is hazardous to estimate the importance of *Konfederacja*'s masculinist character for its electorate, considering how much its core ideological tenets – ethnonationalism, libertarian economics and Catholic fundamentalism – are saturated with masculinism, but polls have repeatedly proven the party's greater popularity among (young) men. According to exit poll surveys following the 2023 elections, *Konfederacja* indeed received the most support from young men, and especially from students and business owners (*PiS z głosami rolników i*, 2023). At the 2023 parliamentary elections, 10.2% of men but only 3.7% of women voted for *Konfederacja* (*PiS z głosami rolników i*, 2023), with the gap growing among 18 to 29 year-olds: 26.3% of men compared to 6.3% of women (*Jak głosowali mężczyźni, a jak*, 2023). Other surveys have vividly illustrated that gender gap in values and issues, such as a widely discussed 2019 survey asking interviewees about the most serious threats for Poland in the 21st century: among 18-39 year-olds, “gender ideology and the LGBT movement” was the most serious threat according to men (31%), while ‘only’ 18% of women shared that belief. Moreover, 26% of men in that age category cited “the demographic crisis and the ageing of society”, compared to 9% of women (Jurszo & Pacewicz, 2019). Young women expressed more concern for climate change, the collapse of the healthcare system, the rise of nationalism and Poland's exit from the EU, and this gender gap in concerns and values has also been observed in Global North countries, like the United States (Saad et al., 2024) or Germany (*Gen Z*, 2024).

The highly masculinist character of *Konfederacja* does not simply come from the fact that it is men who lead and represent the party, but rather from the ways in which the party conceptualises politics, politicians' roles and the world in general. Indeed, in this valorisation of the military or marketplace masculinity, the soldier or businessman embodies values that social stereotypes often link tightly to men and deny to women. Moreover, these values come to serve as a justification for the subordination of other men – especially non-heterosexuals – and of women. In this sense, it is always crucial to analyse masculinity not as what men do, but rather as what men do to assert control over other men and over women, i.e. how the 'masculine' ideal is organised as complementary and hierarchical in contrast to the 'feminine' ideal (Schippers, 2007). According to this interactional understanding of 'gender hegemony', *Konfederacja*'s embrace of a particular masculinity is strongly linked to its subordination of non-heterosexual masculinity and of femininity, as women's place in the party shows.

2. Women in *Konfederacja*'s gender order

The point is not that there is no place for women in the party, but rather that the party's counter-hegemonic project represents a masculinist ideology and favours a highly masculinist style that makes it rather difficult for women to attain prominence within the party. As I argue in this section, women's virtual absence comes from a normalisation/naturalisation of politics as masculine, and even masculinist, the lack of substantial representation of women in the party and the restriction of women to 'feminine' issues. Through subordination to the male leadership and an 'emphasised femininity', the women of *Konfederacja* have nevertheless carved themselves a place in the party and made claims on behalf of women.

Naturalising women's absence

When it arose in 2019, *Konfederacja* became known – and taunted – in the public sphere because of the virtual absence of women in its ranks, showing that Poland's gender hegemony had shifted away from the idea of politics as a men-only field. At the very beginning, the party could boast the presence of a well-known female public figure in the person of leading anti-abortion activist Kaja Gojek, but she decided to leave the party ahead of the 2019 parliamentary elections, accusing the leadership of marginalising her anti-abortion group (Malinowski, 2019). Ahead of the 2019 parliamentary elections, only two of *Konfederacja*'s forty-one regional electoral lists were headed by women, the lowest percentage of all political parties, and none of them succeeded (Bodnar, 2020, p. 20). *Konfederacja*'s parliamentary wing thus emerged as an all-male club with eleven male deputies. Following the 2023 elections, only one woman succeeded alongside 17 men, the aforementioned Karina Bosak. While Mudde rightfully argues that European far-right parties usually do not fare a lot worse than their mainstream right-wing competitors when it comes to the political underrepresentation of women (Mudde, 2007, p. 117), *Konfederacja* represents an extreme example of a men's party, even in the Polish context of masculinised politics.

Despite changing norms, it remains true that in Poland as in many European countries women have a limited presence and influence in politics (Bodnar, 2020; Bogdanowska-Jakubowska, 2017; Druciarek et al., 2024). Stereotypes about women as belonging to the private sphere of the home and men belonging to the public sphere have justified the weak presence of women in Polish politics and are still making it harder for female politicians (Molek-Kozakowska, 2012). Polish women who do go into politics face the problem that the job of politician is still perceived by large parts of the public as masculine and is seen as requiring characteristics

traditionally attached to masculinity: “strong, ruthless, competitive, manipulating others, and caring about themselves only” (Turska-Kawa & Olszanecka-Marmola, 2016, p. 69). While those characteristics also exist among women, widespread stereotypes make it harder for them to embody and perform those characteristics without negative responses, since they risk being perceived as un-feminine and can be attacked as emotional, hysterical, manipulative, etc. (Krook, 2016, p. 273).

During the interviews, I asked the members about the low presence of women in the party and most of the members mentioned that women in Poland were not interested in politics; did not want to partake in the ‘dirty’ field of politics; were more attracted by feminist messages; and/or that JKM and/or the media had given the party the label of an anti-women party. However, several of them – both men and women – normalised/naturalised women’s low presence in politics in general through more essentialist views. While only a few of them expressed the kind of strictly patriarchal view of the world spread by JKM, their opinions still showed that these views are not so rare in the party, as already shown in Chapter 4 and in the previous section. Considering women’s presence in politics, Antoni (NN) noted that ‘by nature’, “the woman wants security, she wants to be led, and the man wants to lead, wants to direct, wants liberty.”¹¹⁶ He went on to explain that women focused on the inner life, on emotions, while men analysed the surrounding world. Elżbieta (*Korona*) went further and questioned women’s presence in politics, telling me about politics:

It is your [men’s] field. First, nature made you like that, I think that you have more to bring in and apart from that you have more to lose. Because we women because of the fact that we’re women... those who have founded a family, have a hearth, we have to take care of the family, though. So that men can take risks. You take risks. You go to war, you give your life for the homeland. You give your life for your wife and you give your life for your children. Now, it has changed, but I think that you have more to lose.¹¹⁷

Reacting to my observation that the political involvement of women like her seems to be in contradiction with her belief, Elżbieta explained her view of women's role as standing by men's side and supporting them. Natalia (NN) had a similar opinion, questioning the need for women to get into top positions and noting that one of *Konfederacja*'s male deputies had picked up the topics of perinatal care and mothers' issues with social insurance: "He does that as deputy and we pass on topics to him, so it's not like we need to be in Parliament to do something. We can act and pass on topics to be dealt with to our [male] colleagues."¹¹⁸ The female members resolve the contradiction between women's political activism and their domestic role through the reproduction of gendered stereotypes and the legitimization of a gendered division of tasks in the political sphere, something noticed among far-right women in other cases (Scrinzi, 2024, p. 104).

In other instances, the interviewees also naturalised/normalised the lack of female leaders in the party through the rhetoric of meritocracy. Thus, Natalia (NN) argued that female members had not yet earned higher positions:

It's that, as I'd say, those top places don't belong to us, we've done too little, we've devoted too little, we've simply not been active long enough, right? So, as soon as some woman will have worked her way up to such a position that she can be top candidate, well she will automatically be so, but it's not as if we'll act on the basis of being a woman, that I win over my [male] colleague, because they have been active longer though, and that's why it has to be like that. So, and I also don't know if one of the women has what it takes to be a top candidate, simply.¹¹⁹

According to those views, gender does not play a role in advancement in the party and women will get to leadership positions as soon as they have proven their abilities. Patrycja (NN), who had a position of responsibility at the time of the interview, proved the same point through her own experience: "I didn't become [*names function*] BECAUSE I am a woman. Eee... but just because I have... I know how to do some things."¹²⁰ Other female interviewees like Magdalena

(NN) agreed wholeheartedly with these views. The only moment a female interviewee hinted at a systemic issue was in Natalia's interview, when she mentioned that her local party meetings were 90% male: "Sometimes there are two girls at a meeting, sometimes three, sometimes one, it depends, and it's well known that when the boys talk they are so much more audible, you know...er.... it's easier for them to get through and so on."¹²¹ While Natalia set up a local party women's group and lauded its 'high-level' discussions, she did not support any kind of systemic approach to women's weak presence, neither in *Konfederacja* nor in Polish politics in general. Thus, in line with the party's ideology, and like their male colleagues, the female interviewees did not focus on structural inequalities, neither socio-economic nor gender-based, and presented advancement as strictly based on personal merit and hard work. This corresponds to the neoliberal individualist accents of the 'populist radical right feminism' analysed by Francesca Scrinzi, who identified these views among the younger generation of female activists in the French and Italian parliamentary far right (Scrinzi, 2024, pp. 111–112).

Despite their virtual absence from the party's frontstage, several of the female interviewees occupied positions of power and responsibility in the party's structures. They seemed to act as 'centrewomen', central female figures who play a crucial role in maintaining and strengthening the internal cohesion of social groups, like Kathleen Blee identified in the U.S. American far right (Blee, 2002, p. 134) and Pasiëka in the Italian far right (Pasiëka, 2024, pp. 166–167). As Pasiëka notes, it is imperative to recognise these positions of (relative) power in order to better understand women's willingness to participate in strongly masculinist movements. Indeed, the female interviewees expressed their satisfaction with their position in the party, saying that they felt valued and appreciated for their work, and they certainly did not seem to be passive victims submitted to their male colleagues. Finally, the fact that women

occupy leadership positions within *Konfederacja* structures – and are thus accepted in positions of power by men – also shows that there are differences between masculinist discourses, and the actual gendered behaviour and order within the party (Scrinzi, 2024, p. 152).

Tensions of representation in a masculinist party

During the interviews, several members revealed that their local section had about 10% of female members, and this proportion corresponds to my own impressions from party gatherings and political meetings. Despite this very low presence, some women in *Konfederacja* have nevertheless found a space – and even a good position – in the party’s ‘backstage’ as ‘centrewomen’, but their ‘frontstage’ presentation has tended to reduce them to a particular interest group focused on ‘feminine’ issues, and even sometimes to a purely decorative feature for the party’s image. Moreover, it seems like *Konfederacja*’s female figures are put in a defensive position, as they take up the role – or are put in the role – of defending the party’s counter-hegemonic gender order against outside criticism and promoting the party line, i.e. rejecting systemic measures to address gender inequalities.

This restricted role was apparent during the 2019 parliamentary campaign, when the low number of female speakers was a common feature at most campaign meetings. At the biggest party convention, the Warsaw Programmatic Convention held in September 2019, this imbalance was especially striking, with all the main speakers presenting the electoral program being men. Women were introduced in the second part of the speeches, as one of “many social, professional and civil groups.”¹²² Nine mostly young women stepped on the stage and Anna Bryłka, one of the two women heading a regional electoral list, took the floor to speak on their behalf. Interestingly enough, although she touched on several gender-neutral issues, she started

her speech by denouncing gender parity requirement, saying: “We don't need an ideological, discriminatory parity. We need experts and we want to bring those experts into parliament!”¹²³ None of the other women took the floor. The idea that parity measures are a form of discrimination has also been voiced by Marine Le Pen (Scrinzi, 2024, p. 77) and gender quotas have been widely rejected by far-right parties across Europe (Spierings, 2020, p. 44). By starting off with a denunciation of feminism, Bryłka seemed to reassure the masculine leadership and membership that *Konfederacja*'s women will not challenge the masculine status quo, something that can be considered as an example of ‘emphasised femininity’ as defined in the Introduction. In total, of the twenty-two speakers at that convention only three were women.

Furthermore, the convention also showed the tendency to use women as explicitly decorative elements for the party. As this chapter's opening vignette described, the party convention was concluded by a staged photoshoot with female members – most of them wearing feminine evening wear – invited on stage to give a more flattering image of the party. On the one hand, this staging can be seen as an effort to project an image of balanced gendered representation, but on the other hand, the women's objectification – in the sense of “being treated primarily as a body valued predominantly for its use to (or consumption by) others” (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997, p. 174) – for a presumably heterosexual male audience stands out, exemplified by former beauty pageant contestant Oraniec taking the central position next to JKM. While women's role in *Konfederacja* is not restricted to their physical appearance, this particular situation clearly shows that these women did not see any problem in complying with their instrumental, objectifying use by the male leadership. As Bogdanowska-Jakubowska remarks, the use of young female politicians as ‘stage props’ is not rare in Polish politics, from right to

left (Bogdanowska-Jakubowska, 2017, p. 87), but *Konfederacja* is the only one to display such extreme form of objectification.

This obvious objectification is not often present, but it did manifest itself several times on social media. Thus, the aforementioned former female beauty pageant Oraniec was also featured in a separate social media post ahead of the election, with the comment: “Thanks to *Konfederacja* Poland can be really beautiful! :)”¹²⁴ (*Konfederacja*, 2019a). The party decided to showcase the candidate even if her 10th position on the regional electoral list made it clear that she stood no chance of being elected. Top candidate, and future deputy, Jacek Wilk also featured Oraniec in a post, posting a selfie with the two of them: “And here is the prettier side of politics and the prettier side of *Konfederacja*. We have a vice-Miss World on our [electoral] lists :-). And who’s the boss/the best?”¹²⁵ (Wilk, 2019). Wilk added a follow-up post containing an image with some of the key programmatic points: “And here is the program – it could pass thanks to the beautiful picture”¹²⁶. In this situation, the objectification is absolute and the intention to use physical appearance for political communication is openly declared. Finally, Wilk clearly expressed his heterosexual desire, an important marker of masculinity, and, in claiming to be ‘the boss/the best’, he asserted domination, perhaps as much over other men as over his female colleague (Kimmel, 1994; Schippers, 2007, p. 90).

Despite its counter-hegemonic masculinist project more or less explicitly rejecting women’s visible political engagement and parity measures in the name of ‘meritocracy’, *Konfederacja* also felt the need to adapt to the contemporary Polish gender hegemony. Indeed, revealing of changing norms, the party felt compelled to counter mainstream narratives about the party’s anti-women character and to court female voters through a less masculinist image, or at least through some kind of female representation. In his interview, Damian (NN) recalled seeing

Krzysztof Bosak's assistant strategically place a young female member right behind Bosak during a press conference, noting that it was obviously an attempt to highlight the presence of women in the party. Throughout the years, the party has fought against accusations of being anti-women, and it has made some efforts, but a lot of it has looked more cosmetic than substantial, merely based on 'descriptive representation', i.e. representation through the simple physical presence of women (Celis & Childs, 2014). As I argue in the next subsection, women are definitely present in *Konfederacja*, and even make substantive claims, but the masculinist ideology and character of the party have meant that they tend to keep themselves and/or are mostly relegated to administrative roles and to 'women's issues'.

The gendered division of roles and women's subordination

In addition to the party's masculinist ideology, the way *Konfederacja*, its leaders and its members frame politics as a masculine fight and perceive women's role in this struggle goes a long way in explaining women's subordinate role in the party. It has also led to a thematic division of roles, with female representatives enacting emphasised femininity by keeping themselves to and/or being kept to secondary 'women's issues'. This gendered division of topics comes out in a 2019 social media post by female candidate Klaudia Domagała, who has been the party's main female voice on women's place in the party, where she countered the claim that *Konfederacja* is not for women:

'*Konfederacja* is not for women' – such headlines circulate in the media. Girls, we have 4 years to change this! The female candidates of *Konfederacja* are exceptional women with libertarian and conservative views. Let's not get shut down by feminists who, under the guise of 'fighting for women's rights', want to take away our families' hard-earned money or limit our rights to raise children according to our own beliefs – whatever they may be. I did not manage to get into the Polish parliament, but our fantastic team of eleven candidates did. Already today I am starting my efforts so that *Konfederacja* loudly raises the issue of REAL improvement in the standards of perinatal care. This is one of the aspects of

a real PRO-family policy and women's rights to a dignified birth that the PO-PiS-PSL-SLD governments have been unanimously ignoring for 30 years! We act [strong arm emoji] Klaudia Domagała #KonfederacjaForWomen #[female]Confederates¹²⁷ (Konfederacja, 2019a)

While this post illustrates the possibility – and even the willingness – of *Konfederacja*'s women to have their voices heard and to win over more women to their ideas, it also shows the tendency to limit women's engagement to that of a particular interest group fighting against feminism, focusing on 'feminine' topics, and talking to female voters mostly as mothers. Domagała has been actively trying to shape an electoral offer for women within the party, for example by focusing on the issue of maternity benefits for working women (Domagała, 2020a) or problems with perinatal care (Domagała, 2020c). Based on Karen Celis and Sarah Childs's (2014) distinction between 'feminist' claims – striving towards gender equality – and 'gendered' claims – addressing women's issues outside of a gender egalitarian framework – it appears that *Konfederacja*'s female members do address women-specific issues and making substantive 'gendered claims' on behalf of women, but without questioning wider heterosexual structures. Even if the focus remains on women's maternal role, women are also addressed as actors in the wage economy, showing the willingness to also address women in 'modern traditional' gender roles, and revelatory of what I understand as the party's 'modernisation' efforts.

Eventually, Domagała organised women in the party in a group called '*Kobiety Wolności i Niepodległości*' (Women of Liberty and Independence, relating to the party's full name, *Konfederacja Wolności i Niepodległości*), which transformed into a charitable organization in 2020. The foundation writes about itself that it is "FROM WOMEN – FOR WOMEN! Let us be free! The foundation [...] has been founded with a thought for all women who need support

for many aspects of their life”¹²⁸ (*O Fundacji*, n.d.). On the foundation’s website, there are five fields of activity listed: perinatal care, respite care, personal development, preventive care for single mothers, and better medical care for women¹²⁹ (*O Fundacji*, n.d.), showing an understanding of women mostly through their role as mothers. However, personal development “for women who want to realize themselves in their professional work”¹³⁰ shows that it also addresses women in the wage economy. Between 2020 and 2023, the organization run by Domagała and two other female party members prepared a yearly calendar featuring *Konfederacja*’s female members to raise funds. Each edition was different, with images evoking different tropes and using different levels of objectification, but often featuring the image of the sexy woman (Domagała, 2020b; Fundacja Kobiety Wolności i Niepodległości, n.d.). Thus, the calendars freely borrowed from the genre of adult calendars for heterosexual men, and showed a tension between female agency and female objectification, perhaps as a balance between the sex appeal likely to attract an overwhelmingly heterosexual male audience and the prudishness and seriousness expected of female representatives from a conservative political party. The absence of a calendar for 2024 and 2025 begs the question whether female members have realised that the calendar did not serve them towards more substantive representation.

Contrary to much of party communication, this focus on ‘feminine’ issues was not often present during the interviews with female party members, who rarely framed their political engagement as primarily motivated by ‘women’s issues’. As I mentioned in Chapter 4, Natalia (NN) was the only female member to explain her involvement as fighting for a better Poland for her children. Furthermore, she framed her political involvement around the issue of

perinatal care as derived from her own childbirth experiences. As a candidate, she decided to focus on female voters and ‘women’ issues:

Because I am a woman though, so, like, this motherhood is something that really interests me. So I wanted to focus on those women, also, also, because those women, right, as they say, the leftist parties, like, are dealing with them in that other aspect because they fight for women’s rights or rights to abortion or equality. So, but we here on the right we approach it, like, a bit from another angle, like, that for us women’s rights is also the right for every woman to be born so we also fight for life’s protection here, but also, like, being a mom I also had to deal with perinatal care, which is lagging behind here in Poland.¹³¹

As previously mentioned, female activists often make ‘gendered claims’ to address women’s issues, but without – and even in opposition to – any feminist framing. As Natalia’s example reveals, the particular position of woman, and mother, can be an incentive to start being politically active, as other scholars working on women’s political engagement have shown (Werbner, 1999). As scholar Eva Svatoňová has shown in the case of a Czech conservative women’s group, motherhood can also be used to signify moral superiority (Svatoňová, 2022, p. 242).

Calling it maternalism and defining it as “the use of motherhood to justify political activism” (Power, 2001, p.25, cited in Scrinzi, 2024, p. 104), Francesca Scrinzi also sees it as an expression of ‘emphasized femininity’. In the Polish context, it is a strategy that has been used by women politicians in general to legitimate their engagement in stereotypically feminine terms of caring and mothering, and by focusing on social issues like education and healthcare (Marmola & Olszanecka, 2012, pp. 197–198). In the Polish far right, the issue of women’s position and role has also been studied and scholars have come to similar conclusions (Kajta, 2022; Kociołowicz-Wiśniewska, 2019). Thus, in the 2010s, seeing little space for themselves in their groups displaying a strongly militarised masculinity, far-right female members

founded two women's sub-groups, including one in the RN. Admitting being "a bit pushed towards the back", these women started to focus on 'female' issues such as the fight against abortion, childcare and family issues and charity for women, and presented themselves as standing up against feminists (Kociołowicz-Wiśniewska, 2019, p. 121). As Kociołowicz-Wiśniewska writes, this approach gave these activists a voice, but it also relegated them to secondary 'feminine' issues. The few far-right female activists questioning gender inequality have even decided to outside of the male-led movements, as Justyna Kajta points out (Kajta, 2022, p. 63). This analysis echoes my findings on *Konfederacja*'s female members who constantly have to negotiate the tensions between their presence and the party's counter-hegemonic gender project, something that pushes them in 'feminine' themes. As I show in the next section, it also confined them to secondary roles and kept them away from the frontstage.

3. Women of *Konfederacja*: between masculinity and femininity

I contend that the party's highly masculinist norms of participation have played against the emergence of strong female leaders within *Konfederacja*. Female party members have had to navigate the masculinist gender hegemony of the Polish political scene within a party representing an even more masculinist counter-hegemony, resulting in a subordinate position when it comes to representation and power. In this section, I argue that female party members have failed to access positions of leadership because they have been caught in a double bind between the need to enact *Konfederacja*'s counter-hegemonic masculinist political style while also corresponding to the expectations of 'emphasised feminine'. As the modalities and intensity of this double bind are not fixed, and have been shifting due to the pressure for greater gender equality in Polish society and changes in *Konfederacja*'s strategy, there has been a greater visibility of female figures in the party.

The double bind of masculinist politics

In addition to facing difficulties on the Polish political scene because of the particularly brutal masculinist political style developed in recent years in Poland, the far right has gone even further in this trend by engaging in a strongly masculinist and even hypermasculine form of politics. With such a political style, it is not surprising that so few *Konfederatki*, female *Konfederacja* members, have managed to carve themselves a space at the party's top level. The issue is not that it would be impossible for them to partake in this kind of political style, but rather that they would need to carefully balance 'masculinist' characteristics associated with far-right politicians with the 'feminine' embodiment that is considered appropriate for women in the public sphere. This 'double bind' between femininity and competence, i.e. the need to embody 'feminine' social norms while also abiding by 'masculine' norms of competence – such as leadership, strength, authority, decisiveness – has long been identified in studies of women in the public sphere as an important limitation for women's access to positions of power (Campus, 2013, pp. 54–55).

In the political context, this double bind means that women have to put on a performance that strikes a balance between the expectations for a 'masculinised' political scene and the need to abide by social expectations on 'feminine' performance. This double bind means that women do participate in politics, but face a deeply anchored set of expectations that tend to limit their ability to play leading and influential roles. Yet, several women politicians have managed this double bind of 'masculine' leadership and 'feminine' embodiment through a skilful combination of both, such as combining 'masculine' qualities of leadership and power with 'feminine' qualities of stereotypically good physical appearance and/or maternal care (Geva, 2018, p. 7; Meret et al., 2016, pp. 133–134). While these dynamics tend to limit possibilities

for women in politics in general, the situation is arguably worse for women of radical parties like *Konfederacja* which sometimes deploy an anti-establishment style, involving a ‘low’ repertoire of performance involving bad manners to signify rebellion and bond with citizens, including through a ‘macho’ masculinist performance (Moffitt & Tormey, 2014, pp. 391–392; Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2015; Ostiguy, 2009). Such repertoire of performance becomes particularly inaccessible to female politicians if such performance marks them in people’s eyes as too ‘unfeminine’. As Donatella Campus remarks, if female politicians “swear, shout, or address someone aggressively, they are mocked or treated as if they were out of control and potentially dangerous” (Campus, 2013, pp. 58–59). Despite these obstacles, several women on the far right like Marine Le Pen have succeeded in enacting the necessary ‘masculine’ toughness expected by their voters while also keeping a ‘feminine’ image (Geva, 2018).

In the Polish context, while the country has had three female Prime Ministers since 1989 – three more than Czechia – this fact hardly represents Polish women’s real political power. More often than not, female politicians have been put in positions of power as the result of internal party manoeuvres and communication strategies (Szczurbiak, 2016, p. 7; Turska-Kawa & Olszanecka-Marmola, 2016, p. 68). Part of the explanation lies in the PiS-PO duel that has been dominating Polish politics since 2005 and has taken a strongly personalised form around the masculine leaderships of Jarosław Kaczyński (PiS) and Donald Tusk (PO), leaving little space for female leaders. This trend is obviously not absolute nor static, and the 2020-2021 feminist mobilisation against the further restriction on reproductive rights showed an increasing readiness by many women to embrace this brutalised political style, as in the “Fuck Off!”, “Fuck PiS!”¹³² and other vulgar and angry slogans, as well as to resort to direct action, including vandalism and some violence. However, this feminist mobilisation also faced a

backlash based on stereotypes about women's proper conduct, as some of the aforementioned comments by the interviewees have shown. Thus, while a greater number of Polish women have gained access to the political scene, they still have to navigate masculine hegemonic terms and norms, as it has been observed in other countries (Campus, 2013, p. 57).

The double bind persists not only through punitive measures – comments, criticism, stigmatisation, sanctions, exclusion – but also because women have internalised its features to a large extent. As the interviews have shown, *Konfederacja* female members do not recognize low female participation as an issue and do not express willingness to climb up the party ladder. Thus, the point is not to suggest that a handful of male leaders have conspired to constrain women to a particular subordinate position in the party or to particular topics. As the concept of hegemony developed by Antonio Gramsci posits, hegemony does not function simply through coercion, but is rather deeply anchored and reproduced in society through norms and institutions (Kováts, 2023). Obviously, the presence of powerful male leaders with misogynistic views and with a highly masculinised conception of politics plays strongly against the emergence of female figures in *Konfederacja*. But the dynamics of the gender hegemony are often more subtle and less conscious and it is more likely that, in *Konfederacja* as everywhere else, a complex interplay of factors leads to women's subordinate position, including gendered socialisation, gendered political culture and gendered party structures. Through daily practices, the party leaders and members – both male and female – reproduce masculinised norms of gendered relations that make women subordinate to men and that limit the possibilities of women to transcend this subordination (Schippers, 2007, p. 100). However, as the interviews have shown, this does not mean that women in the party are mere victims who do not have a voice of their own and do not exercise proper agency. Indeed, the female

interviewees often had some kind of position of authority – albeit limited and internal – and they were often complicit in maintaining women’s subordination based on their own convictions. In short, the gender hegemony at play in *Konfederacja* shows how both men and women naturalise and normalise the gender hegemony and reproduce it within the party.

Party ‘demasculinisation’ and the emergence of women leaders

While the masculinist character of *Konfederacja* and the limiting effects it has had on women in the party are undeniable and enduring, recent developments have shown that the party has been changing, and that it has somewhat opened the door to some female leaders. While it might be too early to claim that Polish politics have been ‘demasculinised’, in line with the idea that there is a weakening of ‘masculine’ standards for political leaders in some countries (Campus, 2013, p. 59), I argue that *Konfederacja* has somewhat shifted further away from the aggressive ‘military masculinity’ and has tried to destigmatise its image by adapting to the Polish gender hegemony through the projection of heterosexual family normality and the promotion of female figures. This shift has somewhat weakened the terms of the double bind in the party, enabling the emergence of an assertive and successful female leader like Ewa Zajączkowska-Hernik.

The party’s efforts to distance itself from the radical image of aggressive military masculinity already appeared at its beginnings. Indeed, during the 2019 parliamentary race, the party repeatedly underlined that its meetings were ‘family-friendly’ and it organised a ‘family picnic’, with a playground and entertainment for children. As Natalia (NN) confessed, it was a conscious decision and she had herself contributed to this strategy, which she had also implemented in her local section by organising childcare during party reunions. Commenting on the child-friendly political meetings, she saw it as “breaking that stereotype that it’s a

masculine party, like, just men are engaged in it, it simply shows that we're actually open for families.”¹³³ She also expressed satisfaction to see Bosak (RN) and Winnicki (RN) show up with their wives and children at the anti-abortion *Marsz dla życia i rodziny* ('March for life and family'). Thus, organisers like Natalia have been actively working to 'de-masculinise' the party image and replace it with a more (heteronormative) family-friendly one.

These efforts have also taken place on the level of female representation, as the previously mentioned attempts to frame *Konfederacja* as a party for women have shown. In the run-up to the 2023 parliamentary elections, the party redoubled its efforts to shake off its hypermasculine image. In March 2023, female members launched an official TikTok account called '*Kobiety Konfederacji*' (The Women of *Konfederacja*) featuring the party's female members intervening on a wide array of topics, including political, economic and geopolitical issues (*Kobiety Konfederacji*, n.d.). In April 2023, the Women of *Konfederacja* organised an '*Akademia liderek*' (Academy of female leaders) – using the feminine form of 'leader' usually despised by the far right – and it organised the *Kongres Kobiet Wolności i Niepodległości* ('Congress of Women of Liberty and Independence'). Judging from social media posts, the congress mixed, on the one hand, a highly emphasised femininity (formal feminine dress, pink balloons, pink participant bags) and 'feminine' issues like 'the beauty of femininity' (*piękno kobiecości*) and 'women's health', and, on the other hand, a gender-neutral vision of women as entrepreneurs, professionals, gun-owners, etc (*Konfederacja*, 2023c). In general, the women section of *Konfederacja* displayed an image of female members that somewhat broke free of the framework of the 'neo-traditional' feminine field of family and that engaged with many fields of interest, including those typically reserved to men, as in a 'modern traditional' gender regime.

It is also interesting to note that just before the 2023 parliamentary election, when migration became a campaign topic, the ‘Women of *Konfederacja*’ picked up the rhetoric on migration as a gendered threat to women’s – and children’s – security, something widespread among Western far-right parties. In an all-women debate between parties, Anna Bryłka implicitly evoked migration when she promised more security for women, claiming that women in Western Europe do not feel safe to go out at night and that the problem has started in Poland as well (Kobiety Konfederacji, 2023a). Two weeks before the vote, Women of *Konfederacja* released a more explicit video where several female members underlined the high number of reported rapes in Sweden, France, Denmark, Germany, and compared them to the low number in Poland, promising to stop the immigration of “people who are culturally alien to us and who threaten the safety of WOMEN” and calling to vote for Konfederacja as “those who stand in our defence”¹³⁴ (Kobiety Konfederacji, 2023b). On their TikTok channel, the most successful video with close to a million and a half views features an attack by Ewa Zajączkowska-Hernik (NN) against a (female) political opponent, asking “how many girls have to be raped, how many women have to be raped, killed”¹³⁵ before her opponent will oppose the immigration of ‘culturally alien’ people (Kobiety Konfederacji, 2024). In addition to framing men as the politicians/warriors who defend women (and children) (Kociółowicz-Wiśniewska, 2019), Zajączkowska-Hernik’s rhetoric echoes the ‘femonationalism’ mentioned earlier in this dissertation, but with the same nuance as in the SPD’s case: it does not claim that gender equality is a core national value.

Despite still being mostly confined to their own separate platform and to ‘women’s’ issues, women’s activism has nevertheless gained female members more visibility, has given them a voice on a wider array of topics and has also showed the party’s willingness to increase

women's presence. At the 2024 European parliamentary (EP) elections, two female candidates Anna Bryłka (RN) and Ewa Zajączkowska-Hernik (NN), who had both been spokespersons and had been featured in party communication and in party meetings, took the front stage and succeeded in winning seats as the party did rather well with 12.1% of the vote, finishing third. While Anna Bryłka was one of the few far-right female activists who had been around for a long time and had always been more of a technical specialist with limited rhetorical skills, Ewa Zajączkowska-Hernik (NN) has offered the example of a woman able to skilfully navigate *Konfederacja*'s double bind and rise quickly through party ranks.

Ewa Zajączkowska-Hernik as the woman warrior

Ewa Zajączkowska-Hernik seems to have best succeeded in managing the double bind, through her assertive 'masculine' style and her emphasised, yet modern femininity. With a background in journalism, the 34-year old came back to NN in 2023 and quickly rose in the party ranks through her ability to incarnate the kind of masculinised politics favoured by *Konfederacja* while also exhibiting the 'emphasised femininity' expected by the party from a woman. Her speeches and interventions have often appeared on the official party channels, where women had not been often featured previously, and she has mobilised quite an important following on her social media platforms. While she ran from the last position on a regional list dominated by men for the 2023 parliamentary elections, her rising fame then propelled her to the second place on a Warsaw list for the 2024 EU elections, where she gathered three times more votes than the first (male) candidate and won a seat.

When she announced her candidacy to the EP, she underlined qualities that closely fit the masculinist mode prioritised by *Konfederacja*: "You know that I am combative, you know that I am uncompromising on issues of state interest. You know that I do not let others push me

around and I tell it like it is”¹³⁶ (Konfederacja, 2024c). She has shown those ‘qualities’ in her numerous interventions and debates, where she does not hesitate to harshly criticise and attack her opponents, like in the aforementioned successful TikTok video. Her first intervention in the EP became viral when she attacked the EU Commission President Ursula Von der Leyen, pointing her finger at her and ostensibly tearing two sheets of paper representing the ecological ‘Green Deal’ and the ‘Pact on Migration and Asylum’ while claiming that von der Leyen should be ‘in prison’ (Konfederacja, 2024d). The original video has gathered to this date more than two and a half million views and the intervention received international media attention, with foreign far-right influencers and media sharing it widely (Scheffer, 2024).

During her campaign and after, Zajączkowska-Hernik made migration one of her main topics – like the party in general – and she has widely used the racialisation of sexual violence as her framing. To make her point, she has not hesitated to use sharp and colourful language, as in a speech at the start of the EU electoral campaign, where she used the well-known declinist framing of Konfederacja, denouncing the “extermination of native Europeans”, and said:

I am the mother of two-year-old Marysia and twelve-year-old Leon, and I promise, ladies and gentlemen [*interrupts herself, overwhelmed by emotion*], that for my children and for all children, as well as their mothers, grandmothers, sisters and friends, we will fight to make Poland safe. I cannot imagine that some pigment-positive princes of the Orient or kings of the bush [...] will be sent to Poland and here in Poland they will create their no-go zones, be maintained with our taxes, assault, rape, and rob our women¹³⁷ (Konfederacja, 2024a).

Even if she designated the migrants in openly racialised terms, she then lamented that she could not call them as she wanted because of political correctness and the curtailing of freedom of speech. In an April 2024 post republished by the party, she also invoked her children to explain her engagement against ‘illegal migration’, also adding her status as a woman: “As a mother of two children and as a woman, I want women and children to be safe

in Europe!”¹³⁸ (Konfederacja, 2024b). In her clash against von der Leyen, she also said “I’m addressing you as a woman to a woman, as a mother to a mother”, accusing the Commission President of making “millions of women and children feel threatened in their own cities” and making her “responsible for each rape, each attack, each tragedy”¹³⁹ committed by immigrants (Konfederacja, 2024d). Zajączkowska-Hernik displays the aforementioned tendency for women to legitimate political participation through motherhood, and she has repeatedly insisted on her status as a woman and mother to rail against immigrants from ‘culturally alien’ countries, singling out immigrants from Muslim countries by using the kind of ‘cultural racist’ rhetoric increasingly used by *Konfederacja* and analysed in Chapter 4. In the text accompanying a selfie with a group of NN female representatives, she claimed that *Konfederacja* is a party for women and starkly illustrated her balancing act between the ‘masculinist’ aggressivity and ‘emphasised femininity’, arguing: “We show that we lead a family life and we are fantastic moms, and at the same time we are able to act in a predatory and active way”¹⁴⁰ (Zajączkowska-Hernik, 2024a).

In her communication, she has showed her readiness to be ‘predatory’ and has not shied away from drawing from the ‘low’ repertoire largely deployed by men in populist politics, sometimes using language that bordered on the vulgar. In this use of ‘audacious’ language, she has also not hesitated to distance herself from a ‘feminine’ political style of her female opponents. After Deputy Minister of the Climate and Environment Urszula Zielińska strongly responded to one of Zajączkowska-Hernik’s critical tweets, Zajączkowska-Hernik made a new post in which she sharply denounced Zielińska as too emotional: “Madam Minister @Ula_Zielinska is letting her emotions run wild. She is not fit to be a politician”¹⁴¹ (Zajączkowska-Hernik, 2024b). In an all-women debate ahead of the 2023 elections, in

September 2023, she mocked a blond opponent, saying “That’s how you talk to a blonde [woman]”¹⁴² (Waleński, 2023). Zajączkowska-Hernik showed that she was not afraid to use the masculinist and provocative political style preferred in her party, including vulgarisms, and she even went as far as to yield stereotypes against women to disqualify her female opponents.

Drawing from the idea of the double bind, I argue that Zajączkowska-Hernik’s success in a masculinist party like *Konfederacja* lies in her ability to navigate the party’s counter-hegemonic gender order, embodying the masculinist tough, aggressive politics favoured by the party and its electors, but also counter-balancing it with highly ‘emphasised femininity’, both in rhetoric and style. In her rhetoric, she has often been using her status as a woman and mother to legitimate her presence in the public sphere and she has been an ardent opponent to feminism, while in style she has used a stereotypically feminine, yet modern appearance. Zajączkowska-Hernik’s rise in the party has also undoubtedly been helped by the party’s efforts to ‘de-masculinise’ its image, which have created more space for female representatives. However, it is her ability to embody the right balance of *Konfederacja* militant masculinist rhetoric and style, together with her emphasised femininity that has allowed Zajączkowska-Hernik to rise above all the other women in the party. It will be interesting to see whether *Konfederacja*’s masculinist political culture will further change, whether other female figures can follow her lead and whether Zajączkowska-Hernik can pursue her rise while successfully navigating the double bind.

The emergence of a female leader like Zajączkowska-Hernik also illustrates the adaptation of *Konfederacja*’s counter-hegemonic project in its attempts to subvert and redirect the current gender hegemony. Indeed, her rhetoric shows the shift towards new far-right framings both drawing from and subverting the existing hegemony: not only in her wide usage of ‘cultural

racism' and 'femonationalism' to counter feminism, but also in her ubiquitous use of the party's frame of 'normality', amongst other in the topics of EU environmental policies and agriculture, which is her topic of specialisation. Thus, Zajączkowska-Hernik represents the party's 'feminisation' strategy as a strategy of 'de-demonisation', which has often been used by other far-right parties to improve their image and attract more female voters (Sauer, 2020, p. 26). And it has somewhat worked, judging by the 2024 EP elections, when *Konfederacja* received 8% of women's vote (compared to 3.4% at the 2023 parliamentary elections), and somewhat reduced its gender gap, which nevertheless remains important (8% vs 16.2%) (*Kobiety i mężczyźni przy urnach*, 2024).

Conclusion

Representing a masculinist gender counter-hegemony in its ideology and mobilisation, *Konfederacja* shows well why it is crucial to pay attention to both ideas and performances to understand the importance of gender and sexuality in the far right. Indeed, the party has been drawing from the masculinist ideological and performative repertoires of the traditional Polish military masculinity and of the more contemporary marketplace masculinity, with the exclusion of women and non-heterosexual men as crucial for the cohesion of the strong homosocial links. The party has embodied a pronounced masculinist style in an already strongly masculine Polish political scene, but it has also adjusted its style to the parliamentary scene and to changing gender social norms, somewhat shifting away from the stigma of 'hypermasculine' football hooligans and confrontational street tactics. Considering the masculinist ideology and style of the party, it is hardly surprising that women occupy subordinate positions in the party, especially since the male party leaders and the interviewed members have often naturalised/normalised – and even sometimes advocated – women's

absence from their party, and from politics in general. Women in the party have thus had to negotiate the party's masculinist counter-hegemonic gender order, which has mostly driven women into roles that are symbolic at best and decorative at worse, and has kept them to 'feminine' issues, but they have also found internal positions of power as 'centrewomen'. As I have argued, women's place in *Konfederacja* reflects the double bind for women in masculinist institutions like far-right parties, where they are caught between the expectations of 'feminine' behaviour and the requirements of masculinist competence and performance, which severely limits women's ability to access positions of power. Nevertheless, under pressure from wider social expectations on women's place in society and politics, *Konfederacja* has recently somewhat 'demasculinised' its rhetoric and style, and this has opened the door to greater female representation, and even to the emergence of female figures. As I show in the last subsection, the case of EU deputy Ewa Zajączkowska-Hernik illustrates that some women on the far right are able to navigate the double bind, counter-balancing aggressive 'masculinist' politics with an emphasised femininity. It remains to see whether these changes can lead to a more substantive role for women in the party and even break the masculinist character of the leadership structures, which are still dominated by the male leaders and the entirely male Council of Leaders.

Chapter 7: Tomio Okamura's one-man show as masculinist politics

It is an unusually hot September day in Hradec Králové, a city about a hundred kilometres east of Prague, and there is a lively market on a central square. Apart from the brawny men at the entrance gate, the market is full of families and elderly people buying groceries and enjoying snacks and drinks on long tables under a tent shielding them from the hard-beating sun. A man in a neatly tucked-in chequered shirt and jeans is surrounded by people who come to talk and take pictures with him. He listens to them and obliges everyone patiently. This man is Tomio Okamura and he is not at a local market, but rather at his own 'Czech Fair', a travelling market with dirt-cheap groceries, snacks and drinks serving as the main campaign attraction for his SPD party ahead of the October 2021 legislative elections. After mingling with the crowd, Okamura steps onto the podium and welcomes the people gathered around the tables and standing next to the stands. The Czech national anthem resonates, followed by the SPD's patriotic folk-rock campaign song, and Okamura then launches into a 45-minute tirade. In his speech, he touches on all kind of topics, from food prices to electric cars, from taxes to crime, without forgetting the party's classics: direct democracy, illegal migration and social benefits abuses. The crowd hangs onto his every word and releases its biggest roar of approval when Okamura calls for paedophiles to be castrated. The other party leaders and the local candidates barely get a few minutes to greet the people. After their presentation, the meeting ends with the SPD campaign song blasting its refrain from the speakers: "Playing fair for the people, defending one's nation, one's state."¹⁴³ The crowd then slowly disperses, some staying for a 15

Czech crowns (CZK) beer (0.60 EUR) or trying to grab some more potatoes for 4.60 CZK per kilogram (0.20 EUR).

Who could have foreseen the fate of this 49-year old Eurasian-looking man standing before the small crowd in Hradec Králové as the leader of the Czech far right? As such electoral meetings vividly demonstrate, SPD is to a large extent ‘Tomio Okamura’s One-Man Show’. Indeed, he is the leader, face and soul of the party, and he is also the one people come and vote for, as discussed in the previous chapters. With his rhetoric and style, Okamura embodies the charismatic far-right leader who challenges the system and the elites to defend the fatherland, the common folk, and their ‘normal world’. In this chapter, I focus on the gendered and sexualised aspects of Tomio Okamura’s style, zooming in on its masculinist facets and the ways they are embedded in the party’s functioning. As I argue in this chapter, a key aspect of his one-man show is precisely that it is a *man’s* show, in the stereotypical understanding of a performance of hegemonic masculinity tailored for his audience, combining the image of the self-made man with that of the man of the people, balancing rebellion and respectability. In contrast to *Konfederacja*, Okamura does not represent a counter-hegemonic masculinity, but rather an alternative performance of masculinity in line with his anti-establishment political style. Even in this ‘milder’ form of masculinity, the importance of the gendered and sexualised aspects come out starkly, highlighting the importance of style to understand gender and sexuality in SPD mobilisation. As in the case of *Konfederacja*, Okamura and SPD also show the downside of masculinism. Indeed, in the Czech case, while Okamura’s ideas and his political persona – including their masculinist aspects – have turned him into one of the country’s most popular politicians, his excessive control and authoritarianism within SPD have

hindered the party's growth by confining SPD to a boys' club around the figure of the leader, with few other strong male figures and even fewer women in visible and influential positions.

1. From self-made man to man of the people

Drawing from the idea of gender hegemony, I approach Tomio Okamura's political rise as partially enabled by specific performances of masculinity drawing from hegemonic masculinity. Indeed, as he established himself as a successful entrepreneur and then as a far-right challenger, he has been deploying particular repertoires with a wide range of explicit and implicit masculinist tropes. As I argue in this section, Okamura's emergence as showman-turned-politician has a lot to do with his ability to embody the right masculinity for his audience, from the self-made man to the rebellious man of the people. Amongst others, his assertion of masculinity has played a role in his ability to overcome his mixed-race origins, and he has combined his origins and his performance of masculinity to create a special bond with large parts of the public. As I pointed out in the previous chapter, the point is not that everything that Okamura does is a performance of hegemonic masculinity, but rather that he draws from a masculinist rhetoric and style that are hardly accessible to women, caught as they are in the aforementioned double bind.

Tomio Okamura's Czech dream

Born to a Japanese-Korean father and a Czech mother, young boy Tomio spent part of his childhood in a Czech orphanage and experienced bullying because of his foreign origins, something that left him with a stuttering problem until early adulthood. Exploiting new opportunities with the country's capitalist transformation in the 1990s and using his mixed background to introduce Japanese cuisine to the Czechs and Czechia to Japanese tourists,

Okamura became a successful businessman and soon converted this capital in public fame through the media, amongst other things serving as judge/investor in the ‘D-Day’ (*Den D*) reality show for would-be entrepreneurs in 2008-2011. He also became the spokesperson of a tourism association and showed constant readiness to intervene in the media. At that time, Okamura was the media’s darling and a celebrity whose private life made it into the tabloids, which commented on his new cars or girlfriends (e.g. *Okamura a jeho harém*, 2013; *Pracháč Okamura přiznal příjmy*, 2013). Despite important differences, the resemblance with Donald Trump and his rise to media fame in the United States – amongst others through the business reality show *The Apprentice* – is uncanny (Schleusener, 2020).

In his rise to prominence in the 2000s and 2010s, Tomio Okamura deployed different repertoires of performance with more or less explicit masculine tropes. As he became a celebrity at the turn of the century’s first decade, Okamura consolidated his image as a self-made man who pulled himself up by his own bootstraps, something that he has never ceased underline. This narrative was the central pillar of his aforementioned 2010 (auto)biography ‘Tomio Okamura – The Czech Dream’ (*Tomio Okamura – Český sen*) co-written with a befriended journalist (Novák Večerníček & Okamura, 2010). In it, Okamura’s difficult childhood, being rejected for his mixed origins in both Japan and Czechia, is highlighted, as well as his tough path from poverty to wealth, from a rough start as garbage collector and popcorn seller in Japan to entrepreneurial success upon returning to Czechia. In the book, Okamura commented on his experiences with racist bullying by underlining that his difference meant that he had to fight for everything in his life by himself and could rely only on himself (Novák Večerníček & Okamura, 2010, pp. 36, 41).

While scholars have noted how Okamura took advantage of the neoliberal discourse around personal success (Císař & Navrátil, 2019, p. 187), they missed the discourse's strong masculine imprint. Indeed, the new capitalist winner was the self-made man – and not the self-made woman – and Okamura thus came to embody the dominant – or 'hegemonic' (Connell, 2005) – form of masculinity in neo-liberal Czechia after 1989 (Šmídová, 2009, p. 195). Even before his entry into politics, an intrinsic aspect of the self-made man image built around – and by – Tomio Okamura was his gendered performance. His rags-to-riches tale includes many of the masculine aspects intrinsic to the myth of the self-made man. As he likes to underline to this date, he did not receive any help from anyone and started with manual, physical work, including the 'dirty' work of garbage collector, and worked his way up to entrepreneurial success by taking risks and seizing his chances. As the (auto)biography goes, Okamura then had to fight a long and lonely struggle against dishonest competitors and corrupt politicians trying to squeeze him out of the Prague tourism business (Novák Večerníček & Okamura, 2010). He nevertheless prevailed and gained respect, transcending his socio-economic and racial origins, as well as his stuttering problem. As he concludes in his excerpt on ethnic minorities in Czechia where he advises minorities to work hard to overcome racism: "People used to laugh at me here in the Czech Republic, but not anymore."¹⁴⁴ (Novák Večerníček & Okamura, 2010, p. 180) Transpiring from his tale are well-known tropes of 'real masculinity': adventurous separation, rugged individualism, physical endurance, risk-taking and anti-institutionalism (Catano, 1990, 2000). His story is a series of the manhood acts mentioned in the previous chapter: exerting control, resisting control and eliciting deference (Ralph-Morrow, 2022, p. 29). In a way, Okamura's rise as a self-made business man combined gaining

respect as both a racialised person and as a man, with his economic success winning him acceptance as a Czech and asserting his identity as a ‘real man’.

Throughout his (auto)biography, Okamura also reproduces the idea of the workaholic patriarch absent from the home and yet providing for the family’s needs: his grandfather, his father and himself, all three represent these ideals of the male breadwinner. In the book, he says that he liked and dated ‘very emancipated’ women with ‘clear opinions’, but that he adheres to Japanese traditional understandings according to which the wife should not be pushed to work for financial reasons: “I would consider it an absolute failure of myself if I were not able to provide economically for my family as a man”¹⁴⁵ (Novák Večerníček & Okamura, 2010, pp. 163–164). It is even mentioned in the book that, after separating from his Japanese wife, he paid her an apartment and gave her money for her to stay in Czechia and take care of their son (Novák Večerníček & Okamura, 2010, pp. 105–106). These comments and arrangements point to the gendered dynamics of masculine self-making, where the man’s worth resides in his ability to be the sole breadwinner, and where socio-economic empowerment in the public sphere serves to legitimate – and even enable – his absence in the private sphere (Mulholland, 2003, pp. 89–110).

With ‘normal people’ against the Roma and politicians

As Tomio Okamura rose to fame and became a media personality, he also increasingly intervened in socio-political affairs, where he often denounced the political elites. In 2007, he founded a blog on the popular blogging platform of the mainstream daily *Mladá Fronta Dnes* and started to express his views on just about everything, gathering the platform’s biggest readership by 2011 and turning some of his blogposts in a political book titled ‘The Art of Ruling’ (*Umění vládnout*) (Dvořák, 2011). Under the pretext of saying things as they are, he

took gradually more radical positions, especially against the Roma, at a time when interracial tensions were running high between the White majority and the Roma minority. In a 2011 blogpost read by almost 200,000 people, he railed against political correctness, stating that the Roma were a burden for society and taking the defence of the far-right *Dělnická strana*'s (Workers' Party) proposal to create a state abroad to settle the Czech Roma (Okamura, 2011). In the same post, he also denounced the alleged positive discrimination for women and rejected homosexual families. The same year, he took the defence of a neo-Nazi convicted for the murder of a Roma man and he participated in whitewashing the far-right past of a candidate for vice-minister (Pálková, 2011). In doing so, Okamura never directly espoused the far right's racial theses, denying any racialising tendencies in his discourse against 'unadaptables', and rather played the devil's advocate in the name of fairness and free speech. As I showed in Chapter 5, Okamura has mastered over the years the 'far-right newspeak', using mainstream liberal notions of freedom and democracy to defend his ethnonationalist and authoritarian views (Mlejnková, 2024).

Moreover, he often took cover behind his mixed racial background to dodge any accusation of racism. Early on in his socio-political engagement, when he received backlash for some of his comments on the Roma, Okamura was quick to point out that he himself had been the victim of racism and that his goal was precisely to stop the rise of racism by urging the Roma to drop their 'unadaptable' lifestyle (Hechtová, 2011). Despite experiencing racism himself, Okamura writes in his 2010 book that Czechia is a tolerant society and that minorities have to show that they give more than they take (Novák Večerníček & Okamura, 2010, p. 180). The title itself 'The Czech Dream' seems to refer to 'The American Dream' – the idea that anyone with a strong work ethic and talent can make it in the United States – and is a flattering reference to

Czechia. In another interview from 2011, Okamura made it clear that he refused to discuss racism in Czechia as a systemic obstacle: “To anyone who complains about being offended for racial reasons, my advice to all minorities who complain about being pushed away is simple – start working with all your might.”¹⁴⁶ (Šebek, 2011) In short, he was quick to turn his discourse about individual success against the ‘unadaptables’ and/or the Roma, whom he made responsible of their own misery (Císař & Navrátil, 2019, p. 187), while he used his success story to reassure Czech society of its tolerance and moral righteousness.

Okamura then surfed on the wave of unprecedented discontent with political affairs (see Chapter 1) to jump in the arena as an independent, beating an established social-democrat (ČSSD) politician in the 2012 Senate elections and announcing his intention to run for president in the first direct presidential elections held in 2013, something that he ended up not successfully registering for. At that time, he complemented his image of rich celebrity self-made man with a performance of man of the people, a non-politician going into parliamentary politics to represent ‘normal people’ against a corrupt political class. In an interview right after his Senate victory, he explained his success with the following words: “People see that the republic has been completely looted over the last twenty years, thieves are laughing in our faces from the left and right. They are running around more or less freely, and normal people are only getting their taxes and retirement age raised”¹⁴⁷ (Žižková & Janík, 2012). As he underlined himself, he won his Senate seat by going to discuss with people in pubs, festivals and public squares, commenting for one newspaper: “leave the billboards to the politicians”¹⁴⁸ (Bořil, 2012; Žižková & Janík, 2012). By expressing his opinion about more or less every topic and offering easy solutions, Okamura early on received the label of ‘populist’, something

that he always vehemently rejected, and even used in his self-victimisation tactics (Kolář, 2012).

Over time, Okamura has never abandoned his image of the self-made man, and since 2020 he has been regularly reminding his Facebook audience about his tough start and rise to success, posting every several months or so a link to a 2008 half-hour long show from the public television about his story, with the comment: “about childhood in an orphanage, bullying, stuttering, beginnings as a garbage man and then as a popcorn and Coca-Cola vendor at the cinema, about starting a business at 21, about family...”¹⁴⁹ (Okamura, 2020e). However, he has progressively reframed his experience, adding a more social note to the neo-liberal mantra of hard work. In a 2022 TV show excerpt shared on his Facebook page, Okamura’s transformation in the ‘man of the people’ seemed complete, as he repeated once again that he started with manual jobs, but used this fact to underline the importance to think more about manual workers, about those who go to work, the retired, and those who have become handicapped (Okamura, 2022a). While the TV host expressed admiration for his success and for the fact that he still challenges the system despite being one of the system’s winners, Okamura responded with demonstrative humility: “I would like us not to talk so much about me, but let's talk about solving the problems of ordinary citizens in the Czech Republic, that's what bothers me.”¹⁵⁰ As I argue in the next section, it is precisely this ability to appear as the extraordinary but relatable strongman, the rebellious but respectable *male* politician that has allowed Tomio Okamura to achieve an important popular following and a certain degree of political power.

2. The one-man show with the people

As Okamura became increasingly involved in parliamentary politics, he adopted the stance of a political outsider challenging the political elites, something that involved a rich repertoire of masculinist behaviour. In the Spring of 2013, he co-founded the political party *Úsvit* and his name was quickly added to the official name, making clear that Okamura was the party's head and face. His portrait could be seen on all electoral material and he was the one touring the country to talk to the media, meet citizens and support local candidates (Kučera, 2013; Okamura, 2014b). The same happened with his next party, the current SPD, which also bore his name between 2016 and 2019. At party events, such as the 2021 'Czech Fairs' described in the introduction, Okamura is the only one to address the public at length, with his party colleagues silently standing next to him, a couple of them sometimes adding a few words. The one-man show format is also obvious online: while the party has an official Facebook account, it mostly reposts Tomio Okamura's posts and the party's paid online advertisement mostly promotes Tomio Okamura's own account, spending fifty times more for his profile than for the party's official page in the last five years (*Ad Library - Facebook*, n.d.). Thus, Okamura embodies the idea of the male political leader exercising full control over his party, taking the stage for long monologues, expressing his views about any topic in an assertive way, promoting his radical remedies with great confidence and trying to assert dominance over his rivals. While he distinguishes himself from the political establishment through his radical critique, his provocations and his image of 'normal guy', Okamura does not reject the respectable politician masculinity, but rather alternates between the two masculine personas in a skilful balancing act.

Rebellious, but respectable

In his performance of rebellious politics, Okamura prides himself in representing the people's views, in contrast to the elites' alleged political correctness and hypocrisy. Even if he has deployed a rather radical rhetoric under this pretext, he has also been careful to keep a veil of respectability to avoid falling into the margins. Thus, while Okamura picked up the ideas and vocabulary of extremist far-right parties and movements active at the turn of the century's first decade, he has managed to use them with his reassuring showman personality, his mixed racial origins and his language of liberalism, order and hard work. Whereas the skinheads and neo-Nazis leading mobilisation against the Roma triggered a backlash in the form of a moral panic (Slačálek, 2021b), mainstream politicians and populist challengers like Okamura could come in with more widely accepted forms of antigypsyism, without the street violence and the openly extremist ideology. Thus, shortly after *Úsvit*'s registration in 2013, Okamura continued with his antigypsyist rhetoric, which became the party's flagship topic, alongside the idea of direct democracy.

With his rhetoric and style, Okamura strives to perform the three aforementioned manhood acts: reject the control of the 'establishment'; assert control over his party, his rivals and minority groups like the Roma; and elicit deference as a popular political leader. These acts often take the form of continuous rounds of provocation triggering a backlash that Okamura can then frame as his struggle for the people against the elites. Thus, early on in his political career, he launched a widely-publicised polemic by denouncing the Roma's lifestyle as antagonistic to "all civilised countries" and calling on the Czech government to support the voluntary departure of the Roma towards a Roma nation-state that would be created abroad, suggesting some territory in India, the country the Roma are believed to originate from (Petřík,

2013). During the electoral campaign for the 2014 EU elections, the party then faced accusations of racism after publishing posters saying ‘Support for families, NOT unadaptables. Work for ours, NOT for immigrants’¹⁵¹ with a cartoon of a white sheep kicking out a black sheep, an image taken from a Swiss anti-migration poster (Klang, 2014). Later on, in August of the same year, Okamura stated that a concentration camp for the Roma in Nazi-occupied Czechia had just been a labour camp, prompting condemnations by most mainstream politicians (Kabátová, 2014). In early 2015, as the topic of Islam and Muslims became increasingly discussed in Czechia, Okamura shared a message from one of his party’s top representatives, in which citizens were called to ‘resist’ Muslims by walking their dogs or pigs around mosques, and he then announced his participation in a dog-walking demonstration against Muslim Arab visitors of a North Bohemian town (Okamura, 2015a; *Okamura vyvenčí psa proti Arabům*, 2015). As the aforementioned examples show, Okamura engaged in permanent rounds of provocation in the name of ‘telling things as they are’ and challenging ‘political correctness’, attracting media attention and building up an image of besieged, victimised fighter for the common folk.

All these instances show how well Okamura – consciously or not – had mastered what Ruth Wodak calls “the micro-politics of rightwing populist politics of denial” (Wodak, 2015, p. 28). In this game of provocation typical of the far right, a politician utters opinions considered scandalous by large parts of the public, pushing the media and other politicians to report and react, then he or she denies any malevolent/racist intention, and finally diverts the debate by presenting himself or herself as a victim of the establishment, by denouncing political correctness and/or by lamenting the loss of freedom of speech (Wodak, 2015, pp. 35–36). Excelling in these ‘politics of denial’, Okamura has never ceased to provoke outrage and has

been quick to deny any wrongdoing by insisting on the factual accuracy of his statements or by playing the victim of the political establishment or the media. After his entry into politics and the radicalisation of his speech, Okamura ceased to be the media's darling as he faced more critical coverage. This change contributed to the transformation of his image into a challenger standing up to the establishment, as he started to regularly attack the media as influence-wielding tools and to present himself as their victim. As in the case of *Konfederacja*, the victim status reinforces Okamura's – and SPD's – credentials as a courageous force of resistance and a radical alternative to the mainstream.

What makes this kind of rhetoric and behaviour masculine, and at times masculinist, is not that it is performed by a man, but rather that it involves a wide repertoire of characteristics associated with masculinity, including its most emphasised forms, and therefore easier for men to embody. As someone proposing daring, sweeping, radical reforms, Okamura embodies the political strongman who is willing to take risks, wants to dominate others and prefers force over compromise. For its first legislative election in 2013, he and his *Úsvit* party vowed to “End the mess and corruption” (“*Konec bordelu a korupce*”) on its posters, choosing the informal and slightly vulgar word *bordel*, meaning both a brothel and a mess, and promised to go “Courageously towards changes” (“*Odvážně k změnám*”). The masculine and masculinist aspects of Okamura's politics also come out in his style, which mixes masculine popular / working-class aesthetics and masculine parliamentary respectability. Thus, at the start of their first campaign in 2013, Tomio Okamura and his (mostly male) colleagues all wore suits and ties, but Okamura also brandished a chequered black-and-white racing flag while one of his colleague raised a starting pistol, performing the idea of a sports race (*Úsvit odstartoval kampaň, cílem je*, 2013). In 2021, the campaign start was even more spectacular, with an

enormous campaign semi-trailer truck adorned with SPD colours and the picture of Tomio Okamura serving a beer and his right-hand man Radim Fiala drinking a beer, a reference to the masculine and popular world of the Czech pub (T. M. Hall, 2003). The ‘SPD truck’ that was supposed to tour the country and accompany the ‘Czech Fairs’ mentioned in the chapter introduction also has a heavily masculine character, with the trucker linked to working-class traditional masculinity – and a profession closed to women in Communist Czechoslovakia – and with the truck’s dominant position on the road (Krátká, 2019; Ouellet, 1994). The SPD’s demonstrations in Prague ahead of the 2019 and 2024 EU elections also included live music by the rock band *Ortel*, which is controversial because of its lead singer’s past in a neo-Nazi band and because of its racist and anti-Muslim texts. The band displays a “heteronormative rugged masculinity” and it is particularly popular among the working class and in poorer regions (Daniel, 2022). Despite the use of elements signifying a certain rebellious masculinity, SPD does not engage in overtly aggressive or provocative actions, with Okamura usually choosing an acerbic rhetoric and a passionate tone, but without losing his composure, and with campaign events adopting a conservative and professional – albeit rather folkloric – outlook. On the one hand, car racing, truck, beer and rock and roll music symbolise a kind of provincial, working-class masculinity in Czechia, but on the other hand, Okamura and his colleagues’ formal attire and their rather conventional behaviour signal urban respectability and trustworthiness as parliamentary representatives. This balance between rebellious and respectable masculine repertoires has been part of Tomio Okamura’s winning formula since his start in politics.

Okamura’s – and to a larger extent the SPD’s – masculine repertoire of politics differs from *Konfederacja*’s through its lack of militaristic references and its almost complete absence of

street mobilisation. This difference is mostly due to the important differences in socio-political developments between the two countries outlined in Chapter 1, with the Polish far right strongly linked to pre-WWII politics, while the Czech far right lacks a rich military history from which to draw from. Moreover, Okamura appeared in the early 2010s as an alternative to the marginal, yet threatening groups drawing more from neo-Nazism than Czech national history (Charvát et al., 2024), and he has cultivated a softer form of politics based on pseudo-liberal rhetoric and parliamentary respectability. Moreover, as the example of former president Miloš Zeman showed, irreverence more than aggressivity is valued in Czech politics (Hesová, 2021, p. 142). The case of the current president Petr Pavel also illustrates the lack of a strong repertoire of militaristic masculinity in Czechia: despite his career in the military, he emphasised more his role as a calm and measured diplomat than a strongman during his campaign, and he had to fight off the bellicose image that SPD and ANO tried to spread.

For the people, among the people

In Tomio Okamura's skilful balancing act between rebellion and respectability, one of the signature tactics has been to not only claim to be with the people against the elites, but also to cultivate a physical proximity with the 'common folk', relentlessly visiting cities, small towns, festivals, fairs and concerts. Starting with his 2012 senatorial victory, Okamura embraced this tactic, and developed it into a well-rehearsed performance over the years. Each time he goes into the crowds, he reports about it widely on his social media pages, often sharing images of his encounters with people. Okamura usually underlines that he was "among the people" (*mezi lidmi*), found the atmosphere "great" (*skvělá*), talked with them to know what to do for them, cites a few of their local issues, and thanks people for their support, which he often describes as "huge" (*obrovská*). As he rejoiced in an interview, people always call him 'Tomio' when

they approach him, another way of highlighting proximity and familiarity with the people (Křížová, 2021). While he campaigns more intensively ahead of elections, he also goes on such trips between electoral contests, something that he boasts about, as in this Facebook post: “I am among the people in Kutná Hora at the Sedlec fair, we are chatting and I really thank many people for their open support for the SPD, there are thousands of people here, the atmosphere is great and I have picked up a lot of concrete issues that we’ll help solving”¹⁵² (Okamura, 2018b). Okamura then cites some local problems and claims that the party is already working on them in Parliament, and he concludes: “Regardless of elections, I go out all year round to take suggestions from people so that I have direct feedback all the time.”¹⁵³ By saying this, Okamura deliberately distances himself from the idea that politicians are only interested in people before the elections and he projects instead the idea of a year-round proximity with the people. In short videos accompanying such posts in 2017-2018, he is surrounded by people he presents as local SPD members, but he is always the only one talking, exposing the fact that SPD is Okamura’s one-man show. For the 2021 electoral campaign, Okamura took the time to pose for pictures with all his fans during the ‘Czech fairs’, something that was widely shared on his social media pages to show the “literally fantastic support” (“*doslova fantastickou podporu*”) of the people (Okamura, 2021). During each event, a party photographer would capture each encounter with supporters and Okamura would then post close to a hundred of these pictures on his Facebook page. Okamura follows this strategy up to this day, and he now posts such encounters as videos on the social media platform TikTok with some energising music, such as a recent visit to a festival, which he captioned “Huge support in Ostrava!” (“*Obrovská podpora v Ostravě!*”) (Okamura, 2024b). These performances underline the idea of anti-establishment politics as a political style, with

the popular leader trying to build a relationship and embody this link with the people, and people responding to it. The point is not that Okamura is indeed the people's leader, but rather that he frames it as such, and has enough of a response to sustain his claim among a certain segment of the electorate (Moffitt & Tormey, 2014, p. 388).

There would not be anything particularly masculine about such tactics, if it were not for the way Okamura frames his activism. Indeed, he showcases his visits among the people as proof that he enjoys high popularity and does not need any bodyguards, contrary to other politicians. While it is undeniable that Okamura is popular among certain segments of the population, his denial of having any kind of protection amounts to masculine boasting and runs contrary to the obvious. Indeed, Okamura has often been seen surrounded by brawny men often wearing sunglasses and earpieces in the last years, as I myself observed when attending the 'Czech Fair' in Hradec Králové and Prague ahead of the 2021 parliamentary elections. As Czech journalist Vojtěch Berger reported in 2021, analysing pictures from several public meetings, the same men were seen covering Okamura's back as he met with citizens (Berger, 2021a). Nevertheless, when he was followed everywhere by these tough-looking men in black at the party's campaign launch, he denied to the press that they were bodyguards, pointing instead to one of them and describing him as "our voter", "a family man"¹⁵⁴ who helped him around (Gavenda, 2021). Later on in the campaign, Okamura admitted that he also received police protection following threats of physical violence, but he insisted that he had not asked for it (Berger, 2021b). In 2024, Berger investigated party expenses and found evidence that the party had indeed been paying for security services, despite denials (Berger, 2024). This shows that both sides, both Okamura and liberal media, understand how much is at stake in the successful framing of the popular leader and his masculinity. Indeed, Okamura's standing heavily

depends on this performance of popular proximity, masculinist strength and fearlessness, which excludes the idea of popular animosity, vulnerability and fear that would necessitate the protection of other, stronger men.

In his role of man of the people, Okamura is not only cultivating proximity with the masses, but he also sometimes actively embodies his role of fearless masculine protector of the people, as in March 2014, when he travelled to a small village where Roma residents allegedly terrorised their White neighbours. He made two posts about his visit, including one where he stands with two White middle-aged men whom he described as victims of the ‘Roma clan’ (Okamura, 2014a). Although he is dressed in a suit, Okamura is putting his arms around the men’s shoulders in a friendly or protective manner, showing closeness instead of formality. He insisted that he was the only politician who came to visit the inhabitants, that the government only sent a lower-rank civil servant and that it refused to support *Úsvit*’s solutions. In August 2015, at the height of the so-called ‘refugee crisis’ in Europe, he showed the same kind of bravado by going to visit one of the few refugee camps in Czechia, publishing a short video that went viral, with 2,7 million views, 35,000 likes and 8,800 shares. In the video announced as ‘shocking’ and hitherto ‘undisclosed’ information, Okamura said that he was the first and only politician to have visited the camp and that he went inside despite being warned that he risked being attacked, robbed and infected by diseases, and that he was surrounded by the refugees – identified as exclusively ‘young men’ – and only separated by a few police officers (Okamura, 2015d). Presenting the camp residents as especially dangerous, not only did Okamura fuel the population’s worst fears and attack the government as irresponsible, but he also underlined his own audacity to find the truth on the ground and his courage to speak out. In those political performance that he widely publicises, Okamura frames himself as the

assertive man of action answering the desperate call of normal people ignored by politicians, oppressed by ‘unadaptables’ and threatened by migrants. By this sensationalisation and theatricalisation, Okamura takes advantage of what Gianpietro Mazzoleni (2014) calls the ‘mediatisation of politics’. However, Okamura’s use of social media takes this logic a step further, as he becomes the media, and controls the frame and message himself. His direct physical interventions correspond to the ‘insurgent phase’ of anti-establishment outsiders, when political challengers stage widely mediatised controversy and use incendiary language to gain a footing on the political scene (Mazzoleni, 2014, p. 51). Although Mazzoleni does not pay attention to gender, I underline that the kind of physical interventions staged by Okamura are masculinist, in the sense that they are hardly accessible to female politicians, who are less likely to achieve the same image of protector and saviour in the eyes of the public.

As an opposition politician, Okamura relentlessly plays the role of the challenger standing up to power, defending the good citizens against the bad politicians. Widely using his popular social media pages, he keeps his followers updated about parliamentary affairs and his relentless fight for the common folk. He often shares his speeches from the Chamber of Deputies tribune in which he castigates the government using harsh words and combining a mix of formal literary Czech (*spisovná čeština*) and popular expressions. For Okamura, the Chamber of Deputies is more a stage to showcase his relentless rebellion against political elites than an institution in which to implement incremental change, and he seems to be acting in it according to the logic of mediatised politics rather than parliamentary mechanisms.

On his social media, Okamura does not only perform the role of the populist far-right strongman fighting for the common folk, but he also builds this political relation by engaging and interacting with his audience. Okamura understood Facebook’s potential early on and he

has quickly managed to establish himself as the leading Czech politician on the platform, a title he still held as of July 2024, staying just ahead of former Prime Minister Andrej Babiš (ANO), with over 400,000 followers. A particular style of posts adopted by Okamura are videos published on an almost daily basis. In them, he salutes both informally and formally his ‘dear friends, esteemed ladies and gentlemen’ („*Milí přátelé, vážené dámy a pánové*“) and welcomes them to his profile, updating them directly about the latest political events and his views and actions. For years, his videos had a strong ‘authentic’ feel, as he talked from what looked like his living room, with his face right in the camera with a rather bad sound, as if holding his phone in a selfie mode (e.g. Tomio Okamura, 2015). Through this constant communication and interaction, Okamura answers contemporary trends in political communication, where politics is “a media communication contest in which charismatic media-savvy politicians try to build an emotional link with the voters, the audience” (Pels, 2003, pp. 45–46).

With social media, politicians run the show, and build this relationship in a more direct way. On Okamura’s social media pages, posts are often commented on positively by dozens if not hundreds of fans, to which Okamura – personally or through his social media administrators – often addresses a ‘thank you’. To create this impression of unanimous admiration and support, negative or critical comments are so systematically deleted, and their authors so frequently banned, that it has become an internet joke, Okamura being nicknamed the ‘Internet Ban King’ and Facebook groups being created by those who were banned (Benatzky, 2017; *Tomio Okamura nám dal BAN*, n.d.; wally_nowak, 2018). While critics denounce the double standards of a politician claiming to fight for freedom of speech, and while jokesters laugh about it, the result on his profiles is a powerful echo chamber of enthusiastic fans. On social

media, the link between the leader and the people seems strong and convincing in this dynamic of communication and interaction, obscuring the fact that communication is rather one-sided, and that ‘the people’ is only a large, but restricted circle excluding any criticism and dissent.

Boasting, muscle-flexing and flirting

While a large part of Tomio Okamura’s performance is not explicitly masculinist, but rather rests on a rhetoric and style far more associated with – and accessible to – men, parts of it still are clearly based on masculine boasting. In 2016, Okamura started to do physical exercise and to show off his progress on his social media pages, with pictures of him weightlifting bare-chested (Okamura, 2016a, 2017d). He also published pictures and a video of his training with well-known bodybuilders and proved his ability to lift 100 kilograms with a video (Okamura, 2016d, 2016e). One one occasion, photo-editing experts claimed that some of Okamura’s pictures were even photoshopped to improve his muscles’ size and shape (*Okamurovy přifouknuté svaly*, 2017). Like many political leaders, Okamura displays a “physical proof of [his] masculine fortitude” (Sperling, 2014, p. 21) which reminds of Russian dictators Vladimir Putin’s “on-camera hypermasculine feats” (Tempest, 2016, p. 101) and his famous bare-chest horse-riding pictures. In 2020, when social-democrat deputy Jaroslav Foldyna joined the SPD, Okamura saluted him on social media as “a fighter for people and a patriot” (*rváč za lidi a vlastenec*), and the two posed for a picture in boxing gloves, as if preparing for a match (Okamura, 2020a). In other shows of hypermasculinity, Foldyna has been featured in posts where he sports his biker leather outfits, shows off his tattoos and flexes his muscles (e.g. Okamura, 2023b).

Part of Okamura's masculine boasting also has to do with his allegedly exceptional work performance, which he explains through extraordinary physiological capacities. In a benevolent video interview ahead of the 2021 parliamentary elections, the journalist expressed admiration for Okamura's industriousness, and Okamura boasted that his doctor allegedly explained it by the fact that Okamura has "the highest level of testosterone that is still healthy"¹⁵⁵ (Křížová, 2021). A few months later, before a debate, he boasted that he had not had a free weekend in months, that he slept only five hours a day and was never tired, also explaining it with his high testosterone level (Fořtová, 2024). With his boasting about weightlifting and high energy linked to the hormone most associated with masculinity, Okamura is not only performing masculinity, but also "performing extraordinariness" – extraordinary performances of non-stop work for the people's sake – as is often the case with populist leaders, who mix an image of normality and closeness to the common folk with an aura of exceptionality (Moffitt, 2016, p. 70).

Last but not least, Okamura's masculinist performance does include subtle but clear references to his heterosexuality. In his (auto)biography, his co-author jokingly introduced the topic of women by saying that luckily for women, Okamura is a gentleman and will not reveal much, and Okamura himself presented a rather modest love life in his (auto)biography, insisting that he had had only two girlfriends since his divorce ten years earlier (Novák Večerníček & Okamura, 2010). On his social media, Okamura does not often show his intimate and family life, but tabloids have widely covered the topic, reporting on his partners and on his real or alleged liaisons, with metaphors such as 'harem', 'geisha' or 'Bond girl', and building him a reputation of womaniser (Chalupa, 2017; Horváth, 2023; Hrejzek, 2023; *Okamura a jeho harém*, 2013; *Okamura je v sexu chladný*, 2017; *Pracháč Okamura přiznal příjmy*, 2013;

Přítelkyně Tomio Okamury přitvrzuje, 2013; Reinischová & Soukup, 2013; Tichý, 2012). In 2011, before going into politics, he was one of the main promoters and jury members of a new female beauty contest for women of foreign origin called ‘Miss Expat’, appearing on promotional material in a suit surrounded by women of different skin colours in bikini (Kovačević, 2011). Okamura also does not hesitate to signal his heterosexuality through small compliments to women journalists, such as lauding the journalist’s looks and smile in the introduction to an interview (Okamura, 2020c), or answering a female journalist moderating a debate who rebuked him for ‘destroying the conversation’ with a patronising “I like you, so it’s okay” (Kačmár, 2024). Okamura’s vision of women is that of the weaker sex completed by the male stronger sex, writing in his (auto)biography that he saw woman as “a creature we should care for, protect and help”¹⁵⁶ and claiming that it was men’s task to make them happy and joyful, like by presenting them with gifts (Novák Večerníček & Okamura, 2010). He has often repeated these views, especially in several International Women’s Day greetings, where he wished for ‘women to be women’, repeating stereotypes on femininity, and often targeting feminism for allegedly aiming to erase differences between the sexes. “I like being a man and I like women being women. I like everything that connects us. And I reject gender fascism”¹⁵⁷, he wrote in 2017 (Okamura, 2017a). “I love women”, he wrote in his 2019 greeting, wishing “that women will remain women in the future with everything that goes with it, because femininity is what we men love most in the world”¹⁵⁸ (Okamura, 2019a). In such a vision, women have to be (feminine) women for men’s sake, while men have to be their strong support, reproducing the idea of the complementarity, but also the subordination between masculinity and femininity that is central to gender hegemony (Schippers, 2007, p. 90).

Over the years, Okamura has remained one of Czechia's leading politicians in terms of popularity and credibility, not only on social media platforms, but also in multiple polls, something he frequently boasts about on social media (Okamura, 2017c, 2018a, 2023a). As in the case of *Konfederacja*, I contend that part of his success is due to his performance of masculinity, but contrary to the Polish party, Okamura's more mainstream 'respectable' performance of masculinity, in line with the Czech gender hegemony, has helped him garner support among a wider range of demographic groups, including among women. Thus, the electoral gender gap among SPD voters is not as wide as among *Konfederacja* voters, based on the scarce data on gender-based electoral behaviour available for Czechia: a 2017 pre-electoral survey concluded that about 43% of decided and potential SPD voters were women (Mapa Voličů, 2017) and a 2021 post-electoral survey concluded that 46% of SPD voters were women (Prokop et al., 2021). Moreover, while *Konfederacja*'s youthful and modern style can be associated with its strong generational bias in electoral support – in addition to the masculine bias – it has not been the case for SPD. Indeed, while the SPD's more 'folkloric' style can be linked with its higher support among middle-aged and provincial voters with less formal education, and its lack of support among big city voters with university degrees (Mapa Voličů, 2017; Maškarinec & Novotný, 2024), it has not led to the kinds of wide gaps seen among *Konfederacja* voters. Despite Okamura's enduring popularity and the SPD's lasting presence on the political scene, the party has not made any electoral progress after 2017, and has even experienced some set-backs. As I show in the next section, two mutually reinforcing factors explaining this stagnation are, first, the SPD's inability – or unwillingness – to grow beyond the figure of Tomio Okamura and, second, the party's functioning, which suffers from the masculinist authoritarian leadership of Okamura and his boys' club entourage.

3. The authoritarian ‘Sect of direct dictatorship’ and the boys’ club

Part of the masculinist political style practised by Tomio Okamura transpires in the way he and a few close male associates have been leading the party. Through a closer analysis of the SPD’s functioning, it is possible to go beyond the reading of rhetoric and front-stage performance, and to focus more on what Tomio Okamura and his colleagues do in the organisation where they wield power. While it is not always easy to gain insights into the internal dealings of far-right political actors like the SPD, it is nevertheless crucial to examine the far right’s ‘backstage’ in order to understand party values and the way they are expressed in internal dealings (Banks, 2006, p. 53; Blee, 2018, pp. 1–2; Pirro, 2023, p. 102). As several scholars have pointed out, far-right political parties do not simply ride waves of political opportunities triggered by events, but rather have agency as individuals and organisations shaping the political field, influencing the public sphere and winning over voters, and their capacities, resources and strategies thus play a key role in their successes and failures (Art, 2011; M. J. Goodwin, 2006, p. 350). In this section, I argue that SPD is run as an authoritarian boys’ club centred around Tomio Okamura, which ensures a centralised marketing built around the leader, but also limits the party’s capacities because of the party’s lack of internal democracy and its frequent infighting. Through their authoritarian managerial style, Tomio Okamura and his close circle of male colleagues pursue a similar political style as in the public sphere, with an understanding and practising of politics as a zero-sum game of conquest and domination. Such a management style is hardly available to women in SPD, who are constrained by the same double bind described in the previous chapter on *Konfederacja*.

Army discipline in the party

Tomio Okamura's masculinist centralised and authoritarian managerial style already appeared in the *Úsvit* party. Not only was Okamura the party's head and face, as previously mentioned, but the party statutes also gave Tomio Okamura almost full power, including a veto right on any statute change and the admission of any candidate member, a five-year long first leadership mandate, with no possibility to be recalled, and the right to single-handedly sign contracts for very high sums (Hloušek et al., 2020, pp. 128–129). The party's organisational structure excluded the development of local branches and it started with only nine members, even less than the number of deputies it had after the first 2013 elections. In short, Tomio Okamura and a small circle around him had full control over the party's affairs. Repeatedly asked by the media about this anomaly, *Úsvit* said that it chose such a model to be more efficient and announced that the party would fix its statutes to take in new members, but it never did so under Okamura's leadership (Nováček et al., 2015; Válková, 2014). This high centralisation did not prevent the party from collapsing, as the majority of members and deputies teamed up against Tomio Okamura in 2015, accusing him of having siphoned off the party's coffers (Břešťan, 2018).

In his new SPD party founded with the support of a few loyalists from *Úsvit* such as his right-hand man Radim Fiala – not related to current Prime Minister Petr Fiala – Okamura kept his undisputed leadership role but he chose a more open party structure. While he and his entourage opened up to a larger membership, they made sure to keep it under tight control. The SPD's rules themselves show the cautious approach to new members, with a two-year waiting period for all candidates, during which they are expected to get involved for the party and pay a fee, but do not have voting rights (Janáková, 2018b). While SPD carefully

approached member recruitment, it displayed an image of mass membership to the public. Thus, Okamura boasted on Facebook in June 2018 about having more than 7,000 members, with an additional 6,000 people registered candidates for membership (Okamura, 2018d), and the party later communicated to journalists membership figures over 11,000 (Zajíc & Andrlé, 2023), but the numbers were widely exaggerated and did not even correspond to previous official party statements, which had announced only 1,200 members as of February 2018 (Janáková, 2018a). In the interviews, the interviewees gave different figures for their local membership numbers, sometimes distinguishing between members and candidates, active and inactive, but the numbers never exceeded 200 for any of the 14 Czech regions, except in Prague, where one member gave the figure of “like 400”, while another gave the precise number of 136, commenting: “if I take the whole country, there’s a thousand of us. To outsiders, it is said that there are ten thousands or more of us, but it’s not like that.”¹⁵⁹

Beyond efforts to showcase the image of a popular mass party, the question with membership revolves around the tension between centralised control, organisational development and internal democracy, as Okamura and his entourage want to keep a firm grip on the party’s reins, but also have to attract people to develop the party and run campaigns. This tension has been dealt with through authoritarian methods and has often led to intense infighting, something the Czech media have been regularly reporting on. Bitter former members have been complaining to the media, parodying the party’s name into ‘*Sekta přímé diktatury*’ (Sect of direct dictatorship) because of its authoritarian and undemocratic practices (Břešťan, 2019; Dvořáková, 2018; Janouš, 2018; *Stala se z nás „sekta*, 2019). The general picture coming from these testimonies published in the media, sometimes supported by audio and video recordings, is that of a party ruled by authoritarian regional strongmen with the backing of the central

leadership who surround themselves with loyal members and exclude any dissenting voice. During their two-year waiting period, candidates have to prove their commitment and help the party, but they do not have a say in decision-making, unless the leadership decides to speed up the membership process. This long process has given the possibility to some local leaders to filter and accept only those who show loyalty and will reinforce their power. When a local cell challenged the central leadership around Okamura or showed signs of excessive agitation, it was simply disbanded (Dvořáková, 2018). The fact that Okamura has never been publicly criticised by any member (who would not then be excluded or leave) and has never faced any official challenger for leadership at party conferences is telling of the low level of internal democracy in SPD (*Tomio Okamura obhájil post předsedy*, 2024). In general, the party seems to abide by the views expressed by Okamura's 'best friend', biographer, long time fellow traveller and 'SPD ideologist' (Pšenička, 2018) Jaroslav Novák Večerníček, "Just like in a firm, democracy has no place in a party. In a way, a party is an army."¹⁶⁰ Indeed, SPD resembles more the Spartan army than the Athenian Agora.

In the interviews, a few members talked about authoritarian methods and infighting, and they were embittered by their experiences. Problems mostly seemed concentrated in a few regions, though, and did not reflect all interviewees' experiences. At the time I conducted the interviews, one member was on the verge of being expelled (this person would leave soon after) and another one had taken a step back because of conflicts. A third one would soon be expelled, as I found out later. Yet another member shared with me an email circulating among SPD members criticising in detail the leadership following the disappointing 2021 parliamentary election results, in which several local SPD leaders were accused of authoritarian methods in efforts to curb dissent and impose their will on local members.

Interestingly, the members rarely accused Tomio Okamura and tended to target more his right-hand man Radim Fiala. As one member claimed, Okamura is a “terribly hard-working man”¹⁶¹ but he has allegedly been tricked by Fiala, who “is a kind of grey eminence who withholds... edits the facts and withholds... he’s made such a wall around Tomio that nothing can get to him.”¹⁶² This member as well as another member from the same region explained to me how the central leadership imposed its will at the 2021 elections by setting up its own regional candidate lists on the sly, placing newcomers unknown to the regional members as electoral list leaders, making announcements at the last minute and ignoring local protests. The leadership did the same thing in several other regions, triggering protests that made it into the press, such as in the Pardubice region (Grim, 2021). The two disgruntled members whom I interviewed said that they could not express their opinions publicly. One of them derided the party slogan “The courage to say the truth” (*„Odvaha říkat pravdu“*), telling me: “if I say it [the truth], they [the leadership] will block me.”¹⁶³ The other expressed their conviction that they would have been excluded if the Facebook account that they had used to critically comment on the new local leader’s page had been under their real name.

Based on media reports and on my own research, I suspect that the party’s masculinist centralised authoritarian management has hindered its development by failing to grow beyond the figure of Tomio Okamura, and to recruit and reward motivated and competent members likely to make the organisation thrive. As scholar David Art wrote, the quality of party activists has been a crucial factor for far-right parties’ development (2011). While SPD does not face the issue of attracting only extremists with ‘nothing to lose’, it has struggled to recruit people with political skills. The most striking example was Miloslav Rozner, member of the SPD presidium and top candidate for the Southern Bohemian region in 2017, who became the

country's laughing stock after a particularly poor performance as the party's 'expert on culture' at a pre-electoral debate (Kabátová, 2017). As Rozner's example showed, Tomio Okamura's SPD did not have many people able to intervene in the media and debate in a convincing way among its leadership, especially in the first years. That was also true on the local level, as Miloš explained to me in our interview: he rapidly became the local chapter's leader just because he was the only one who was able to talk to journalists without 'stuttering' and 'blushing' with embarrassment. Part of the explanation might reside in the party's reputation as 'extremist', which can make membership carry a certain risk, an issue widely reported by far-right members in other countries (Klandermans & Mayer, 2005). However, while several interviewees talked about the stigma, none of them reported experiencing personal issues, and only Jiří reported that some local entrepreneurs pulled out of SPD party list under social pressure. I believe that the issue rather lies in the leadership's tendency to value loyalty more than efficiency, as the scandals around the candidate lists for the 2021 elections showed. As laid out in Chapter 3, there are potential leaders on the local level: several of the interviewed members have some kind of political experience and skills, and some could even be considered as local notables ("opinion leaders") that usually contribute greatly to a far-right party's 'destigmatisation' and success on the local level (Scarrow, 1996 cited in Art, 2011, p. 34). Moreover, as SPD is being increasingly normalised and has even been accepted as a regional coalition partner by the main opposition party ANO after the 2024 regional elections (Brodničková & Mach, 2024), the party could become more appealing to skilful would-be politicians. However, to favour the rise of genuine, motivated, skilful activists through party ranks, Okamura and the wider leadership would have to trade loyalty for efficiency as the primary advancement criterion.

The boys' club and women

It is not particularly easy to analyse gender relations in SPD beyond the figure of Tomio Okamura, since it is a one-man show with the whole party organisation living in the shadow of the undisputed leader. What is known is that Okamura's entourage is a closed all-male circle with Jaroslav Novák Večerníče and Radim Fiala as the leader's right-hand men (Dvořáková, 2018). Dvořáková also described the local – mostly male – leaders keeping a tight rein on the regional cells, often with authoritarian methods. SPD seems to correspond to a typical '*Männerbund*' – the equivalent of the boys' club – something Eva Kreisky defines as "masculinity as a system [...] which is embedded in the organisational culture [...] of political institutions" (Kreisky, 2014, p. 19). The concept of the *Männerbund*/boys' club works well to explain the way SPD has been established as a masculinist institution through its historical development based on "informal networks, relationships and career cultures" (Kreisky, 2014, p. 19), probably much more than through the active and conscious exclusion of women. Once again, this idea would not starkly distinguish SPD from other Czech political parties – especially on the right – which have also been described as boys' clubs who have institutionalised male domination within their structures (Maříková, 2016, pp. 30–31; Rakušanová, 2006, p. 11).

Accordingly, no woman has made it into the close entourage or the party's presidium, even if a couple of female deputies have acquired a certain visibility. Thus, deputies Lucie Šafránková and Karla Maříková¹⁶⁴ are perhaps the most well-known – or rather, the least unknown – female members of the SPD, often appearing at Okamura's side during press conferences. However, as in *Konfederacja*'s case, they have been confined to topics more traditionally associated with women, with Šafránková intervening exclusively on issues of social policy,

while Maříková – a trained nurse – deals with healthcare issues. As scholar Marta Vohlídalová shows, this gendered role division corresponds to widely shared stereotypes about men and women’s aptitudes and competences in Czechia, with the public considering social policy as a ‘women’s’ issue and healthcare being slightly more often seen as a ‘women’s’ issue (2015, p. 5).

During press conferences, Okamura remains the only one who expresses himself at length on all topics, but some of the male leaders also show a tendency to go beyond their fields of ‘expertise’, while the female deputies stick narrowly to their topics during short one or two-minute long interventions, often reading from their papers (e.g. Okamura, 2024a). During his long public speeches at the ‘Czech fairs’, Okamura would sometimes invite Lucie Šafránková to come on stage as the author of legislative efforts to rid ‘unadaptables’ of social benefits, but he would usually not give her the floor and she would simply stand on stage for the rest of the speech, as a decorative prop, not unlike what I described in the previous chapter. In Olomouc, he welcomed the then 34-year old woman on stage with the words “Lucy here is kind of a tiny young lady, but she’s a big fighter”¹⁶⁵, highlighting her age and physical appearance, but also lauding her spirit. Of the two campaign speeches I attended and also counting one available online, only in Prague did some of the candidates, including Šafránková, take the microphone for a few words. She spoke for less than thirty seconds. At the 2021 campaign launch, journalists also commented about ‘the mute candidates’, noting that only Okamura and Fiala took the floor, even if all the top candidates were presented to the media (Gavenda, 2021). Thus, in the Okamura One-Man Show, other men and women are kept in the shadow of the leader, but women are even less visible, and keep to – or are kept to – ‘women’s’ topics. While SPD has a rather good record of female representation in the Chamber of Deputies, slightly

above the poor average of Czech political parties (*Zastoupení žen v poslanecké sněmovně ČR*, n.d.), not a single woman in SPD has been given more space and importance than that of representative of some particular stereotypically ‘feminine’ topics, and no woman politician has made her way into the party leadership.

On the local level of party members, it is even harder to analyse gender relations, since there are fewer public demonstrations of party life. On the basis of the interviews, it is impossible to fully comprehend whether and how a masculinist leadership culture functions in local SPD cells. In general, the interviewed members had little to say about party activism, which did not seem to include a lot of work, besides the regular meetings and the occasional campaigning. Moreover, since many of the interviewees were elected officials, they discussed more their political activism in the representative bodies than their internal party affairs. In general, they showed little interest and/or willingness to discuss internal party matters, perhaps because that they did not see anything interesting to discuss or because they had a limited trust in me. Pavel made it clear during the interview that he would not discuss internal problems, citing bad experiences with journalists. Most of the participating members refrained from commenting on the leadership besides positive comments and general reflections. In contrast, the few aforementioned disgruntled members took me as a confidant or a person to whom they could vent their frustration, expressing their disappointment, sending me screenshots of conversations with party leaders and showing me the previously mentioned critical email distributed among party members. During the interviews, I did not receive insightful information about gender relations within the party when I asked them about the SPD’s membership gender gap, beyond the usual comments about women’s low political representation in Czechia, women’s lower interest in politics and their lack of time due to the

double burden of professional and domestic duties. In Czechia more than in Poland, the presence of women in far-right political parties is often as low or only slightly lower than the situation in conservative and right-wing parties in general, something that can be observed throughout Europe (Mudde, 2007, p. 99). Contrary to *Konfederacja* party leaders and many of the Polish interviewees, SPD leadership and members rarely drew from essentialised gender roles to talk about men and women in politics, and it did not seem to be a relevant issue for them. This is perhaps because, unlike in the Polish case, it has not been strongly thematised in Czechia, and SPD has not been attacked over this issue.

In the interviews, what did transpire is that loyalty to the central leadership is the most important factor to succeed in the party. Commenting on her issues with the party leadership, Jana said that what mattered more than gender was the willingness to ‘stay quiet and do what they want you to do’¹⁶⁶, citing as an example a woman chosen as top female candidate for SPD in 2021. When it comes to her, the leadership reproached her for having a “big mouth” (*prořízlá pusa*), something that can be seen as a gendered stereotype against outspoken women, however it also gained Jana the support of many local fellow members, as she explained: “because I am a woman and I’m not afraid of anything, oh no”¹⁶⁷, she said, adding with a laughter that a fellow male member approvingly told her: “Hey, dude, you’re like a guy, so it’s fine!”¹⁶⁸ In her case, fearlessness and outspokenness made her popular with local rank-and-file members, to the extent that one man even recognised her as an ‘honourary man’, a woman with masculinist qualities approved by men (Mrovlje & Kirkpatrick, 2023). On the other hand, she proved too outspoken and too unwilling to bow to the party hierarchy to make her way upwards in the SPD. Thus, in the Okamura boys’ club, the most important to succeed

in the party is first and foremost to pledge and maintain allegiance to the leader and the hierarchy.

In addition to the general relegation of SPD members in the leader's shadow – symptomatic of masculinist leadership – gender plays a role in the division of gender roles on the frontstage, with leading male party representatives in SPD given more space and intervening on a wider array of topics. These elements suggest that Okamura and/or the party leadership have internalised a certain masculinist understanding of the desirable gendered characteristics of party representatives. Nevertheless, as I mentioned previously, unlike *Konfederacja*, SPD does not challenge the gender hegemony and does not stand out strongly on the Czech political scene, where few parties have a substantive female presence, and the current Fiala government only has one female minister. Although the Okamura and SPD do use a masculinist political style similar to *Konfederacja*'s, they have shown more restraint, keeping a more respectable outlook and refraining from engaging in physical provocations and street demonstrations as in Poland. This is perhaps due to the calmer, slightly less confrontational political style currently prevailing in Czechia. Also, despite its advocacy of the status for the gender and sexual order, its masculinist management and its relegation of women to secondary roles, SPD does not express the same kind of avowed misogyny as its Polish counterparts and does not actively agitate on the topic of women's reproductive rights. In short, in the case of SPD, even if its masculinist style contributes to male domination in the public sphere and has hindered women's position within the party, the party's rhetoric and style have not represented the same kind of explicit masculinist identity politics as in *Konfederacja*. This greater moderation might have contributed to the SPD's relative successes among the female electorate, compared to other European far-right parties, and especially to *Konfederacja*'s gaping results.

Conclusion

Rising to fame as a successful entrepreneur exploiting his 'exotic' origins and developing a flair for the media, Okamura then rode the wave of discontent with traditional political parties, and used antigypsyist sentiments to establish himself as the leader of the far right and bring it back into parliament. As I have demonstrated in this chapter, an important part of his success came from his ability to draw from the hegemonic form of masculinity, first exploiting the repertoire of the self-made man and then alternating between the rebellious man of the people and the serious politician. Balancing between the persona of the down-to-earth representative of the disenfranchised masses and that of the respectable parliamentary orator, and projecting an image of assertiveness, pugnacity, fearlessness and extraordinary endurance, Okamura has been explicitly or implicitly using a wide variety of tropes typically associated with hegemonic masculinity and has gathered an important following. Far from being strictly beneficial, however, Okamura's masculinist characteristics have also translated into a tendency to lead the party as a one-man show and to manage the party in an authoritarian fashion, leading to internal fighting and the frequent exclusion of dissenting voices. This ruling style has also hindered the emergence and rise of capable politicians able to mobilise and convince, other than Tomio Okamura, and has led to poor results in several electoral contests without the leader's candidacy. As I have shown, this management style has a clear masculinist character, with the leadership resembling a closed boys' club, leadership positions being mostly awarded to men combining loyalty to Okamura and a masculinist authoritarian approach to subordinates, and women being confined to secondary roles and to 'women's' issues. Thus, while Okamura has achieved impressive success thanks to his political skills, including his 'correct' embodiments of masculinity, he has also reached certain limits with this masculinist,

authoritarian management. However, after rather poor results in the latest presidential and European elections in 2023-2024, the party has shown a willingness to change its strategy by toning down its attacks against competitors and opening the door to cooperation with other far-right actors, like *Trikolora* (Tricolour) – headed by female leader Zuzana Majerová (Grim, 2024; *SPD a Trikolora budou ve*, 2024). Moreover, the party has shown increasing openness to cooperation with the main opposition party ANO and has even joined some regional government coalitions with it in 2024. It remains to be seen whether the leadership and management style will also evolve, whether there will be greater democracy within the party, and whether these changes will increase space for potential female leaders.

Conclusion: Towards a new conceptualisation of the far right and gender and sexuality

In parallel to my PhD studies, I have been working as a journalist and occasionally acting as a ‘fixer’ for French-speaking journalists coming to cover Poland, Czechia and Slovakia. In October 2023, I accompanied François-Damien Bourgery, a journalist from *Radio France internationale*, to Eastern Poland ahead of the parliamentary elections. We arrived late one night in a small sleepy village near the border with Belarus to meet a local activist who had been rescuing asylum-seekers and migrants since the beginning of the ‘border crisis’ in the Summer of 2021, when the Belarusian authorities started to assist extra-European migrants in crossing into the EU. The far-right PiS government had reacted in an authoritarian fashion, decreeing a state of emergency in the border region, sending in the army, and violently and illegally pushing back migrants, refusing them the right to claim asylum. With the support of *Konfederacja* and other far-right groupings, who asked for even stricter measures, the PiS government erected a border fence and continued its aggressive push-back practices. Seeking a third mandate in a row, the PiS government even made ‘illegal migration’ on the Belarusian border a key campaign topic. Translating the conversation while sipping a hot cup of tea and snacking on some biscuits, I quickly lost my appetite, as lawyer and activist Kamil Syller calmly told us about the activists’ races to find refugees before the border police, about the terrible conditions in which they would find migrants crossing through the surrounding swampy forests and about the cadavers of the unlucky ones, which emerged with the thaw in

the Spring. As of Summer 2024, 130 people had died trying to cross the border between Belarus and EU countries (Chrzczonowicz, 2024). The next day, we were in a secret ‘safe space’ for LGBT+ people in Białystok, the regional urban centre, covering the issue of sexual and gender minorities in Poland. Local LGBT+ activists told us about the atmosphere of fear in which they lived, about the daily discriminations and about the horrors experienced in July 2019, when the first ‘Equality March’ in Białystok was confronted by thousands of angry hooligans, far-right activists – including some from *Konfederacja* – and ‘normal’ citizens, some of whom violently attacked the marchers. Over those two days, I was directly confronted with the stories of those people who are not included in this dissertation, and yet who are the most affected by the far right and its normalisation in contemporary Poland. While my focus is on far-right parties and their members, I do not want to erase the real-world consequences that their words and actions have on other people, often from more vulnerable groups.

Several days later, I found myself dancing and drinking until late in the evening with friends celebrating the downfall of the PiS party and the poor result of *Konfederacja* at the 2023 parliamentary elections, after a record mobilisation gave a clear majority to right-wing, centre-right and centre-left parties who had vowed to work together. The centre-right PO/KO leader Donald Tusk succeeded in realising a comeback on the national political scene, promising the sun, moon and stars. However, over the next months, his new broad government coalition could not agree on any substantial changes on some of the key socio-cultural issues that had marked the PiS era: no liberalisation of abortion, no civil partnership for same-gender couples, and no change to border policies. On the last point, Donald Tusk even embarked on a crusade against extra-European refugees in late 2024, presenting them as tools in Russia and Belarus’ ‘hybrid warfare’ against the EU, and announcing the suspension of the right to asylum

(Cienski, 2024). Tusk's anti-migration turn is not that all that surprising, considering that he had used such rhetoric during the campaign, and his recuperation of far-right discourses on 'culturally foreign' migrants is symptomatic of wider trends in Europe, where liberal and conservative forces alike are increasingly targeting extra-European migrants, and especially Muslims (Brubaker, 2017; Mondon & Winter, 2020b). As I have been sitting in my Prague apartment for most of the last year writing this dissertation, no similar, spectacular event has shaken the Czech political scene. And yet, the same crawling normalisation of far-right ideas has been ongoing. From the parliamentary consensus in support of the genocide in Palestine to the cross-party alliance blocking same-gender marriage or the Istanbul Convention, the mainstreamisation of the far right has progressed in the last years, culminating in the breakdown of the *cordon sanitaire* against the far right following the September 2024 regional elections, when the leading opposition party ANO formed some regional coalitions with the SPD, amidst general indifference. The doors are now open to the far right's participation in the next ANO-led government after the 2025 parliamentary elections. As the developments in Poland and Czechia illustrate, far-right ideas have crept into the mainstream and, regardless of its different electoral results, the far right has already changed Poland, Czechia, and the whole of Europe.

The normality and normalisation of the far right

Despite a few of the interviewed members representing unabashed racist, antisemitic or ultra-conservative views, those who hoped for more sensationalist revelations might have been disappointed after reading this dissertation. To a large extent, the members come out as 'normal' people with rather 'normal' beliefs, which readers might not share, but have probably encountered in their daily life. As I show in this dissertation, the far right and its members in

Poland and Czechia are also increasingly using ‘far-right newspeak’ borrowing from mainstream neoliberal hegemonic discourses, and wrapping their radicalism in the veil of ‘*normalność*’ (Polish for normality) and the ‘*normální svět*’ (Czech for the normal world). *Konfederajca* and SPD are adapting their rhetoric and programmes, following social trends, and skilfully using modern technology like social media to bypass critical media scrutiny and establish a direct link with their audience. Over the course of the six years since the start of this PhD project, the parties have evolved and transformed, especially in the case of *Konfederacja*, which has consolidated disparate forces around its paleolibertarian ideological project and has gone through a generational renewal of its leadership, which is even more dedicated to its project of modernisation. With new female figureheads like Ewa Zajączkowska-Hernik, the party has somewhat moved towards feminisation, even wielding ‘women’s rights’ in its crusade against migration. When it comes to the SPD, it has gone through a sort of plateau, failing to gain ground since its success in riding the anti-refugee wave in 2017, but it has kept its position by constantly developing new topics, from anti-Covid-19 restrictions to climate change denial. In a time of socio-economic difficulties, SPD has also persisted with its ‘social’ discourse criticising the centre-right government for its ‘asocial’ governance, and blaming EU environmental measures and help to Ukrainians for hardships. In both cases, far-right parties are not passive beneficiaries of wider developments, but are rather actively shaping the public sphere and imposing their agenda, and thus redefining the meaning of ‘normality’.

To a large extent, the objective of talking directly to the rank-and-file members of the far right was to expose them for what they are, ‘normal’ citizens who are well integrated in society. The study of the far right has long suffered from its focus on the ubiquitous leaders and their

communication, while the profiles, stories and beliefs of the people who build the core of these parties remained in the shadows of the backstage. Showing the members as ‘normal people’ does not amount to normalising their beliefs and views, but rather to shifting the focus towards mainstream society, and forcing us to question the socio-cultural fundamentals that allow the far right to emerge and prosper in our societies. As Francesca Scrinzi put it, the far right is “an expression of our societies, rather than an anti-liberal extreme driven by irrationality” (2024, p. 161). This dissertation did not want to exhibit the interviewed members as ‘freaks’ to look at and then to immediately forget after turning the last page, letting the reader comfortably slide back into the comfort of ‘normality’. On the contrary, I show that there is no border between the mainstream and the margins, but rather a united, continuous whole called society, where the mainstream and the margins are co-constitutive and shifting. This conceptualisation of society has also led me to rethink the way in which we define the far right, putting back the emphasis on the core ideological concept of inequality and its authoritarian enforcement, thus shifting the attention back to widely shared norms and beliefs, from left to right, which eventually fuel far-right projects like those of *Konfederacja* and the SPD. Without uprooting anti-egalitarianism and authoritarianism, there will always be fertile ground for far-right ideas and projects.

The centrality of gender and sexuality

Going back to its main research questions, this dissertation asserts the central importance of gender and sexuality for the far right in general. Asking whether gender and sexuality mattered in all aspects of far-right activism and, when they did, to what extent, I found that, in terms of involvement, pathways into activism rarely follow obviously gendered patterns, with men and women describing very similar processes. On the question of ideology though, I demonstrated

that gender and sexuality are very much central to far-right ideological projects, but in various, contextual and relational ways, as they are intertwined with other regimes of inequality, mostly racial/ethnic and class-based. Finally, when it comes to mobilisation, I identified masculinism – or hypermasculinity – and performances of hegemonic masculinity and emphasised femininity as crucial to the far right's style, and as the main explanation for women's difficulties to attain and enact leading public roles in this political family.

In Part I, I argued that members from each party incarnated a different generational experience of disaffection with the current political, cultural and socio-economic system. In the Polish case, the young membership of *Konfederacja* represented a generation that came of age under the consolidation of a two-party system and rapid socio-cultural changes in the 2010s, with a strong far-right 'anti-system' counter-hegemony emerging in the background, best represented by the Independence March. Raised in families with national-conservative values and inspired by media-savvy far-right personalities like Janusz Korwin-Mikke, these youths represented the increasing ideological convergence that would later lead to the *Konfederacja* coalition. In *Konfederacja*'s structures, they found a channel to oppose the PO-PiS duopoly and mobilise for a paleolibertarian project of radical transformation mixing the ethnonationalist conservative figure of the *Polak-katolik* with U.S. American-style ultra-liberalism.

In contrast, the Czech members represented an older generation that had lived through the hopes and disappointments of 1989, and rather wanted to go back on some of its developments, even expressing a certain dose of nostalgia for some aspects of the state socialist regime. Moreover, the Czech members did not come from strongly nationalist or conservative families, and usually grew up and spent most of their adult life without being politically engaged. Increasingly disillusioned with political elites, the members started

seeking alternatives, eventually joining *Úsvit* / the SPD. The charismatic figure of leader Tomio Okamura and his anti-establishment direct democracy programme played an important role in offering a coherent platform to express existing ethnonationalist and workfarist sentiments, but the members also reported a certain radicalisation of their views, first around antigypsyist and Euro-sceptic positions, and later around the rejection of refugees/migrants/Muslims at the time of the ‘refugee crisis’ in 2015-2016. In the case of the Czech members, contrary to their Polish counterparts, it was thus a long path marked by a slow radicalisation – and even more by randomness than radicalisation in some cases – that finally led to far-right membership. In both the Polish and Czech case, I found that, in the pathways to activism, gendered aspects did not stand out and did not seem to matter strongly; a question that should be further investigated.

The main argument of the second part of the dissertation focusing on ideology is that gender and sexuality as ideological aspects occupy a central place in the political projects represented by *Konfederacja* and the SPD. In the parties’ ideology, gender and sexuality are, first, pervasive to views on race/ethnicity and class, and, second, when analytically divided, one of the main dimensions of inequality defended, naturalised and/or promoted by the far right. Thus, in the Polish case, gender and sexuality represent a central pillar of the party’s paleolibertarian ideology, which vows to react to what the party and members describe as a social, and even civilisational, decline, in which the social order, and amongst others the gender and sexual order, is under attack by feminists, LGBT+ activists and leftists-liberals who allegedly want to impose their own vision of normality. In reaction to this, *Konfederacja* more or less explicitly advocates for gender and sexual inequality in defence of the ‘traditional’, i.e. heteronormative or heterosexist, family in order to re-empower families to

exercise a central reproductive role in a project of wide-scale dismantlement and privatisation of the state. In this vision, the authority of the heteronormative/heterosexist family is politically, economically and culturally reasserted to ensure ethnonational reproduction for middle and upper-class families, instead of universal welfare programmes for all and an open migration system.

In the case of SPD, gender and sexuality is deeply entangled within ethnonationalist workfarist discourses on social reproduction in the Czech context where questions of women's and LGBT+ rights have not been at the centre of post-1989 socio-political debates. Thus, the party did not develop a defined discourse around the gender and sexual order and the 'traditional family' before 2017, and it then mostly used the concept of the 'traditional family' to reinforce its existing moralistic discourse on work and social reproduction, which targeted not only the Roma minority, but also increasingly extra-European migrants, often racialised as Muslims. However, the party later took the lead against 'gender ideology' when debates on gender belatedly reached Czechia in 2018, and the party has since then taken a determined stance against any attempt to question the Czech gender and sexual order. While the members did not insist on the 'traditional family' and its heteronormative character, they were adamant in their refusal of non-binary or fluid gender identities and looks. Just as *Konfederacja* reflects the Polish reality, SPD and its members' positions on gender and sexuality largely reflect the Czech national context, with greater tolerance for non-cisheteronormative people and the absence of religious arguments. In both cases, the parties' positions on gender and sexuality position them on the far right of their respective political spectrums, something that proves that those issues constitute one of the key dimensions of inequality lying at the core of far-right ideology, as I argue.

Finally, in the third and last part, I went beyond the study of gender and sexuality as ideological elements in political projects to look at the third way in which gender and sexuality matter for the far right: in the mobilisation styles and structures. In the case of *Konfederacja*, I argued that its masculinist style and structure represented a certain gender counter-hegemony constrained by, drawing from and challenging the Polish gender hegemony. I analysed how the party's rhetoric and style heavily draw from the masculinist repertoires of the Polish patriot and the entrepreneur to compete in Poland's masculinist political scene marked by a brutalisation of rhetoric and style. While the party and its members claim this masculinist style, naturalise women's absence from politics and reject modernising norms of masculinity, they have also had to adapt to changing norms and to moderate their style to avoid the stigma of the aggressive skinhead / football hooligan. When it comes to women's place in the party, the party's masculinist style has placed female members in a double bind between the feminine requirement of presentation and the masculinist expectation of mobilisation, which has mostly confined women to supporting roles and 'women's' topics. The interviewed female members usually naturalised this state of affairs and expressed satisfaction with their position in the party, which often entailed some internal power as kind of 'centrewomen'. Despite this apparent equilibrium, the naturalisation of gender inequalities and the refusal of parity measures, there have been signs of change in *Konfederacja's* gender order, with the emergence of female figures.

In the Czech case, its gendered mobilisation and structures can be almost entirely subsumed to the overwhelming place taken by masculinist leader Tomio Okamura, who has occupied the whole of the frontstage and heavily centralised power. In this one-man show, the role of gender and sexuality come out first and foremost in Okamura's performance, which has been

drawing from certain tropes of masculinity, first as the self-made man who pulled himself up by his own bootstraps, then as the anti-establishment ‘man of the people.’ Contrary to *Konfederacja*, Okamura does not represent a counter-hegemonic masculinity, but rather an alternative performance of masculinity in line with his anti-establishment style. On the organisational side, Okamura’s masculinist leadership marked by excessive control and authoritarianism has confined SPD to a boys’ club around the figure of the leader, with few other strong male figures and even fewer women in visible and influential positions. Similarly to the Polish case, the leading female figures in SPD have been rather restricted to the ‘women’s’ issues of social affairs and healthcare. In the interviews, the authoritarian internal management – with its masculinist aspects – came out as the defining structural factor for the members and their mobilisation, more than a strict gendered division of tasks. In both the cases of *Konfederacja* and SPD, the masculine and masculinist aspects of mobilisation show the crucial importance of studying gender and sexuality in the far right beyond rhetoric and ideology.

An Eastern European post-socialist phenomenon?

As I show throughout the dissertation, there are as many similarities as differences between the two parties, and it is hard to argue that they stand out as possessing a particular common ‘Eastern’ or ‘Central European’, or ‘post-socialist’ character. Drawing from my comparison, I argue instead that national or regional particularities tend to be overplayed in the field of studies of the far right. Surely the different historical legacies and contexts in Central and Eastern Europe have shaped the possibilities for ideological projects and framings – the political and discursive opportunity structure. However, even if *Konfederacja* and SPD, just like many of their ‘Eastern European’ counterparts, often address the issues of the state

socialist period, the 1989 ‘revolutions’ and the post-1989 transformation, I do not think that it is enough to consider, as Andrea Pirro does, “the populist radical right in Central and Eastern Europe as a phenomenon *sui generis* defined by historical legacies and contextual idiosyncrasies” (Pirro, 2015, p. 14). Thus, while the ‘Western’ far right targeted immigration early on and the ‘Eastern’ far right more often attacked ‘indigenous’ minorities – like the Roma – all far-right parties across Europe display the same anti-egalitarian ideology, and tend to focus on its national and ethnic/racial dimension. Moreover, as this dissertation shows, immigration has now become a primary focus for both *Konfederacja* and SPD. Similarly, while the ‘Eastern’ and ‘Western’ European far right might attack mainstream parties and ‘elites’ for different reasons – the handling of post-89 reforms in the ‘East’, and globalisation and de-industrialisation in the ‘West’ – in both cases they pursue anti-establishment politics and express criticism or rejection of the EU. Finally, the specific ‘memory politics’ of the ‘East’, around the communist regime and decommunisation – and the lack thereof – have their equivalents in the ‘West’, around World War II collaboration (also a topic in the ‘East’, notably in Poland) and around colonialism. To put it in a nutshell, Western and Eastern European far right actors possess “contextually distinctive and functionally equivalent aspects” (Pytlas, 2018b, p. 3).

The West-East divide in studies of the far right is not only overplayed, but it also has a negative homogenising tendency, because it buttresses the idea of two homogeneous and essentially different parts of Europe. Such vision often comes from studies about ‘Eastern Europe’ based on two or three cases (e.g. Pirro, 2015), and especially from the “tendency to view the whole region through the prism of the Hungarian and Polish experiences” (Cianetti et al., 2020, p. 245), as for example Rogers Brubaker does in an article (2017). As I show

throughout this dissertation on the examples of *Konfederacja* and SPD, the two ‘Eastern’ European parties possess as many differences as they have similarities. Their member bases are strikingly different and correspond to different generational experiences, with the young *Konfederacja* members mostly lacking the personal experience of state socialism that the older SPD members often related to. On the ideological level, *Konfederacja*’s continuity with – and claim to – the interwar Polish far right and its antisemitic ethnonationalism and Catholic fundamentalism stands in sharp contrast to SPD, with its absence of links to past Czech far-right political movements, its declared philosemitism and its secular outlook. Moreover, *Konfederacja*’s monarchist, anti-democratic and elitist tendencies are far from SPD’s embrace of direct democracy and rabid anti-elitism. On socio-economic matters too, there are blatant differences between the Polish paleolibertarianism and the Czech workfare chauvinism. Finally, as this dissertation’s focus on gender and sexuality shows, the two parties’ ideological projects foresee different gender and sexual orders, from *Konfederacja*’s ‘neo-traditional’ gender regime, with its more or less explicit re-patriarchalising fantasies, to SPD’s defence of the ‘modern traditional’ status quo.

Without rejecting the usefulness of comparisons between the Western and Eastern parts of Europe, I suggest that comparisons across and beyond the two regions might be more fruitful. Thus, *Konfederacja*’s paleolibertarianism, despite its ‘Polish’ and ‘Eastern European’ aspects, is strikingly similar to developments in the United States, where ultra-libertarian and ultra-conservative ideas have been combined in the past and have even merged in the Trump-dominated Republican Party (Cooper, 2021), and it might be interesting to study it as one of the many cases of the “transnational circulation of ideas” in the global far right (Blee & Deutsch, 2012; Froio & Ganesh, 2019; Nissen, 2022; Pasięka, 2024; Van Hauwaert, 2019b;

Woroncow, 2023). When it comes to SPD, it stands in many aspects closer to several ‘Western European’ far-right parties than to *Konfederacja* or PiS, or even to Slovak or Hungarian far-right parties. Indeed, like the French *Rassemblement National* (RN), the Dutch *Partij voor de Vrijheid* (PVV) or the Danish *Dansk Folkeparti* (DF), the SPD displays a ‘modern’ ideology and style, devoid of references to interwar fascism, careful to keep away from extremist groups, insisting on ‘culture’ over ‘race’, and full of ‘far right newspeak’ based on the liberal rhetoric of freedom and democracy. Like these parties, the SPD claims to defend gender and sexual equality against Muslims/Islam, even if it does so without claiming women’s and LGBT+ rights as a national characteristic. Finally, like them, the SPD defends formal equality while also rejecting any additional measures striving for substantial equality (Farris, 2017; Meret, 2015; Meret et al., 2016; Meret & Siim, 2013).

Despite the enduring existence of national and regional characteristics, and the presence of different ideological currents, I also believe that the SPD and *Konfederacja* are examples of the convergence in the European far right towards the adoption of an ‘alternative master frame’, where the ‘old’ tenets of biological racism, antisemitism, and anti-democratism have been replaced by “nationalism, xenophobia, authoritarianism and populism”, at least in rhetoric (Van Hauwaert, 2019a, p. 135). Far-right parties in Europe are not only facing the same continental, and even global, challenges, but they are also in close contact: through direct collaboration in the EU Parliament, international events like the World Congress of Families, transnational networks, activist meetings, personal connections, and online networking (Graff & Korolczuk, 2022, pp. 43–53). Beyond the spread of the discourse on ‘gender ideology’, the framing of the entangled topics of immigration, economics and gender and sexuality in *Konfederacja*, the SPD and their European (and Global North) counterparts also show a

certain convergence based on the rejection of the enemy figure of the work-shy, welfare scrounging, criminal, male, extra-European (Muslim) migrant with misogynistic – and, sometimes, homophobic – attitudes. With the large-scale politicisation of immigration and Islam in Czechia and Poland, and the Europeanisation of debates in the wake of the 2015-2016 ‘refugee crisis’, political actors in the two countries have adopted, translated and shaped transnational discourses. While the Czech anti-Islam/refugee movement and then SPD were early adopters of ‘liberal’ and ‘cultural racist’ tropes – with their gendered and sexualised components – in ‘Eastern’ Europe, *Konfederacja* has also been increasingly adopting them in the last few years. In the case of *Konfederacja*, the modernisation process I identified, both in rhetoric and in leadership, and the fresh exclusion of the Catholic fundamentalist and antisemitic leader of the *Korona* faction Grzegorz Braun in early 2025 (Czermiński, 2025) might pave the way for the party’s greater convergence towards SPD and other European far-right counterparts, away from explicit racism, open sexism and homophobia, and the rejection of democracy.

While I contend that *Konfederacja* and SPD have adopted and adapted frames developed in the West, I do not imply that the ‘East’ is simply catching up with the ‘West’ in terms of far-right politics. As scholars noted in the 2010s, the ‘Eastern European’ far right tended to be more extremist, more openly anti-democratic and/or more explicitly racist and antisemitic (Minkenberg, 2017, p. 1; Pirro, 2015, p. 195; Pytlas, 2018b, p. 2). While this was never valid for SPD, it still applies to *Konfederacja*. The same scholars also noted that the ‘Eastern European’ far right was more successful at mainstreaming its ideas (Minkenberg, 2017, p. 144; Pytlas, 2018b, p. 2), either through the radicalisation of the mainstream, as in the case of the conservative-turned-far-right PiS party in Poland (and Fidesz in Hungary), or through the

mainstreamisation of radicalism, as in the spread of antigypsyism, anti-Muslim racism and anti-LGBT+ across the political scene in Czechia. Looking back at these conclusions in 2025, I question whether these differences still hold. Indeed, the recent successes of the far right across the Western world somewhat challenge the idea of ‘modernisation’, as several ‘Western’ far-right parties more or less openly flirt with extremism, as in the case of parties in power, like Italy’s *Fratelli d'Italia* (Gozzi & Lowen, 2024) and the Trumpist Republican Party (Kriner, 2025), or in the case of powerful opposition parties like the German AfD (Thieme, 2024). Even in Western European countries with a ‘modern’ far right, more radical far-right challengers – including on questions on gender and sexuality – have emerged, like Thierry Baudet (*Forum voor Democratie*) in the Netherlands (Linders et al., 2023) or Éric Zemmour (*Reconquête*) in France (Scrinzi, 2024, pp. 170–171). Finally, it can hardly be argued anymore that the West is better safeguarded against far-right mainstreamisation, as Western mainstream right-wing parties have increasingly radicalised their positions, notably on immigration, and showed readiness to cooperate – and even govern – with the far right (Mondon, 2025; Mondon & Dawes, 2023; Mondon & Winter, 2020b; Schneider, 2024). Hence, while I do observe a certain far-right convergence in the Global North, I also underline that I do not see this process as linear – towards less radicalism – nor unidirectional – from West to East – but rather as the result of multi-directional dynamics submitted to ongoing power struggles.

Reconceptualising the far right and the role of gender and sexuality

In this dissertation, I assert gender and sexuality’s central importance for the far right in three ways: as pervasive to far-right ideology on race/ethnicity and class; as one of the main dimensions of inequality defended, naturalised and/or promoted by the far right; and as

intrinsic to the far-right mobilisation style. Moreover, drawing from my own as well as other research findings – mostly from Europe and the Global North – cited in this dissertation, I draw the conclusion that different far-right actors' positions on gender and sexuality are not random nor incoherent, but rather strongly anchored into these actors' general ideological attachment to inequalities build into social hierarchies and structures of privileges. Thus, within their own respective local context, European far-right parties are the most committed political actors to the authoritarian defence, naturalisation and/or promotion of gender and sexual inequalities. This does not mean that they always reject the idea of gender equality, even if it does happen, as in JKM's case, but rather that they tend to restrict it to legal equality and/or to reject 'innate equality' (Akkerman, 2015, p. 57). They sometimes even extent this formal equality to 'homonormative couples'. In any case, all far-parties reject measures to establish substantial gender and sexual equality. As previously mentioned, the radicalism of their anti-egalitarianism in these matters will usually depend on their local context, the local 'common sense' (Spierings, 2020).

Looking back at my findings in the light of existing scholarship on the far right, I have grown increasingly critical about the ways in which the far right has been conceptualised, and especially when it comes to the place of gender and sexuality within it. The comparison of *Konfederacja* and SPD has offered interesting insights about this puzzle and it has pushed me to reconsider some of my own views, and those of fellow scholars. Considering the case of Poland, the centrality of the theme of the 'traditional family', contrasted to feminism and LGBT+ rights, in both the PiS far-right project and *Konfederacja*'s, compels the mind to go beyond some existing frameworks, which see gender and sexuality as 'secondary', 'non-defining', or 'instrumental'. Even in the case of SPD, which has belatedly embraced the fight

against ‘gender ideology’, and does not frequently attack women’s and LGBT+ rights, the central role of social reproduction in its racialised discourse on ‘working families’ shows that gender and sexuality strongly matter for the party’s ideological project. Thus, despite important differences between the two parties, they both have something in common, and namely they are the most vocal defenders of gender and sexual inequalities in their own national context. Taking this contextual approach to gender and sexuality in the far right and isolating those elements for analytical purposes, I argue that gender and sexuality is one of the main dimensions of inequality represented by the far right and co-constitutive of other ones, especially race/ethnicity/nationality and socio-economic class. Thus, as much as most parties on the far right concentrate on the racial/ethnic/national dimension of inequality, it does not mean that this dimension constitutes the ideological core of the far right. Instead, I propose to go back to the concepts of inequality and authoritarianism to conceptualise the far right.

In its embrace of heterosexism/heteronormativity, ultra-libertarian economics and ethnonationalism, *Konfederacja* presents a striking example of the centrality of inequality as the ideological core of far-right politics, expressed to different degrees across several co-constitutive dimensions like gender, sexuality, class, race/ethnicity, religion. In *Konfederacja*’s paleolibertarian ideological project, it is not nativism that occupies the central position, as the influential definition of the far right conceptualised by Cas Mudde (Mudde, 2007) would have it, but rather inequality, expressed in racial/ethnic, gendered and sexualised, socio-economic and cultural terms, in different combinations and to different degrees. The trouble with the focus on nativism appears in the case of the NN (ex-KORWiN) party, *Konfederacja*’s paleolibertarian wing, whose leaders and members often showed a much greater interest in the socio-economic aspects of inequality – through the promotion of ruthless unhindered

economic competition with little to no redistribution through taxation – than in racial/ethnic/national ones. Moreover, *Konfederacja* cannot even be considered as truly nativist, according to Mudde’s definition of nativism as “an ideology, which holds that states should be inhabited *exclusively* by members of the native group (“the nation”) and that nonnative elements (persons and ideas) are fundamentally threatening to the homogenous nation-state” (Mudde, 2007, p. 19 emphasis mine). Indeed, as the interviews and the party’s internal disagreements have shown, not all elements in *Konfederacja* are equally committed to the complete ethnic homogeneity made implicit in this definition, and I would argue that very few, if any, of the contemporary European far-right parties are. Perhaps the definition of nativism that he provided in another co-authored article – as “a combination of nationalism and xenophobia, [that] strives for a monocultural state hostile to ‘alien’ influences” (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2015, p. 20) – better reflects that nativism should be understood as an emphasis on ethnic/racial or cultural supremacy, more than an absolutist quest for ethnic homogeneity.

In general, the term ‘nativist’ at the core of Mudde’s original definition is proving increasingly inadequate to make sense of shifting discourses by far-right parties insisting on the civic or cultural – not racial/ethnic – aspects of belonging (Halikiopoulou et al., 2013). Thus, a far-right party like the French *Rassemblement National* has advocated for a ‘French Islam’ instead of rejecting the religion and all its adepts (Scrinzi, 2024, p. 53), and the Italian far-right *Lega* massively regularised extra-European migrant female care workers when it was in power (Farris, 2017, p. 164). While scholars should critically examine the coherence and sincerity of such rhetoric and policies, they should not reject them *a priori* as a cynical manipulations. Engaging with far-right leaders, members and voters can make these important nuances in nativist, anti-migration and nationalist discourses appear, such as the diverse views on

different migrant groups and minorities expressed by *Konfederacja* and the SPD members. In short, scholars have to engage more closely with the complex work of the politics of belonging, how the far right is shifting its rhetoric, and what it means for existing social hierarchies.

I believe that the root of this definitional and conceptual problem lies in Mudde's influential definition of the 'populist radical right' (2007), where he makes a jump from inequality to nativism without clearly explaining why. Thus, Mudde starts by referring to Norberto Bobbio's famous Left-Right distinction (1996) as resting on the defence of (in)equality to define the right-wing as the defender of inequality, but he then jumps to nativism as the ideological core of the radical and extreme right, leaving inequality behind (Mudde, 2007, 2017). While he makes a convincing argument throughout his groundbreaking book *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe* (2007) about the centrality of race/ethnicity for the far right, and the relative unimportance of other issues like the economy or gender and sexuality, I see two major problems in this work, beyond the aforementioned definitional imprecision of the term 'nativism'. First, it treats race/ethnicity as an isolated dimension, forgetting that racialisation is inevitably gendered and sexualised, and entangled with socio-economic class (Cooper, 2017; Mosse, 1985; Nagel, 2003; Rathgeb, 2024). Second, the conceptual jump from inequality to nativism makes one lose sight of the historically consistent and enduring ideological roots of the far right. By focusing on nativism, Mudde treats all other elements like gender, sexuality and class as separate and almost 'random' add-ons, as if far-right parties could ignore, adopt, shape or reject them at will, without any concern for ideological coherence. In this vision, gender and sexuality or socio-economics can be moulded at will in service of the nativist ideology. However, as he writes himself, European far-right parties do have as a common

denominator a vision of gender and sexuality insisting on the family, rejecting ‘equalisation’ measures to enforce gender equality and emphasising ‘natural’ sex differences (Mudde, 2007, p. 92).

Drawing from these reflections, I argue that the far right’s definition must be amended. If one agrees that the core of the *right* is linked to inequality, I contend that it is not only logical but also essential to keep this distinction at the centre of any definition of the *far right*. I thus define the far right as the *authoritarian defence, naturalisation and/or promotion of inequality*. In this definition, the degree of radicalism – i.e. the degree of inequalities – and the authoritarian approach is precisely what differentiates the *right* from the *far right*. As I write in the Introduction, my definition adopts Mudde’s understanding of authoritarianism as “the belief in a strictly ordered society, in which infringements of authority are to be punished severely” (Mudde, 2007, p. 23) and keeps his distinction between the radical right, which accepts the basic rules of democracy, and the extreme right, which does not.

I consider my definition as furthering the understanding of the far right in five ways. First, it allows for historical continuity and conceptual inclusivity, taking into account the origins of the right-wing and the fact that far-right movements/parties have not always primarily focused on ethnic/racial/national belonging, especially in the era preceding the rise of nationalism. Indeed, the far right draws its roots in the 18th and 19th century anti-Enlightenment movement against liberalism and its egalitarian and universalistic views, by defending monarchic, aristocratic and clerical privileges before racial/ethnic/national issues became more salient (Bar-On, 2016; Sternhell, 2010; Tamás, 2000). Even today, some currents within *Konfederacja* – especially in the NN and *Korona* wings – remain strikingly close to these anti-Enlightenment origins, with their anti-democratic, monarchic and Catholic fundamentalist convictions. It also

helps understand certain shifts in party developments by linking them to a common ideological root, like the Scandinavian that started as anti-tax parties before focusing on immigration, complementing their criticism of socio-economic egalitarianism with the rejection of ethnic/racial egalitarianism (Art, 2011, p. 43; Betz, 1994, pp. 4–7; Rydgren, 2004). Second, and linked to the first point, my definition offers a better understanding of the continuity between the mainstream right and the far right, which share a common ideological core, and only differ in the intensity – from moderate to radical – of their defence of inequality and in their approaches to the enforcement of inequality – from liberal to authoritarian. The third reason speaking in favour of this definition is the inclusion of various degrees – the *defence*, *naturalisation and/or promotion* – since the far right relates differently to existing inequalities in different contexts, sometimes more committed to maintaining the unequal status quo than to returning towards more inequality. In the context of gender and sexuality, it helps understand why far-right parties in some countries might accept gender equality and even same-gender marriages, but refuse additional measures striving for substantive – and not only formal – equality. For example, the SPD does not advocate the return to a more unequal – i.e. more heterosexist – gender and sexual order, but rather blocks efforts towards greater equality. Fourth, this definition shifts the emphasis on the various potential dimensions of inequality, instead of taking for granted that the ethnic/racial/national element is central. Indeed, as *Konfederacja*'s case shows, the emphasis on the gender and sexual order and on socio-economics can be more prominent than the ethnic/racial/national, even if they are all intertwined. Arguably, this is also linked to different 'cycles of contention' and 'political and discursive opportunity structures', when different issues gain a certain salience, as in the SPD's belated and sudden engagement against 'gender ideology' when parliament debated the

ratification of the Istanbul Convention in 2018. My definition thus encourages a flexible and dynamic comprehension of how the far right focuses on different dimensions of inequality and advocates for different levels of inequality, and how it can shift over time. Last but not least, I believe this definition can better travel around the world, as it can better correspond to the reality of other countries or continents, where mobilisation around migration or interethnic/interracial issues is less prominent, like in some Latin American countries (e.g. Borges & Zanotti, 2024).

Based on this definition and dividing entangled dimensions for analytical purposes, the two parties' inegalitarian ideological core comes out clearly, albeit with varying intensity depending on dimensions of inequality. Thus, taken as a whole, *Konfederacja* combines a high commitment to inequality on all dimensions, even though its party wings display some differences. When it comes to SPD, it is more committed to the racial/ethnic and the gender/sexual dimensions of inequality, but it has displayed temporal shifts and nuances. Thus, the gender/sexual was first kept to the idea of ethnonational social reproduction before it was extended to women's and LGBT+ rights. While the SPD's position on the socio-economic dimension appears ambiguous, considering its criticism of globalisation and its support for public services, the party nevertheless signals its support for the present unequal socio-economic status quo between the rich and the poor, and between the employed and the unemployed by supporting national capitalism, advocating tax cuts and promoting workfare chauvinism. Thus, as many other far-right parties, SPD defends socio-economic inequalities, but with "selective protections for the native (male) core workforce" (Rathgeb, 2024, p. 8). On socio-economics, if one analytically isolates that dimension, it is true that the far right cannot be always considered as the most ardent defender of inequalities in its local context, as the PiS

party's project of pseudo-welfare state showed, but one should keep in mind that the far right's socio-economic policies always serve its inegalitarian sociocultural policies (Rathgeb, 2024), as in *Konfederacja*'s ethnonational community of middle- and higher-class heterosexual families replacing the state and in SPD's project of welfare chauvinism for (White Czech) working families. Transnational research on far-right actors and their positions in their local contexts would be required to test whether my argument on anti-egalitarianism holds on a wider scale.

Looking backwards and forwards

For me, writing a PhD dissertation has been as much an enriching discovery of old and new academic territories, as it has been a constant and painful reminder of my own shortcomings and failures. Perhaps such feelings are bound to accompany any scientific inquiry, and the most important is to learn from one's mistakes and to go on to make new ones. I embarked in this PhD dissertation with the limited ambition to focus on the parties' and members' ideological views and projects. In the end, I collected such rich interview data that I decided to enlarge my focus to involvement paths and mobilisation within the party. However, I also realised that I would have conducted the interviews differently if I had set out to cover those topics from the very beginning. Moreover, I often lamented my own lack of insistence during the interviews, as I was often reluctant to push for more information and be more critical, constantly afraid that I could lose access to 'the field'. As my own research has shown, and as the numerous studies on the far right coming out each year by the hundreds, if not thousands, far-right activists, movements and parties are much more open to scholars than one would think, and my worries were probably exaggerated. While this dissertation already brings together the first set of 'close-up' qualitative data on *Konfederacja* and SPD members, I now

wished that I could have also engaged in a more immersive ethnography with one of the two parties, experiencing the world of political activists on both ‘frontstage’ and ‘backstage’ in a more intimate manner, to bring out more of the subtleties, nuances, doubts and contradictions intrinsic to all political movements, as recent ethnographies of the far right have shown (Pasieka, 2024; Pilkington, 2016).

It is especially crucial to conduct more close-up research on far-right political parties as they increasingly influence politics and even access power. Unfortunately, there has been a tendency among scholars working on the far right in the Global North with ethnographic methods to focus on the most extremist, marginal far-right groups (e.g. Blee, 2002, 2018; Ezekiel, 1995; Fangen, 1999; Ferber, 2004; Kimmel & Ferber, 2000; Pasieka, 2024; Pilkington, 2016; Ralph-Morrow, 2022; Shoshan, 2016; Teitelbaum, 2017; Virchow, 2007), at the detriment of institutionalised parties. This tendency has also been true for Poland, in both ethnographic and non-ethnographic research, with greater attention for the extra-parliamentary, more extremist far-right activists and sympathisers (Antonowicz et al., 2016; Kajta, 2020a; Kossakowski et al., 2020; Pasieka, 2024; Pielużek, 2017; Śmieja, 2021; Witkowski, 2023a) than the members of institutionalised parties like *Konfederacja* or PiS; and for Czechia, where Czech extremist groups and neo-Nazi subculture are more widely researched (Charvát, 2019; Daniel, 2022; M. Mareš, 2014; Rataj et al., 2020; Rataj & Mihálik, 2019; Slačálek, 2018; Smolík, 2015), than SPD members. Perhaps because extremist groups are the most deadly ones; because of a certain fascination for the ‘dangerous’ and ‘forbidden’; or rather because smaller groups are easier to study. In any case, it has led to some undesired side-effects, like the reproduction of the idea of the far right as ‘abnormal’, and the neglect of

the arguably much-more powerful and influential far-right party organisations and their activists.

A more balanced focus on groups across the right and the far right is also necessary to avoid some pitfalls, as the focus on the most extremist far-right groups gives too much space to the most extremist individuals who are more likely to have a ‘marginal’ profile. This has led to some somewhat questionable conclusions on the far right and gender, insisting on the direct link between far-right radicalism and ‘humiliated and shamed’ masculinity (e.g. Kimmel, 2019; Sauer, 2020). Indeed, the focus on the most extremist groups reproduces the image of angry white men and violent skinheads/hooligans (e.g. Ferber, 2004; Kimmel, 2019; Kimmel & Ferber, 2000; Ralph-Morrow, 2022), who see far right demonstrations as “a forum for its men to engage in compensatory, hypermasculine pursuits” (Ralph-Morrow, 2022, p. 39), while the more ‘normal’ male and female activists and voters of institutionalised far-right parties remain less frequently studied. As I showed in my dissertation, the young Polish male interviewees, despite discontent about the state of affairs in Poland, and despite a few stories of personal frustration with the gender and sexual order, did not tend to fit into the stereotype of disenfranchised men frustrated in their masculinity. On the contrary, as educated young men from the middle class – and just like the female interviewees – they seemed to be expressing and asserting a worldview largely drawing from the mainstream hegemony, with its gender – and class-based, ethnic/racial, religious – hegemony, rather than addressing feelings of masculine ‘humiliation and shame’. As I showed in this dissertation, gender plays an important role in ideology and mobilisation, but in diverse and complex ways, and more qualitative, ethnographic research would be required to investigate how masculinities and femininities find

an expression in far-right politics, and how they play out within political parties (e.g. Scrinzi, 2024).

Furthermore, as I show in this dissertation, the cases of *Konfederacja* and SPD show the need to develop a better understanding of socio-economic disenfranchisement and dispossession's role in far-right mobilisation, beyond the framework of transition/modernisation losers (Mrozowicki & Kajta, 2021, pp. 4–5; Shields, 2021, p. 1627). As Mondon and Winter write, the exaggerated and biased focus on the White working class, as in analyses of Trump and Brexit voters, leads to an erroneous reading of far-right successes as “white working class revolts”, thus legitimising racism and the far right (Mondon & Winter, 2020c). In the Polish case, the highly-educated, middle-class, urban *Konfederacja* members show that a new generation of far-right activists has emerged in Poland, and they can hardly be considered as disenfranchised ‘transition losers’. In the case of the SPD, despite criticism of the transition, I have also shown that dissatisfaction did not stem from personal post-1989 hardships. Thus, in both cases, my findings, as well as similar conclusions by other scholars (Bornschier & Kriesi, 2012; Minkenberg & Pytlas, 2013; Mudde, 2007, pp. 204–205; Savage, 2023), push academic research to develop more satisfactory explanatory models. Especially since the socio-economic displacements of globalisation, alongside new social shocks such as pandemics and wars, continue to challenge our societies. While these upheavals seem to fuel the surge of the far right, the whys and the hows remain unanswered, and I am convinced that only more ‘close-up’ research of the far right can help gain a better understanding of these dynamics, as recent works have shown (e.g. Pasieka, 2024; Scrinzi, 2024).

In the same way, the interaction of class with race, the ‘neoliberalism–nationalism nexus’, with all its gendered and sexualised aspects, calls for more attention to this interactive dynamic that

is so important for the far right. As I have shown in Chapters 4 and 5, the parties and members have more nuanced positions on race/ethnicity and migration than the conceptualisation of the far right as nativist – i.e. striving for ethnic homogeneity – presupposes. Despite the presence of a sort of double discourse between the good working migrant individual and the bad welfare-dependent refugee racial/ethnic groups, mirroring discourses on the good working Roma and the bad welfare-dependent Roma communities, there were also the good migrant groups, such as the Vietnamese and Eastern Europeans in Czechia and, to some extent, the Ukrainians in Poland. An important ‘invisible’ migrant group were also EU citizens like me, whose right to reside and work in Poland and Czechia is absolutely not contested. Over the course of this dissertation, shifts have also taken place, considering the massive arrival of Ukrainian refugees, whom the far right in both countries has increasingly attacked as ‘welfare scroungers’ and/or as criminals. Similarly, the politicisation of extra-European migration in Poland has also be accompanied by the increased use of the ‘racialisation of sexism’ frame in some of *Konfederacja*’s discourses. Thus, while racist stereotypes very much exist and matter, they evolve in a dynamic interaction with socio-economic and gendered issues, and the idea of ‘nativism’ as the core of the far right must be modified or, as I argue, reconsidered. Moreover, despite the fruitful application of the concept of ‘whiteness’ (Frankenburg, 1993) to explain politics of belonging in Europe in general (Kóczé, 2020b; Kundnani, 2023), or in Central and Eastern Europe in particular (Baker et al., 2024; Böröcz & Sarkar, 2017; Helms, 2025; Imre, 2005; Kalmar, 2022), including Poland (Balogun, 2023; Balogun & Pędziwiatr, 2023), they tend to take for granted the centrality of race to the detriment of more dynamic and intersectional explanatory models. In the meantime, barely any far-right party today in the Global North advocates racial/ethnic purity and a full stop to migration anymore, instead

increasingly shifting from the language of race to the language of culture, work and ‘normality’, including on gender and sexuality, to build new discourses of belonging. As people of mixed racial origins like Tomio Okamura can take the head of a far-right party like SPD, and many voters from racial/ethnic minorities can back far-right projects like Donald Trump’s (M. Brown et al., 2024), it is time to take seriously those shifting politics of belonging. As I have argued, the far right activates several co-constitutive dimensions of inequality, and it can shift its emphasis and combinations, creating powerful narratives and building strong and diverse voter bases. It is crucial for scholars to continue to critically engage with those trends, and to develop the right conceptual and methodological tools to pose new questions and provide new answers.

Word count: 94,447

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- 35 let demokracie (p. 30). (2024). STEM.
https://www.stem.cz/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/STEM_35-let-demokracie.pdf
- Abi-Hassan, S. (2017). Populism and gender. *The Oxford Handbook of Populism*, 426–444.
- Ad Library—Facebook. (n.d.). Facebook. Retrieved 3 July 2024, from
<https://www.facebook.com/ads/library/>
- Akkerman, T. (2015). Gender and the radical right in Western Europe: A comparative analysis of policy agendas. *Patterns of Prejudice*, 49(1–2), 37–60.
- Akkerman, T., & Hagelund, A. (2007). ‘Women and children first!’ Anti-immigration parties and gender in Norway and the Netherlands. *Patterns of Prejudice*, 41(2), 197–214.
- Alvaredo, F., Chancel, L., Piketty, T., Saez, E., & Zucman, G. (2018). *Rapport sur les inégalités mondiales 2018*. World Inequality Lab.
- Amesberger, H., & Halbmayer, B. (Eds.). (2002). *Rechtsextreme Parteien, eine mögliche Heimat für Frauen?* Leske + Budrich.
- Anderson, B. (1983). *Imagined communities: Reflections on the growth and spread of nationalism*. Verso.
- Anthias, F., & Yuval-Davis, N. (Eds.). (1989). *Woman, nation, state*. Macmillan.
- Antonowicz, D., Kossakowski, R., & Szlendak, T. (2016). Flaming flares, football fanatics and political rebellion: Resistant youth cultures in late capitalism. In *Eastern European Youth Cultures in a Global Context* (pp. 131–144). Springer.
- Art, D. (2011). *Inside the radical right: The development of anti-immigrant parties in Western Europe*. Cambridge University Press.
- Ashe, S. D., Busher, J., Macklin, G., & Winter, A. (Eds.). (2020). *Researching the far right: Theory, method and practice*. Routledge.
- Atkinson, P., & Hammersley, M. (2007). *Ethnography: Principles in practice* (Third edition). Routledge.
- Avanza, M. (2008). Comment faire de l’ethnographie quand on n’aime pas “ses indigènes”? Une enquête au sein d’un mouvement xénophobe. *Les Politiques de l’enquête*, 41–58.
- Bacchetta, P., & Power, M. (Eds.). (2002). *Right-wing women. From conservatives to extremists around the world*. Routledge.
- Baker, C., Iacob, B. C., Imre, A., & Mark, J. (2024). *Off white: Central and Eastern Europe and the global history of race*. Manchester University Press.
- Balogun, B. (2023). Refugees separated by the global color line: The power of Europeanness, whiteness, and sameness. *International Migration Review*, 0(0), 1–17.
- Balogun, B., & Pędziwiatr, K. (2023). ‘Stop Calling Me Murzyn’—How Black Lives Matter in Poland. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 49(6), 1552–1569.

- Bamforth, N., & Richards, D. A. (2008). *Patriarchal Religion, Sexuality, and Gender: A Critique of New Natural Law*. Cambridge University Press.
- Banaś, M. (2017). *Kobiety w polityce*. Księgarnia Akademicka.
- Bancroft, A. (2001). Closed spaces, restricted places: Marginalisation of Roma in Europe. *Space and Polity*, 5(2), 145–157.
- Banks, M. (2006). Performing ‘Neo-nationalism’: Some Methodological Notes. In A. Gingrich & M. Banks (Eds.), *Neo-nationalism in Europe and beyond: Perspectives from social anthropology* (pp. 50–68). Berghahn Books.
- Baranowska, K. (2023, June 24). *Wielka konwencja Konfederacji. Grzegorz Braun dostał największe owacje*. Interia.pl. <https://wydarzenia.interia.pl/kraj/news-wielka-konwencja-konfederacji-grzegorz-braun-dostal-najwieks,nId,6861561>
- Baranowski, M. (2023). The illiberal turn in politics and ideology through the commodified social policy of the ‘family 500+’ programme. *Forum for Social Economics*, 52(3), 270–281.
- Barker, M. (1981). *The new racism: Conservatives and the ideology of the tribe*. Junction Books.
- Bar-On, T. (2016). *Where have all the fascists gone?* Routledge.
- Barth, F. (1969). *Ethnic groups and boundaries: The social organization of culture difference* (Little, Brown&Co. series in Anthropology).
- Bartoníček, R. (2018, November 12). *Členka SPD i šířitelka fake news. Kdo je žena, která varuje zákonodárce před úmluvou*. Aktuálně.cz. <https://zpravy.aktualne.cz/domaci/tradicni-rodinu-haji-fanyinka-spd-ktera-povazuje-spornou-umlu/r~0c8ff1e4e28e11e8b7c1ac1f6b220ee8/>
- Beauduin, A. (2024). The Czech Parliamentary Radical Right and the West: Harnessing Postsocialism to Anti-Liberalism. *Intersections. East European Journal of Society and Politics*, 10(1).
- Bellè, E. (2016). Knowing as being, knowing is being. Doing a political ethnography of an Italian right-wing party. *Anthropologie & Développement*, 44, 79–100.
- Benatzky, M. (2017, October 24). *Jak Okamurova strana komunikovala na Facebooku? Vyvolávala hlavně pocit velkého spiknutí všech proti lidu a mazala každý nesouhlasný hlas*. iDNES.cz. https://www.idnes.cz/zpravy/mediahub/jak-okamurova-strana-komunikovala-na-facebooku-vyvolavala-hlavne-pocit-velkeho-spiknuti-vsech-proti.A171024_1050073_mediahub_imp
- Benford, R. D., & Snow, D. A. (2000). Framing processes and social movements: An overview and assessment. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 26(1), 611–639.
- Berg, L. (2019). Between anti-feminism and ethnicized sexism: Far-right gender politics in Germany. In M. Fielitz & N. Thurston (Eds.), *Post-Digital Cultures of the Far Right*. transcript Verlag.

- Berger, V. (2021a, August 31). *Okamuru hlídají svalovci se sluchátkem v uchu. Ochranku ale nemá, tvrdí SPD*. HlídacíPes.org. <https://hlidacipes.org/okamuru-pri-foceni-s-fanousky-hlidaji-svalovci-se-sluchatkem-v-uchu-ochranku-nema-tvrdi-spd/>
- Berger, V. (2021b, September 23). *Okamura přišel o image miláčka davu. Hlídá ho policie, ochranku mají i jarmarky a kamion SPD*. HlídacíPes.org. <https://hlidacipes.org/okamura-prisel-o-image-milacka-davu-hlida-ho-policie-ochranku-maji-i-jarmarky-a-kamion-spd/>
- Berger, V. (2024, May 23). *Okamurovi muži a ženy v černém. SPD hlídá její „vlastní“ bezpečnostní agentura*. HlídacíPes.org. <https://hlidacipes.org/okamurovi-muzi-a-zeny-v-cernem-spd-hlida-jeji-vlastni-bezpecnostni-agentura/>
- Betz, H. G. (1994). *Radical right-wing populism in Western Europe*. Springer.
- Bialasiewicz, L. (2006). 'The death of the West': Samuel Huntington Oriana Fallaci and a new 'moral' geopolitics of births and bodies. *Geopolitics*, 11(4), 701–724.
- Bill, S. (2022). Counter-elite populism and civil society in Poland: PiS's strategies of elite replacement. *East European Politics and Societies*, 36(1), 118–140.
- Bill, S., & Stanley, B. (2020). Whose Poland is it to be? PiS and the struggle between monism and pluralism. *East European Politics*, 36(3), 378–394.
- Bizeul, D. (2003). *Avec ceux du FN*. La Découverte.
- Bizeul, D. (2007). Des loyautés incompatibles. Aspects moraux d'une immersion au Front national. *SociologieS*.
- Blee, K. M. (1991). Women in the 1920s' Ku Klux Klan Movement. *Feminist Studies*, 17(1), 57–77.
- Blee, K. M. (1996). Becoming a racist: Women in contemporary Ku Klux Klan and neo-Nazi groups. *Gender & Society*, 10(6), 680–702.
- Blee, K. M. (2002). *Inside organized racism: Women in the hate movement*. University of California Press.
- Blee, K. M. (2007). Ethnographies of the far right. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 36(2), 119–128.
- Blee, K. M. (2012). Does Gender Matter in the United States Far-Right? *Politics, Religion & Ideology*, 13(2), 253–265.
- Blee, K. M. (2018). *Understanding Racist Activism: Theory, Methods and Research*. Routledge.
- Blee, K. M., & Creasap, K. A. (2010). Conservative and right-wing movements. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 36, 269–286.
- Blee, K. M., & Deutsch, S. M. (Eds.). (2012). *Women of the right: Comparisons and interplay across borders*. Pennsylvania State University Press.
- Blee, K. M., & Latif, M. (2020). Sociological survey of the far right. In S. D. Ashe, J. Busher, G. Macklin, & A. Winter (Eds.), *Researching the far right: Theory, method and practice* (pp. 45–59). Routledge.

- Blee, K. M., & Linden, A. (2012). Women in extreme right parties and movements: A Comparison of the Netherlands and the United States. In K. M. Blee & S. McGee Deutsch (Eds.), *Women of the right: Comparisons and interplay across borders* (pp. 98–116). Pennsylvania State University Press.
- Blee, K. M., & McGee Deutsch, S. (2012). *Women of the Right: International and Transnational Perspectives*. University Park, Penn State University Press.
- Blee, K. M., & Taylor, V. (2002). Semi-structured interviewing in social movement research. *Methods of Social Movement Research*, 16, 92–117.
- Bobako, M. (2017). *Islamofobia jako technologia władzy: Studium z antropologii politycznej*. Towarzystwo Autorów i Wydawców Prac Naukowych Universitas.
- Bobbio, N. (1996). *Left and right: The significance of a political distinction*. University of Chicago Press.
- Bodnar, A. (2020). *Kwoty i co dalej? Udział kobiet w życiu politycznym w Polsce* (Biuletyn Rzecznika Praw Obywatelskich 2020 6; p. 65). Biuro Rzecznika Praw Obywatelskich. https://www.rpo.gov.pl/sites/default/files/Kobiety_w_zyciu_politycznym.pdf
- Boellstorff, T., Nardi, B., Pearce, C., & Taylor, T. L. (2012). *Ethnography and virtual worlds*. Princeton University Press.
- Bogdanowska-Jakubowska, E. (2017). A picture of masculinity in Polish political discourse. In E. Bogdanowska-Jakubowska (Ed.), *Oblicza męskości / Faces of Masculinity* (pp. 77–94). Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego.
- Bohle, D., Greskovits, B., & Naczyk, M. (2024). The Gramscian politics of Europe's rule of law crisis. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 31(7), 1775–1798.
- Borges, A., & Zanotti, L. (2024). Authoritarian, But Not Nativist: Classifying Far-Right Parties in Latin America. *Political Studies*, 0(0), 1–23.
- Bořil, M. (2012, June 3). *Okamura bude kandidovat do Senátu, kvůli matce si vybral Zlín*. iDNES.cz. https://www.idnes.cz/zpravy/domaci/okamura-kandiduje-ze-zlina-do-senatu-jako-nezavisly.A120603_125106_zlin-zpravy_bor
- Bornschier, S., & Kriesi, H. (2012). The populist right, the working class, and the changing face of class politics. In *Class politics and the radical right* (pp. 10–30). Routledge.
- Böröcz, J., & Sarkar, M. (2017). The Unbearable Whiteness of the Polish Plumber and the Hungarian Peacock Dance around “Race”. *Slavic Review*, 76(2), 307–314.
- Bosak, K. (2019, June 15). *Propaganda LGBT idzie na całego*. X (formerly Twitter). <https://x.com/krzysztofbosak/status/1139927877363884033>
- Bosak, K. (2024, August 6). *Koszty społeczne masowej imigracji*. Konfederacja. <https://konfederacja.pl/koszty-spoeczne-masowej-imigracji/>
- Boumaza, M. (2001). L'expérience d'une jeune chercheuse en "milieu extrême": Une enquête au Front National. *Regards Sociologiques*, 22, 105–121.
- Bracewell, W. (2000). Rape in Kosovo: Masculinity and Serbian nationalism. *Nations and Nationalism*, 6(4), 563–590.

- Braun, G. (Director). (2020, November 21). *Grzegorz Braun vs Policja. Pokojowy protest otoczony policyjnym kordonem!* [Video recording]. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AGV-_fno_eA
- Braun słono zapłaci za nienoszenie maseczek w Sejmie. Ściągną mu z pensji 156 tysięcy zł. (2021, December 30). Polska Agencja Prasowa. <https://www.pap.pl/aktualnosci/news/%2C1039891%2Cbraun-slonozaplati-za-nienoszenie-maseczek-w-sejmie-sciagnamu-z-pensji>
- Braun ukarany przez Parlament Europejski. (2025, February 10). TVN24. <https://tvn24.pl/polska/kara-dla-grzegorza-brauna-za-obrazliwy-i-dyskryminujacy-jezyk-podczas-debaty-o-lgbtqi-st8299969>
- Břešťan, R. (2018, February 8). *Zpronevěra peněz hnutí Úsvit? O odložení případu někteří bývalí členové hnutí ani nevěděli*. HlídaciPes.org. <https://hlidacipes.org/zpronevera-penez-hnuti-usvit-odlozeni-pripadu-nekteri-byvali-clenove-hnuti-nevedeli/>
- Břešťan, R. (2019, February 26). *Sekta přímé diktatury, překládají název Okamurova hnutí bývalí členové*. HlídaciPes.org. <https://hlidacipes.org/sekta-prime-diktatury-prekladaji-nazev-okamurova-hnuti-byvali-clenove/>
- Brodničková, K., & Mach, J. (2024, October 12). *ANO to dalo s SPD dohromady už ve čtyřech krajích. Okamura by rád i do vlády*. Novinky.Cz. <https://www.novinky.cz/clanek/domaci-ano-to-dalo-s-spd-dohromady-uz-ve-ctyrech-krajich-okamura-by-rad-i-do-vlady-40492669>
- Brown, M., Figueroa, F., Fingerhut, H., & Sanders, L. (2024, November 10). *Young Black and Latino men say they chose Trump because of the economy and jobs. Here's how and why*. AP News. <https://apnews.com/article/young-black-latino-men-trump-economy-jobs-9184ca85b1651f06fd555ab2df7982b5>
- Brown, W. (2003). Neo-liberalism and the End of Liberal Democracy. *Theory & Event*, 7(1).
- Brubaker, R. (1996). *Nationalism reframed: Nationhood and the national question in the new Europe*. Cambridge University Press.
- Brubaker, R. (2004). *Ethnicity without groups*. Harvard University Press.
- Brubaker, R. (2017). Between nationalism and civilizationism: The European populist moment in comparative perspective. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 40(8), 1191–1226.
- Brubaker, R., Feischmidt, M., Fox, J., & Grancea, L. (2006). *Nationalist Politics and Everyday Ethnicity in a Transylvanian Town*. Princeton University Press.
- Busher, J. (2020). Negotiating ethical dilemmas during an ethnographic study of anti-minority activism: A personal reflection on the adoption of a 'non-dehumanization' principle. In S. D. Ashe, J. Busher, G. Macklin, & A. Winter (Eds.), *Researching the far right: Theory, method and practice* (pp. 270–283). Routledge.
- Bustikova, L. (2013). Welfare chauvinism, ethnic heterogeneity and conditions for the electoral breakthrough of radical right parties: Evidence from eastern Europe. In *Right-Wing Radicalism Today* (pp. 106–123). Routledge.
- Čada, K. (2012). Social exclusion of the Roma and Czech society. In M. Stewart (Ed.), *The gypsy 'menace'. Populism and the new anti-gypsy politics* (pp. 67–79). Hurst & Co.

- Campus, D. (2013). *Women political leaders and the media*. Springer.
- Čanigová, K., & Souralová, A. (2024). Low-income Roma mothers negotiating mothering in the context of poverty. *Journal of Poverty*, 28(2), 110–133.
- Carlisle, M. (2022, May 16). *Inside the Right-Wing Movement to Ban Trans Youth From Sports*. TIME. <https://time.com/6176799/trans-sports-bans-conservative-movement/>
- Carter, E. (2005). *The Extreme Right in Western Europe: Success Or Failure?* Manchester University Press.
- Cashman, L. (2017). New label no progress: Institutional racism and the persistent segregation of Romani students in the Czech Republic. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 20(5), 595–608.
- Catano, J. V. (1990). The rhetoric of masculinity: Origins, institutions, and the myth of the self-made man. *College English*, 52(4), 421–436.
- Catano, J. V. (2000). Entrepreneurial Masculinity: Re-tooling the Self-made Man. *Journal of American & Comparative Cultures*, 23(2), 1–8.
- Celis, K., & Childs, S. (2014). Introduction: The ‘puzzle’ of gender, conservatism and representation. In K. Celis & S. Childs (Eds.), *Gender, conservatism and political representation* (pp. 1–20). ECPR Press.
- CEPERolkV6 (Director). (2019, September 21). 🌟 NA ŽYWO 🌟 Konwencja programowa Konfederacji Wolność i Niepodległość [Video recording]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WHky7O5SwVo>
- Chalupa, M. (2017, October 8). *Všechny Okamurovy ženy: Které dámy šéf SPD okouzlit a užíval si s nimi?* Expres.cz. https://www.expres.cz/zpravy/okamurovy-zeny-a-milenky.A171008_184718_dx-zpravy_neos
- Charvát, J. (2019). The Role and Importance of White Power Music in Shaping the Far Right in the Czech Republic. *Popular Music in Communist and Post-Communist Europe*, 243–253.
- Charvát, J., Slačálek, O., & Svatoňová, E. (2024). Four Cycles of the Czech Far-right’s Contention. In *The Routledge Handbook of Far-Right Extremism in Europe*. Taylor & Francis.
- Chetaille, A. (2013). Une «autre Europe» homophobe? L’Union européenne, le nationalisme polonais et la sexualisation de la «division Est/Ouest». *Raisons Politiques*, 1, 119–140.
- Chrzczonowicz, M. (2024, July 18). *Już 130 migrantów i migrantek zginęło na granicy UE z Białorusią [PIERWSZY RAPORT O OFIARACH KRYZYSU]*. OKO.press. <https://oko.press/130-migrantow-i-migrantek-zginelo-na-granicy-raport>
- Chudy, B. (2023, March 30). *Śławomir Mentzen chce dać rodzicom prawo do klapsa. ‘Musi być nieprzyjemny’*. Radio Zet. <https://wiadomosci.radiozet.pl/polska/polityka/slawomir-mentzen-chce-dac-rodzicom-prawo-do-klapsa-musi-byc-nieprzyjemny>
- Cianetti, L., Dawson, J., & Hanley, S. (2020). Rethinking “democratic backsliding” in Central and Eastern Europe—looking beyond Hungary and Poland. In L. Cianetti, J. Dawson,

- & S. Hanley (Eds.), *Rethinking 'Democratic Backsliding' in Central and Eastern Europe* (pp. 1–14). Routledge.
- Ciensi, J. (2024, October 21). *Playing with 'electoral rocket fuel': How Poland's Donald Tusk hopes to weaponize migration*. Politico. <https://www.politico.eu/article/donald-tusk-poland-migration-politics-electoral-rocket-fuel/>
- Císař, O. (2017). Czech Republic: From post-communist idealism to economic populism. *Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung*.
- Císař, O., & Navrátil, J. (2019). For the people, by the people? The Czech radical and populist right after the refugee crisis. In M. Caiani & O. Císař (Eds.), *Radical Right Movement Parties in Europe* (pp. 184–198). Routledge.
- Císař, O., & Vrábliková, K. (2019). National protest agenda and the dimensionality of party politics: Evidence from four East-Central European democracies. *European Journal of Political Research*, 58(4), 1152–1171.
- Cohen, S. (2011). *Folk devils and moral panics*. Routledge.
- Connell, R. (1987). *Gender and power: Society, the Person and Sexual Politics*. Polity Press.
- Connell, R. (1997). Sexual revolution. In *New sexual agendas* (pp. 60–76). Springer.
- Connell, R. (2005). *Masculinities* (Second Edition). University of California Press.
- Connell, R. (2009). *Gender. In World Perspective*. Polity.
- Connell, R. (2012). Gender, health and theory: Conceptualizing the issue, in local and world perspective. *Social Science & Medicine*, 74(11), 1675–1683.
- Connell, R., & Messerschmidt, J. W. (2005). Hegemonic masculinity: Rethinking the concept. *Gender & Society*, 19(6), 829–859.
- Connor, W. (1973). The politics of ethnonationalism. *Journal of International Affairs*, 1–21.
- Connor, W. (1994). *Ethnonationalism: The Quest for Understanding*. Princeton University Press.
- Cooper, M. (2017). *Family values: Between neoliberalism and the new social conservatism*. Zone Books.
- Cooper, M. (2021). The alt-right: Neoliberalism, libertarianism and the fascist temptation. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 38(6), 29–50.
- Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color. *Stanford Law Review*, 43(6), 1241–1299.
- Crețan, R., Kupka, P., Powell, R., & Walach, V. (2022). Racialized Urban Encounters, Collective Histories and Fragmented Habitus. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 46(1), 82–100.
- CrowdTangle. (2024, August 16). Meta. <https://transparency.meta.com/researchtools/other-datasets/crowdtangle#:~:text=CrowdTangle%20was%20a%20public%20insights,high%2Dquality%20data%20to%20researchers>.

- Czermiński, J. (2023, July 5). *Krzysztof Bosak: Trzeba zablokować imigrację z państw muzułmańskich*. Rzeczpospolita. <https://www.rp.pl/polityka/art38697541-krzysztof-bosak-trzeba-zablokowac-imigracje-z-panstw-muzulmanskich>
- Czermiński, J. (2025, January 17). *Grzegorz Braun wykluczony z Konfederacji. Oficjalna decyzja*. Rzeczpospolita. <https://www.rp.pl/polityka/art41696851-grzegorz-braun-wykluczony-z-konfederacji-jest-decyzja-sadu-partyjnego>
- Daddow, O., & Hertner, I. (2021). Interpreting toxic masculinity in political parties: A framework for analysis. *Party Politics*, 27(4), 743–754.
- Damhuis, K., & Westheuser, L. (2024). Cleavage politics in ordinary reasoning: How common sense divides. *European Societies*, 1–37.
- Daniel, O. (2022). Plucking the Strings of Working-Class Xenophobia: The Case of Ortel, a Czech Band in the mid-2010s. *Totalitarismus Und Demokratie*, 19(1), 95–110.
- Dawidowicz, A. (2014). Język zbrukany, czyli rzecz o języku polityków i jego patologiach. *Studia Polityczne*, 36, 158–170.
- De Grazia, V. (1992). *How fascism ruled women: Italy, 1922-1945*. University of California Press.
- De Lange, S. L., & Mügge, L. M. (2015). Gender and right-wing populism in the Low Countries: Ideological variations across parties and time. *Patterns of Prejudice*, 49(1–2), 61–80.
- Dennis, R. M. (1995). Social Darwinism, scientific racism, and the metaphysics of race. *Journal of Negro Education*, 243–252.
- Deodhar, B. (2022). Inside, outside, upside down: Power, positionality, and limits of ethnic identity in the ethnographies of the far-right. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 51(4), 538–565.
- Dietze, G. (2020). Why are women attracted to right-wing populism? Sexual exceptionalism, emancipation fatigue, and new maternalism. In G. Dietze & J. Roth (Eds.), *Right-Wing Populism and Gender, European Perspectives and Beyond* (pp. 147–165). transcript Verlag.
- Dietze, G., & Roth, J. (2020). Right-Wing Populism and Gender: A Preliminary Cartography of an Emergent Field of Research. In G. Dietze & J. Roth (Eds.), *Right-Wing Populism and Gender. European Perspectives and Beyond* (pp. 7–22). transcript Verlag.
- Domagała. (2020a, January 7). ➡ *Matki kontra ZUS!* [Online post]. Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/KlaudiaDomagalaPL/posts/pfbid0b5MPq14aWTmyPG3k6ddE7rvnwmLruwHvzeRthiGTuk9mb4zmLKrwd49cffiZRjcF1>
- Domagała, K. (2020b, January 28). *Klaudia Domagała ➡ Kalendarz 'Kobiety Wolności i Niepodległości' na rok 2020 z darmową dostawą!!*. Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/120389212691945/photos/a.121360022594864/196063898457809/>
- Domagała, K. (2020c, October 30). *Konfederacja staje w obronie zdrowia kobiet i dzieci!* [Online post]. Facebook.

- <https://www.facebook.com/KlaudiaDomagalaPL/posts/pfbid02HqrtNCU8UcXP7TKj4n6BaW7FnwZCtv69wo5RVMitt6B7EfkuQSuEHHsbfp4F7Y5gl>
- Dražanová, L. (2015). National identity and the interplay between national pride and ethnic exclusionism: The exceptional case of the Czech Republic. *Ethnopolitics*, 14(3), 235–255.
- Druciarek, M., Kopka-Piątek, M., Niżyńska, A., Przybysz, I., & Przybysz, D. (2024). *Kobiety w polityce krajowej. Strategie partii politycznych w wyborach parlamentarnych 2023* (p. 58). Instytut Spraw Publicznych. <https://www.isp.org.pl/pl/publikacje/kobiety-w-polityce-krajowej-strategie-partii-politycznych-w-wyborach-parlamentarnych-2023>
- Duggan, L. (2002). The new homonormativity: The sexual politics of neoliberalism. *Materializing Democracy: Toward a Revitalized Cultural Politics*, 10, 175–194.
- Dvořák, J. (2011, May 10). *Politika není špinavá, špinavý může být jen politik, říká Tomio Okamura*. iDNES.cz. https://www.idnes.cz/zpravy/archiv/politika-neni-spinava-spinavy-muze-byt-jen-politik-rika-tomio-okamura.A110510_122137_kavarna_jdv
- Dvořáková, P. (2018, September 3). *Okamurova Sekta Přímé Diktatury se rozpadá. Novovlastencům to ale může prospět*. Deník Referendum. <https://denikreferendum.cz/clanek/28221-okamurova-sekta-prime-diktatury-se-rozpada-novovlastencum-to-ale-muze-prospet>
- Eatwell, R. (2018). Charisma and the radical right. In J. Rydgren (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of the radical right* (pp. 251–268). Oxford University Press.
- Eatwell, R., & Goodwin, M. J. (2018). *National populism: The revolt against liberal democracy*. Penguin UK.
- eMisjaTv (Director). (2019, October 5). *Konwencja wyborcza Konfederacji w Rzeszowie* [Video recording]. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_uNZphAgq9g
- Engeli, I. (2020). Gender and sexuality research in the age of populism: Lessons for political science. *European Political Science*, 19(2), 226–235.
- Engler, S., Pytlas, B., & Deegan-Krause, K. (2019). Assessing the diversity of anti-establishment and populist politics in Central and Eastern Europe. *West European Politics*, 42, 1310–1336.
- Enloe, C. (1989). *Bananas, beaches and bases: Making feminist sense of international politics*. University of California Press.
- Ezekiel, R. (1995). *The racist mind: Portraits of American neo-Nazis and Klansmen*. Penguin Books.
- Fairclough, N. (2003). *Analysing discourse: Textual analysis for social research*. Routledge.
- Fangen, K. (1999). On the margins of life: Life stories of radical nationalists. *Acta Sociologica*, 42(4), 357–373.
- Farris, S. R. (2012). Femonationalism and the "Regular" Army of Labor Called Migrant Women. *History of the Present*, 2(2), 184–199.
- Farris, S. R. (2017). *In the Name of Women's Rights: The Rise of Femonationalism*. Duke University Press.

- Félix, A. (2017). Towards an alternative emancipation? The new way (s) of women's mobilisation in the Hungarian radical right subculture. In M. Köttig, R. Bitzan, & A. Pető (Eds.), *Gender and far right politics in Europe* (pp. 95–109). Springer International Publishing.
- Ferber, A. L. (2004). *Home-grown hate: Gender and organized racism*. Psychology Press.
- Ferree, M. M. (2018). "Theories Don't Grow on Trees". Contextualizing Gender Knowledge. In J. W. Messerschmidt, M. A. Messner, R. Connell, & P. Y. Martin (Eds.), *Gender reckonings: New social theory and research* (pp. 13–34). New York University Press.
- Ferree, M. M. (2020). The crisis of masculinity for gendered democracies: Before, during, and after Trump. *Sociological Forum*, 35, 898–917.
- Fielding, N. G. (1982). Observational research on the national front. In M. Bulmer (Ed.), *Social research ethics: An examination of the merits of covert participant observation* (pp. 80–104). Macmillan Press.
- Fielding, N. G. (1993). Mediating the message: Affinity and hostility in research on sensitive topics. In C. M. Renzetti & R. M. Lee (Eds.), *Researching sensitive topics* (pp. 146–159). Sage.
- Fodor, É. (2022). *The gender regime of anti-liberal Hungary*. Springer Nature.
- Fomina, J., & Kucharczyk, J. (2016). The specter haunting Europe: Populism and protest in Poland. *Journal of Democracy*, 27(4), 58–68.
- Forťová, K. (2024, October 7). *Volby 2021 | Únava, úsměvy i testosteron. Lídři ze sebe ždímalí poslední zbytky sil*. iDNES.cz. https://www.idnes.cz/volby/debata-nova-parlamentni-volby-bartos-babis-okamura-fiala-filip-slachta-hamacek.A211007_135233_domaci_klf
- Frankenburg, R. (1993). *White women, race matters: The social construction of whiteness*. Routledge.
- Fraser, N. (2016). Capitalism's crisis of care. *Dissent*, 63(4), 30–37.
- Fraser, N., & Gordon, L. (1994). A genealogy of dependency: Tracing a keyword of the US welfare state. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 19(2), 309–336.
- Fredrickson, B. L., & Roberts, T.-A. (1997). Objectification theory: Toward understanding women's lived experiences and mental health risks. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 21(2), 173–206.
- Froio, C., & Ganesh, B. (2019). The transnationalisation of far right discourse on Twitter: Issues and actors that cross borders in Western European democracies. *European Societies*, 21(4), 513–539.
- Fundacja Kobiety Wolności i Niepodległości. (n.d.). *Kalendarz charytatywny 2023*. Fundacja Kobiety Wolności i Niepodległości. Retrieved 3 August 2024, from <https://kobietywolnosc.pl/kalendarz-charytatywny-2023/>
- Gal, S., & Kligman, G. (Eds.). (2000). *Reproducing gender: Politics, publics, and everyday life after socialism*. Princeton University Press.

- Galliher, J. F. (1982). The Protection of Human Subjects: A re-examination of the professional code of ethics. In M. Bulmer (Ed.), *Social research ethics: An examination of the merits of covert participant observation* (Macmillan Press, pp. 152–165).
- Garbagnoli, S. (2016). Against the heresy of immanence: Vatican's 'gender' as a new rhetorical device against the denaturalization of the sexual order. *Religion and Gender*, 6(2), 187–204.
- Garbagnoli, S. (2017). Italy as a lighthouse: Anti-gender protests between the 'anthropological question' and national identity. In R. Kuhar & D. Paternotte (Eds.), *Anti-gender campaigns in Europe: Mobilizing against equality* (pp. 151–174). Rowman & Littlefield.
- Gavenda, J. (2021, July 15). *Truck SPĎák, muži v černém a němí kandidáti. SPD odstartovala volební kampaň*. Seznam Zprávy. <https://www.seznamzpravy.cz/clanek/truck-spdak-muzi-v-cernem-a-nemi-kandidati-spd-odstartovala-volebni-kampan-169740>
- Gdula, M. (2018). *Nowy autorytaryzm*. Wydawnictwo 'Krytyki Politycznej'.
- Gen Z: Driften Frauen und Männer politisch auseinander?* (2024, November 23). Deutschlandfunk. <https://www.deutschlandfunk.de/gen-z-wahlverhalten-gender-gap-100.html>
- Geva, D. (2018). Daughter, Mother, Captain: Marine Le Pen, Gender, and Populism in the French National Front. *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State & Society, Summer*, 1–26.
- Geva, D. (2019). Non au gender: Moral epistemics and French conservative strategies of distinction. *European Journal of Cultural and Political Sociology*, 6(4), 393–420.
- Geva, D. (2020). A double-headed hydra: Marine Le Pen's charisma, between political masculinity and political femininity. *NORMA*, 15(1), 26–42.
- Geva, D. (2021). Orbán's Ordonationalism as Post-Neoliberal Hegemony. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 38(6), 71–93.
- Giedron, B. (2024, August 3). *Ten głos polecam tym, którzy bezrefleksyjnie twierdzą, że #imigracjazarobkowa jest wyłącznie korzystna, że jak imigranci pracują to nie ma problemu*. [Online post]. X (formerly Twitter). https://x.com/Bob_Gedron/status/1819643202002890786
- Gilroy, P. (1987). *There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack: The Cultural Politics of Race and Nation*. Routledge.
- Ging, D. (2019). Alphas, betas, and incels: Theorizing the masculinities of the manosphere. *Men and Masculinities*, 22(4), 638–657.
- Gingrich, A. (2006). Nation, Status and Gender in Trouble? Exploring Some Contexts and Characteristics of Neo-nationalism in Western Europe. In A. Gingrich & M. Banks (Eds.), *Neo-nationalism in Europe and beyond: Perspectives from social anthropology* (pp. 29–49). Berghahn Books.
- Gingrich, A., & Banks, M. (2006). Introduction: Neo-nationalism in Europe and beyond. In A. Gingrich & M. Banks (Eds.), *Neo-nationalism in Europe and beyond: Perspectives from social anthropology* (pp. 1–26). Berghahn Books.

- Givens, T. E. (2004). The radical right gender gap. *Comparative Political Studies*, 37(1), 30–54.
- Głosowanie nr 8 na 10. Posiedzeniu Sejmu. (2020, April 16). Sejm Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej. <https://www.sejm.gov.pl/sejm9.nsf/agent.xsp?symbol=glosowania&NrKadencji=9&NrPosiedzenia=10&NrGlosowania=8>
- Głozak, B. (2015, March 29). Janusz Korwin-Mikke w Siedlcach o antycywilizacji unijnej. SPIN. <https://www.spin.siedlce.pl/2015/03/29/janusz-korwin-mikke-w-siedlcach-o-antycywilizacji-unijnej/>
- Goodwin, J., Jasper, J. M., & Polletta, F. (2001). Introduction: Why Emotions Matter. In J. Goodwin, J. M. Jasper, & F. Polletta (Eds.), *Passionate politics: Emotions and social movements* (pp. 1–26). University of Chicago Press.
- Goodwin, M. J. (2006). The rise and faults of the internalist perspective in extreme right studies. *Representation*, 42(4), 347–364.
- Gozzi, L., & Lowen, M. (2024, January 9). Italian fascist salute images spark political uproar. BBC. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-67922431>
- Graff, A. (2009). Gender, Sexuality, and Nation—Here and Now: Reflections on the Gendered and Sexualized Aspects of Contemporary Polish Nationalism. In E. H. Oleksy (Ed.), *Intimate Citizenship: Gender, Sexualities, Politics* (pp. 133–147). Routledge.
- Graff, A. (2010). Looking at pictures of gay men: Political uses of homophobia in contemporary Poland. *Public Culture*, 22(3), 583–603.
- Graff, A. (2014). Report from the gender trenches: War against ‘genderism’ in Poland. *European Journal of Women’s Studies*, 21(4), 431–435.
- Graff, A., & Korolczuk, E. (2022). *Anti-gender politics in the populist moment*. Taylor & Francis.
- Grim, J. (2021, July 24). Poslanec SPD Kohoutek si stěžuje na dosazení Bašty na kandidátku. ,Mohlo to být přání prezidenta,‘ tvrdí. iROZHLAS. https://www.irozhlas.cz/zpravy-domov/jaroslav-basta-spd-pardubicky-kraj-kohoutek-milos-zeman-volby-2021_2107240705_jgr
- Grim, J. (2023, June 21). Většina Čechů podporuje právo homosexuálů uzavřít sňatek i adoptovat děti, ukazuje nový průzkum CVVM. iROZHLAS. https://www.irozhlas.cz/zpravy-domov/cvvm-homosexualni-mazelstvi-adopce-deti-manzelstvi-pro-vsechny_2306211143_jgr
- Grim, J. (2024, October 16). Rok do voleb pokračuje konkurz na budoucí koaliční nevěstu pro ANO. V opozici se pospojovaly tři tábory. iROZHLAS. https://www.irozhlas.cz/zpravy-domov/rok-do-voleb-pokracuje-konkurz-na-budouci-koalicni-nevestu-pro-ano-v-opozici-se_2410160500_jgr
- Grodecki, M., Szczepańska, D., & Pasamonik, B. (2024). Nationalism and Anti-LGBTQ+: Exploring the Role of Nationalism in Soccer Fans’ Protests Against LGBTQ+ Equal Rights. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 1(aop), 1–11.
- Grzebalska, W. (2016). Militarizing the nation: Gender politics of the Warsaw uprising. In *Gendered Wars, Gendered Memories* (pp. 121–133). Routledge.

- Grzegorz Braun chce karać za homoseksualizm. 'Biedroń powinien trafić do więzienia'. (2019, March 21). Polsat News. <https://www.polsatnews.pl/wiadomosc/2019-03-21/grzegorz-braun-chce-karac-za-homoseksualizm-biedron-powinien-trafic-do-wiezienia/>
- Grzegorz Braun do Adama Niedzielskiego: Będziesz pan wisiał. (2021, September 16). TVN24. <https://tvn24.pl/polska/grzegorz-braun-do-adama-niedzielskiego-bedziesz-wisial-st5415605>
- Gwiazda, A. (2021). Right-wing populism and feminist politics: The case of Law and Justice in Poland. *International Political Science Review*, 42(5), 580–595.
- Halikiopoulou, D., Mock, S., & Vasilopoulou, S. (2013). The civic zeitgeist: Nationalism and liberal values in the European radical right. *Nations and Nationalism*, 19(1), 107–127.
- Hall, S. (1996). Who needs identity? *Questions of Cultural Identity*, 16(2), 1–17.
- Hall, T. M. (2003). Pivo and pohoda: The social conditions and symbolism of Czech beer-drinking. *Anthropology of East Europe Review*, 21(1), 109–126.
- Hamel, C. (2005). De la racialisation du sexisme au sexisme identitaire. *Migrations Société*, 17(99–100), 91–104.
- Hammersley, M. (2015). On ethical principles for social research. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 18(4), 433–449.
- Hanley, S. (2012). The Czech Republicans 1990-8: A populist outsider in a consolidating democracy. In C. Mudde & C. R. Kaltwasser (Eds.), *Populism in Europe and the Americas: Threat or corrective for democracy?* (pp. 68–87). Cambridge University Press.
- Hanley, S. (2014). Two cheers for Czech democracy. *Politologický Časopis-Czech Journal of Political Science*, 21(3), 161–176.
- Hanley, S., & Vachudova, M. A. (2018). Understanding the illiberal turn: Democratic backsliding in the Czech Republic. *East European Politics*, 34(3), 276–296.
- Hark, S., & Villa, P. I. (Eds.). (2015). *Anti-Genderismus: Sexualität und Geschlecht als Schauplätze aktueller politischer Auseinandersetzungen*. transcript Verlag.
- Harteveld, E., Van Der Brug, W., Dahlberg, S., & Kokkonen, A. (2015). The gender gap in populist radical-right voting: Examining the demand side in Western and Eastern Europe. *Patterns of Prejudice*, 49(1–2), 103–134.
- Hašková, H., & Dudová, R. (2021). Children of the state?: The role of pronatalism in the development of Czech childcare and reproductive health policies. In *Intimacy and mobility in an era of hardening borders* (pp. 181–198). Manchester University Press.
- Havlík, V. (2015). Stable or not? Patterns of party system dynamics and the rise of the new political parties in the Czech Republic. *Romanian Journal of Political Sciences*, 15(01), 185–207.
- Havlík, V., & Kluknavská, A. (2022). The Populist Vs Anti-Populist Divide in the Time of Pandemic: The 2021 Czech National Election and its Consequences for European Politics. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 60, 1–12.

- Havlík, V., & Kluknavská, A. (2023). Our people first (again)! The impact of the Russia-Ukraine War on the populist Radical Right in the Czech Republic. In G. Ivaldi & E. Zankina (Eds.), *The Impacts of the Russian Invasion of Ukraine on Right-wing Populism in Europe* (pp. 91–101). European Center for Populism Studies.
- Hechtová, A. (2011, June 4). *Okamura dostal výprask od Tachecí za Cikány. Chtěl odejít*. Parlamentní Listy. <https://www.parlamentnilisty.cz/archiv/Okamura-dostal-vyprask-od-Tacheci-za-Cikany-Chtel-odejit-199011>
- Heitlinger, A. (1996). Framing feminism in post-communist Czech Republic. *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 29(1), 77–93.
- Helms, E. (2013). *Innocence and victimhood: Gender, nation, and women's activism in postwar Bosnia-Herzegovina*. University of Wisconsin Press.
- Helms, E. (2025). Race in place: Scales of difference along the Balkan Route of migration. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 48(3), 472–497.
- Hesová, Z. (2021). Three types of culture wars and the populist strategies in central Europe. *Politologický Časopis-Czech Journal of Political Science*, 28(2), 130–150.
- Hlasování Poslanecké sněmovny—94/42*. (2024, February 28). Poslanecká Sněmovna Parlamentu České republiky. <https://www.psp.cz/sqw/hlasy.sqw?G=82534>
- Hloušek, V., Kopeček, L., & Vodová, P. (2020). *The rise of entrepreneurial parties in European politics*. Springer.
- Hobsbawm, E. (1990). *Nations and Nationalism since 1780. Programme, Myth, Reality*. Cambridge University Press.
- Holmes, S., & Krastev, I. (2020). *The Light that Failed*. Simon and Schuster.
- Holý, L. (1996). *The little Czech and the great Czech nation: National identity and the post-communist social transformation*. Cambridge University Press.
- Horváth, I. (2023, October 5). *Bulvár řeší údajnou Okamurovu milenku. Předseda SPD vysvětlil, co s ní dělá*. TV Nova. <https://tn.nova.cz/zpravodajstvi/clanek/524899-bulvar-resi-udajnou-okamurovu-milenku-predseda-spd-vysvetlil-co-s-ni-dela>
- Hrejzek, L. (2023, October 2). *Okamura a nová holka? Lídr SPD si na Hlaváku vyzvedl neznámou krásku! Padla i pusa*. *Expres.cz*. https://www.expres.cz/zpravy/tomio-okamura-spd-lovec-zen-neznama-milenka-hlavni-nadrazi-praha-pusa-polibek-video.A231002_133231_dx-zpravy_lare
- Illouz, E. (2023). *The emotional life of populism: How fear, disgust, resentment, and love undermine democracy*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Imre, A. (2005). Whiteness in post-socialist Eastern Europe: The time of the Gypsies, the end of race. In A. J. López (Ed.), *Postcolonial whiteness: A critical reader on race and empire* (pp. 79–102). State University of New York Press.
- Israel, M., & Hay, I. (2006). *Research ethics for social scientists*. Sage.
- Jackson, S. (2018). Why “Heteronormativity” Is Not Enough: A Feminist Sociological Perspective on Heterosexuality. In J. W. Messerschmidt, M. A. Messner, R. Connell, &

- P. Y. Martin (Eds.), *Gender reckonings: New social theory and research* (pp. 131–155). New York University Press.
- Jak głosowali mężczyźni, a jak kobiety?* (2023, October 19). TVN24. <https://tvn24.pl/wybory-parlamentarne-2023/wybory-parlamentarne-2023-jak-glosowali-mezczyzni-a-jak-kobiety-st7399212>
- Jamin, J. (2014). Cultural marxism and the radical right. In P. Jackson & A. Shekhovtsov (Eds.), *The post-war Anglo-American far right: A special relationship of hate* (pp. 84–103). Springer.
- Janáková, B. (2018a, February 25). *Levici trápí úbytek členů. KSČM ztratila tisíce, naopak „táhne“ SPD*. iDNES.cz. https://www.idnes.cz/zpravy/domaci/politika-politicke-strany-snemovna-clenove-pirati-spd-kscm-cssd-ano.A180212_171920_domaci_bja
- Janáková, B. (2018b, June 20). *Okamura nafukuje počet členů, přes web se mohou hlásit i fiktivní zájemci*. iDNES.cz. https://www.idnes.cz/zpravy/domaci/spd-hnuti-pocet-clenu-clenstvi-prukazy.A180614_154025_domaci_bja
- Janion, M. (2020). *Niesamowita Słowiańszczyzna: Fantazmaty literatury*. Wydawnictwo Literackie.
- Janouš, V. (2018, August 16). *Rozpory v SPD. Vyloučení členové se bouří, navrhuji zrušení hnutí*. iDNES.cz. https://www.idnes.cz/zpravy/domaci/spd-clen-vyloucen-kamil-papezik-navrh-zruseni-strany.A180814_110226_domaci_pmk
- Janusz Korwin-Mikke. (2023). In *Wikipedia, wolna encyklopedia*. https://pl.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Janusz_Korwin-Mikke&oldid=70876871#cite_note-prez2015-138
- Jaskułowski, K. (2019). *The everyday politics of migration crisis in Poland: Between nationalism, fear and empathy*. Springer.
- Jasper, J. M. (2007). Cultural approaches in the sociology of social movements. In C. Roggeband & B. Klandermans (Eds.), *Handbook of social movements across disciplines* (pp. 59–109). Springer.
- Johnson, P. E. (2017). The art of masculine victimhood: Donald Trump's demagoguery. *Women's Studies in Communication*, 40(3), 229–250.
- Joppke, C. (2021). *Neoliberal nationalism: Immigration and the rise of the populist right*. Cambridge University Press.
- Jurszo, R., & Pacewicz, P. (2019, September 19). *Mężczyźni najbardziej boją się gejów i Gender; kobiety zapaści ochrony zdrowia. Wspólny strach o klimat*. OKO.press. <https://oko.press/mezczyzni-najbardziej-boja-sie-gejow-i-gender-kobiety-zapasci-sluzby-zdrowia-wspolny-strach-o-klimat>
- Jusová, I. (2016). INTRODUCTION. Gender, Sexuality, and Ethnicity Issues in the Czech Culture: Past and Present. In J. Šiklová & I. Jusová (Eds.), *Czech Feminisms: Perspectives on Gender in East Central Europe* (pp. 1–26). Indiana University Press.
- Kabátová, Š. (2014, August 4). *Okamura popřel romský koncentrák. Hanebnost na úrovni zločinu, reagují politici*. Lidovky.cz. <https://www.lidovky.cz/domov/hanebnost-na->

- urovni-zlocinu-rika-kalousek-k-okamurovo-popreni-holocaustu.A140803_120959_in_domov_sk
- Kabátová, Š. (2017, October 2). *Faux pas v televizi. Byl jsem nervózní, se slovní zásobou problém nemám, říká kandidát SPD*. Lidovky.cz. https://www.lidovky.cz/domov/faux-pas-v-televizi-byl-jsem-nervozni-se-slovni-zasobou-problem-nemam-rika-kandidat-spd.A171002_115024_in_domov_sk
- Kącki, M. (2023). *Chłopczy. Idą po Polskę*. Znak.
- Kačmár, T. (2024, January 21). *A dost! V životě jsem takhle nekřičela. Hádka v Partii vybičovala Tománkovou k nevidané reakci*. CNN Prima NEWS. <https://cnn.iprima.cz/clanek-a-dost-v-zivote-jsem-takhle-nekricela-hadka-v-partii-vybicovala-tomanovou-k-nevidane-reakci-423354>
- Kajta, J. (2013). Kto się sprzeciwia różnorodności? O tożsamości uczestników ruchu nacjonalistycznego. *Pogranicze. Studia Społeczne*, 22, 63–78.
- Kajta, J. (2020a). *Młodzi radykalni? O tożsamości polskiego ruchu nacjonalistycznego i jego uczestników*. Zakład Wydawniczy NOMOS.
- Kajta, J. (2020b). Why Nationalism? Biographies and Motives of Participants in the Polish Nationalist Movement. *Intersections. East European Journal of Society and Politics*, 6(4), 131–154.
- Kajta, J. (2022). Calling for an alternative emancipation? Female discourses in the Polish radical-nationalist movement. *European Societies*, 24(1), 61–82.
- Kajta, J. (2023). Pomiędzy emocjami i polityczną strategią: Marsz Niepodległości w narracjach uczestników ruchu nacjonalistycznego. In P. Witkowski (Ed.), *Śmierć Wrogom Ojczyzny! Anatomia polityczna uczestników Marszu Niepodległości* (pp. 75–104). Instytut Wydawniczy Książka i Prasa.
- Kalb, D. (2011). Introduction. Headlines of nation, subtexts of class: Working-class populism and the return of the repressed in neoliberal Europe. In D. Kalb & G. Halmai (Eds.), *Headlines of nation, subtexts of class* (pp. 1–36). Berghahn Books.
- Kalmar, I. (2018). ‘The battlefield is in Brussels’: Islamophobia in the Visegrád Four in its global context. *Patterns of Prejudice*, 52(5), 406–419.
- Kalmar, I. (2022). *White But Not Quite: Central Europe’s Illiberal Revolt*. Policy Press.
- Kaniok, P., & Havlík, V. (2016). Populism and euroscepticism in the Czech Republic: Meeting friends or passing by? *Romanian Journal of European Affairs*, 16, 20–35.
- Každý třetí nad 40 let si myslí, že za socialismu „bylo líp“*. (2019, October 22). Post Bellum. <https://www.postbellum.cz/2019/10/kazdy-treti-nad-40-let-si-mysli-ze-za-socialismu-bylo-lip/>
- Kim, S. (2020). Between illiberalism and hyper-neoliberalism: Competing populist discourses in the Czech Republic. *European Politics and Society*, 21(5), 618–633.
- Kimmel, M. (1994). Masculinity as Homophobia: Fear, Shame and Silence in the Construction of Gender Identity. In H. Brod & M. Kaufman (Eds.), *Theorizing masculinities* (pp. 119–141). Sage Publications.

- Kimmel, M. (2007). Racism as adolescent male rite of passage: Ex-Nazis in Scandinavia. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 36(2), 202–218.
- Kimmel, M. (2017). *Angry white men: American masculinity at the end of an era*. Hachette UK.
- Kimmel, M. (2019). *Healing from hate: How young men get into—And out of—Violent extremism*. University of California Press.
- Kimmel, M., & Ferber, A. L. (2000). “White Men Are This Nation:” Right-Wing Militias and the Restoration of Rural American Masculinity. *Rural Sociology*, 65(4), 582–604.
- Kitschelt, H. (2006). Movement parties. In R. S. Katz & W. Crotty (Eds.), *Handbook of party politics* (pp. 278–290). Sage.
- Kitschelt, H., & McGann, A. J. (1997). *The Radical Right in Western Europe. A Comparative Analysis*. The University of Michigan Press.
- Klandermans, B., & Mayer, N. (Eds.). (2005). *Extreme right activists in Europe: Through the magnifying glass*. Routledge.
- Klang. (2014, April 24). *Švýcarští autoři odmítají plakát Úsvitu, soudit se nebudou*. Aktuálně.cz. <https://zpravy.aktualne.cz/domaci/je-na-hrane-ale-okamuruv-plakat-autorsky-zakon-neporusuje/r~18b0a4aacbbe11e391780025900fea04/>
- Klauziński, S. (2023, September 20). *Rzeczniczka Konfederacji o likwidacji zasiłku dla bezrobotnych: Nie ma i już*. OKO.press. <https://oko.press/na-zywo/wybory-na-zywo-oko-press/rzeczniczka-konfederacji-o-likwidacji-zasilku-dla-bezrobotnych-nie-ma-i-juz>
- Kluknavská, A., & Havlík, V. (2024). Making or Faking Depolarization? The Antipopulist Parties’ Construction of the Populism/Antipopulism Divide on Social Media in the Czech Republic. *Politische Vierteljahresschrift*, 1–23.
- Kobiety i mężczyźni przy urnach. Konfederacja lepsza od Lewicy wśród kobiet*. (2024, June 9). TVN24. <https://tvn24.pl/polska/wybory-do-parlamentu-europejskiego-2024-jak-glosowaly-kobiety-st7955036>
- Kobiety Konfederacji. (n.d.). *Kobiety Konfederacji*. TikTok. Retrieved 6 August 2024, from https://www.tiktok.com/@kobietykonfederacji_
- Kobiety Konfederacji. (2023a, September 18). *Konfederacja ma najlepszy program dla kobiet!* [Online post]. TikTok. https://www.tiktok.com/@kobietykonfederacji_/video/7280227105869237536?_t=8qJxE5bz55F&_r=1
- Kobiety Konfederacji. (2023b, October 3). *Stop masowej, nielegalnej imigracji! #konfederacja #kobietykonfederacji #konfederacjadlakobiet #imigracja* [Online post]. TikTok. https://www.tiktok.com/@kobietykonfederacji_/video/7285781733688036640?_t=8qJuaM12qXI&_r=1
- Kobiety Konfederacji. (2024, June 26). *Co się musi stać w Polsce, by pani przyjęła do wiadomości, że ta jedna dzida to o jedna dzida za dużo* [Online post]. Facebook.

- https://www.tiktok.com/@kobietykonfederacji_/video/7384722077871312161?_r=1&_t=8qK58UcbDrV
- Kociołowicz-Wisniewska, B. (2019). Medialne strategie autoprezentacji działaczek nacjonalistycznych organizacji kobiecych. *Media-Kultura-Komunikacja Społeczna*, 2(15), 115–130.
- Kóć, A. (2020a). Gendered and racialized social insecurity of Roma in East Central Europe. In H. van Baar & A. Kóć (Eds.), *The Roma and their struggle for identity in contemporary Europe* (pp. 124–149). Berghahn.
- Kóć, A. (2020b). Race, migration and neoliberalism: Distorted notions of Romani migration in European public discourses. In C. Yıldız & N. De Genova (Eds.), *Roma Migrants in the European Union* (pp. 35–49). Routledge.
- Kofman, E. (1998). When society was simple: Gender and ethnic division and the far and new right in France. In H. Hintjes & N. Charles (Eds.), *Gender, Ethnicity and Political Ideologies* (pp. 91–106). Routledge.
- Kolanko, M. (2023, April 4). *Konfederacja z własną strategią na kampanię do Sejmu*. Rzeczpospolita. <https://www.rp.pl/polityka/art38267411-konfederacja-z-wlasna-strategia-na-kampanie-do-sejmu>
- Kolář, P. (2012, November 8). *Tomio Okamura: Já a populist? Jsem jako Masaryk a Baťa*. Reflex.cz. <https://www.reflex.cz/clanek/zpravy/48463/tomio-okamura-ja-a-populista-jsem-jako-masaryk-a-bata.html>
- Kolczyński, M. (2020). Strategia komunikacyjna Konfederacji w wyborach w 2019 roku – próba rekonstrukcji. *Studia Politologiczne*, 55(55), 259–276.
- Komitety Wyborcze Kandydata na Prezydenta RP Krzysztofa Bosaka. (2020). *Nowy Porządek. Tezy konstytucyjne*. https://konfederacja.pl/app/uploads/Konfederacja_WiN_Program_2023-1.pdf
- Konfederacja. (2019a). Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/KONFEDERACJA2019>
- Konfederacja. (2019b). *Polska dla Ciebie. Piątka Konfederacji—Program Konfederacji Wolność i Niepodległość*. <https://konfederacja.pl/app/uploads/KONFEDERACJA-Program-Wyborczy-Polska-dla-Ciebie-1.pdf>
- Konfederacja. (2019c, March 24). *Kaja Godek: "Gdybyśmy wycofali dotacje* [Online post]. Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/KONFEDERACJA2019/posts/1984496271856973>
- Konfederacja. (2019d, April 16). *Robert Winnicki: "Płonąca #NotreDame to symbol gasnącej Europy*. [Online post]. Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/KONFEDERACJA2019/posts/pfbid02pow4aMpVH3awUPtGQnRb7J7gtNtsVyus7Tm2zZMb1YB2px8NgMNePgmyHsUkmKzDI>
- Konfederacja. (2019e, September 5). *#DrużynaKonfederacji zwarta i gotowa do walki o lepszą Polskę!* [Online post]. Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/KONFEDERACJA2019/posts/pfbid02BRUYkXwvWZNs9kqeMmc5HzAFN9ht34zM3zHMuYakVbdENX9NBePsfjofj3yh56R5l>

- Konfederacja. (2019f, September 16). *#Konfederacja to niższe podatki i* [Online post]. Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/1971966879776579/posts/2089903781316221>
- Konfederacja. (2019g, November 17). *Nie możecie tego przegapić!* [Online post]. Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=484631018847297>
- Konfederacja. (2019h, November 29). *Nie przegapcie tego!* [Online post]. Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=426688571607898>
- Konfederacja. (2023a). *Program wyborczy 2023. Konstytucja wolności.* https://konfederacja.pl/app/uploads/Konfederacja_WiN_Program_2023-1.pdf
- Konfederacja. (2023b, June 19). *Rzecznik prasowy #Konfederacji @annabrylka: W 2022 roku wydano 365 tysięcy zezwoleń na pracę dla cudzoziemców, z czego 136 tysięcy zezwoleń to zezwolenia dla obywateli państw muzułmańskich. ➡ 33000 - Uzbekistan, ➡ 25000 - Turcja, ➡ 13500 - Bangladesz, ➡ 12000 - https://t.co/vPF1qJAzk8" / X* [Online post]. X (formerly Twitter). https://x.com/KONFEDERACJA_/status/1670768495565447168
- Konfederacja. (2023c, July 22). *Klaudia Domagała: Rozpoczął się I Kongres Kobiet Wolności i Niepodległości PL* [Online post]. Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/100050487729876/posts/845627990463451>
- Konfederacja. (2023d, September 7). *Dla nich to radykalizm, dla nas to NORMALNOŚĆ!* [Online post]. Facebook. https://www.facebook.com/KONFEDERACJA2019/posts/869887541370829/?comment_id=977323366691417
- Konfederacja. (2023e, October 8). *ZERO socjalu dla Ukraińców* [Online post]. Facebook. https://www.facebook.com/story.php/?story_fbid=885878979771685&id=100050487729876&paipv=0&eav=AfbfSmijkQTQVx6QBJ_QB0bz8ufWZg-ooPlfmryp_Po6ERTiKlOxfQyFOiMuyO5guSM&_rdr
- Konfederacja. (2023f, October 13). *!! TVP i PiS 'alarmują' o* [Online post]. Konfederacja. <https://www.facebook.com/KONFEDERACJA2019/posts/pfbid02ZZe6HvNEy1hjVafENiyf6tx1b4CsrVQMopYkwRuad1ZMDsGMfUpr6MQTWHERGHXGl>
- Konfederacja. (2024a, April 15). *Wyjątkowe wystąpienie Ewa Zajączkowska na otwarciu kampanii do europarlamentu!* [Online post]. Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1443330429623508>
- Konfederacja. (2024b, April 16). *Ewa Zajączkowska: Idę do Europarlamentu!* [Online post]. Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/KONFEDERACJA2019/posts/ewa-zaj%C4%85czkowska-id%C4%99-do-europarlamentu-razem-z-europos%C5%82ami-z-innych-pa%C5%84stw-chc%C4%99-/993468359012746/>
- Konfederacja. (2024c, April 27). *Media informują, że premier Donald Tusk potrzebuje nowego impulsu wyborczego, bo entuzjazm z 15 października się wypala* [Online post]. Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/KONFEDERACJA2019/posts/pfbid02qktRKcw2GZNQgrCFGaZ94G6Ey7rnpTNJthZVKTi4eesvQrT6qi7DMrC6uMd3Xa1Ul>

- Konfederacja. (2024d, July 18). *REŃCE PRECZ OD POLSKI* [Video]. Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/KONFEDERACJA2019/videos/r%C4%99ce-precz-od-polski-niesamowite-wyst%C4%85pienie-ewy-zaj%C4%85czkowskiej-hernik-przeciwko/1000052268174237/>
- Konfederacja Wolność i Niepodległość. (2024). In *Wikipedia, wolna encyklopedia*. https://pl.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Konfederacja_Wolno%C5%9B%C4%87_i_Niepodleg%C5%82o%C5%9B%C4%87&oldid=75295525
- Konwencja PiS. Kaczyński: *Chcemy obronić normalną polską rodzinę*. (2019, September 27). wMeritum.pl. <https://wmeritum.pl/konwencja-kaczynski-rodzine/295805>
- Koonz, C. (1986). *Mothers in the Fatherland: Women, the Family, and Nazi Politics*. Cape.
- Koopmans, R., & Olzak, S. (2004). Discursive opportunities and the evolution of right-wing violence in Germany. *American Journal of Sociology*, 110(1), 198–230.
- Kopeček, M. (2021). From Narrating Dissidence to Post-Dissident Narratives of Democracy: Anti-totalitarianism, Politics of Memory and Culture Wars in East-Central Europe 1970s–2000s. In Z. Hesová, P. Barša, & O. Slačálek (Eds.), *Central European culture wars: Beyond post-communism and populism* (pp. 28–83). Humanitas.
- Kopecký, J. (2016, February 8). *Marksová vynadala lidovcům. Není třetí pohlaví, opáčil ji Bělobrádek*. iDNES.cz. https://www.idnes.cz/zpravy/domaci/marksova-vynadala-lidovcum-neni-treti-pohlavi-opacil-ji-belobradek.A160208_180138_domaci_kop
- Korolczuk, E., & Graff, A. (2017). “Worse than communism and Nazism put together”: War on gender in Poland. In R. Kuhar & D. Paternotte (Eds.), *Anti-gender campaigns in Europe: Mobilizing against equality* (pp. 175–193). Rowman & Littlefield.
- Korolczuk, E., & Graff, A. (2018). Gender as “Ebola from Brussels”: The anticolonial frame and the rise of illiberal populism. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 43(4), 797–821.
- KORWiN vs UE i SEJM. (2020, May 25). *Czy kobiety w partii KORWiN są dyskryminowane? - Julia Polakowska, Gabriela Jurkiewicz*. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rEbpcHk5CvY&t=122s>
- Korwin-Mikke: *W interesie kobiet jest, by NIE MIAŁY czynnego prawa wyborczego*. (2020, July 1). Najwyższy Czas! <https://nczas.com/2020/07/01/korwin-mikke-w-interesie-kobiet-jest-by-nie-mialy-czynnego-prawa-wyborczego/>
- Korwin-Mikke w PE: *Zalew Europy śmieciem ludzkim. Polityka upadku!* (2015, September 9). Onet Wiadomości. <https://wiadomosci.onet.pl/swiat/janusz-korwin-mikke-o-imigrantach-w-parlamencie-europejskim/d4ynkb>
- Kosman, M. (2022). Strategie dyskursywne Konfederacji—na przykładzie utworów nagranych w ramach akcji Hot16Challenge. In A. Budzyńska-Daca & R. R. Dybalska (Eds.), *Dyskursy polityczne w Polsce i Czechach po roku 1989* (pp. 131–143). Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego.
- Kossakowski, R., Antonowicz, D., & Jakubowska, H. (2020). The reproduction of hegemonic masculinity in football fandom: An analysis of the performance of Polish ultras. In R.

- Magrath, J. Cleland, & E. Anderson (Eds.), *The Palgrave handbook of masculinity and sport* (pp. 517–536). Springer.
- Köttig, M., Bitzan, R., & Petö, A. (Eds.). (2017). *Gender and far right politics in Europe*. Springer International Publishing.
- Kotwas, M., & Kubik, J. (2019). Symbolic thickening of public culture and the rise of right-wing populism in Poland. *East European Politics and Societies*, 33(2), 435–471.
- Kovačević, V. (2011, July 12). *Česko má novou soutěž krásy, poprvé hledá nejkrásnější cizinku*. iDNES.cz. https://www.idnes.cz/zpravy/revue/modelky/cesko-ma-novou-soutez-krasy-hleda-nejkrasnejsi-cizinku.A110712_082210_missamodelky_ved
- Kováts, E. (2020). Post-socialist conditions and the Orbán government's gender politics between 2010 and 2019 in Hungary. In G. Dietze & J. Roth (Eds.), *Right-Wing Populism and Gender. European Perspectives and Beyond* (pp. 75–100). transcript Verlag.
- Kováts, E. (2021). Anti-gender politics in East-Central Europe: Right-wing defiance to west-eurocentrism. *GENDER–Zeitschrift Für Geschlecht, Kultur Und Gesellschaft*, 13(1), 76–90.
- Kováts, E. (2023). An Illiberal Left? Assessing Current Anti-Pluralist Political Practices in the West. In M. Laruelle (Ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Illiberalism*. Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780197639108.001.0001>
- Krämer, B., Fernholz, T., Husung, T., Meusel, J., & Voll, M. (2021). Right-wing populism as a worldview and online practice: Social media communication by ordinary citizens between ideology and lifestyles. *European Journal of Cultural and Political Sociology*, 8(3), 235–264.
- Krapfl, J. (2017). *Revolution with a human face: Politics, culture, and community in Czechoslovakia, 1989–1992*. Cornell University Press.
- Krastev, I., & Holmes, S. (2018). Explaining Eastern Europe: Imitation and its discontents. *Journal of Democracy*, 29(3), 117–128.
- Krátká, L. (2019). Life Like a Swing: Women's Perspectives of Everyday Life in Czechoslovak Seafarers' Families under State Socialism. *Wroclawski Rocznik Historii Mówionej*, 09, 45–77.
- Kreidl, M., & Vlachová, K. (2000). Rise and decline of right-wing extremism in the Czech Republic in the 1990s. *Czech Sociological Review*, 69–91.
- Kreisky, E. (2014). Masculinity as an analytical category: Work in progress. In K. Starck & B. Sauer (Eds.), *A Man's World? Political Masculinities in Literature and Culture* (pp. 11–26). Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Kriner, M. (2025, February 3). *Musk's inauguration salute is not the only apparent fascist signal from Trump's administration*. The Conversation. <http://theconversation.com/musks-inauguration-salute-is-not-the-only-apparent-fascist-signal-from-trumps-administration-248517>
- Křížková, A., Pospíšilová, K., Maříková, H., & Marková Volejníčková, R. (2018). *Rozdíly v odměňování žen a mužů v ČR: Pracoviště, zaměstnání, stejná práce a rozklad faktorů*

- (p. 151). Ministerstvo práce a sociálních věc. <https://www.materinkykv.cz/wp-content/uploads/rozdily-zeny-muzi.pdf>
- Křížová, E. (2021, July 23). *Okamura: Mám nejvyšší hladinu testosteronu. Ve vládě být nemusím.* iDNES.Cz. https://www.idnes.cz/zpravy/domaci/okamura-spd-volby-rozhovor.A210723_084008_domaci_elk?zdroj=vzbava_recombee
- Krook, M. L. (2016). Contesting gender quotas: Dynamics of resistance. *Politics, Groups, and Identities*, 4(2), 268–283.
- Krzyżanowski, M. (2018). Discursive shifts in ethno-nationalist politics: On politicization and mediatization of the “refugee crisis” in Poland. *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies*, 16(1–2), 76–96.
- Kučera, V. (2013, September 30). Františkovi Lázně? Politické hnutí se za hrubku omluvilo! *Deník.cz*. <https://www.denik.cz/karlovarsky-kraj/frantiskovi-lazne-politicke-hnuti-se-za-hrubku-omluvilo-20130930.html>
- Kuhar, R., & Paternotte, D. (2017). “Gender ideology” in movement: Introduction. In R. Kuhar & D. Paternotte (Eds.), *Anti-gender campaigns in Europe: Mobilizing against equality*. Rowman & Littlefield.
- Kukova, S. (2007, June). *Gipsy people in ‘Nadezhda’, Sliven, Bulgaria*. Wikipedia Commons. <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:NadezhdaSliven.jpg>
- Kulczycki, A. (1995). Abortion policy in postcommunist Europe: The conflict in Poland. *Population and Development Review*, 471–505.
- Kulpa, R. (2014). Western leveraged pedagogy of Central and Eastern Europe: Discourses of homophobia, tolerance, and nationhood. *Gender, Place & Culture*, 21(4), 431–448.
- Kulpa, R. (2019). National menace: Mediating homo/sexuality and sovereignty in the Polish national/ist discourses. *Critical Discourse Studies*, 1–17.
- Kundnani, H. (2023). *Eurowhiteness: Culture, empire and race in the European project*. Oxford University Press.
- Kunštát, D. (2013). *Důvěra ústavním institucím a spokojenost s politickou situací v lednu 2013*. Centrum pro výzkum veřejného mínění. http://cvvm.soc.cas.cz/media/com_form2content/documents/c2/a1492/f9/pi130205.pdf
- Lauder, M. A. (2003). Covert participant observation of a deviant community: Justifying the use of deception. *Journal of Contemporary Religion*, 18(2), 185–196.
- Lechowicz-Dyl, K. (2022, March 1). *Braun wtargnął do Instytutu Kardiologii. Szumowski: Złoże zawiadomienie do prokuratury*. Polska Agencja Prasowa. <https://www.pap.pl/aktualnosci/news%2C1099009%2Cbraun-wtargnal-do-instytutu-kardiologii-szumowski-zloze-zawiadomienie-do>
- Lecours, A. (2000). Ethnonationalism in the West: A theoretical exploration. *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, 6(1), 103–124.
- Linden, A., & Klandermans, B. (2007). Revolutionaries, wanderers, converts, and compliants: Life histories of extreme right activists. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 36(2), 184–201.

- Linders, N., Dudink, S., & Spierings, N. (2023). Masculinity and sexuality in populist radical right leadership. *Politics & Gender*, 19(3), 653–674.
- Lipczyński, T. (2024, July 9). *Polska z drugą najwyższą liczbą uchodźców z Ukrainy w całej UE. Są nowe dane [MAPA]*. Forsal.pl. <https://forsal.pl/swiat/unia-europejska/artykuly/9542459,polska-z-druga-najwyzsza-liczba-uchodzcow-z-ukrainy-w-calej-ue-sa-now.html>
- Lipiński, A., & Stępińska, A. (2019). Polish right-wing populism in the era of social media: The unexpected careers of Paweł Kukiz and Janusz Korwin-Mikke. *Problems of Post-Communism*, 66(1), 71–82.
- Löffler, M. (2020). Populist attraction: The symbolic uses of masculinities in the Austrian general election campaign 2017. *NORMA*, 15(1), 10–25.
- Lofland, J. F. (1961). Reply to Davis. *Social Problems*, 8(4), 365–367.
- Łukasiewicz, A. (2016, April 22). *Korwin-Mikke do licealistów: Europa zdycha, a nasze córki skończą w haremach*. Gazeta Wyborcza. <https://zielonagora.wyborcza.pl/zielonagora/7,35182,19962991,korwin-mikke-do-licealistow-europa-zdycha-a-nasze-corki-skoncza.html>
- Majewski, P. (2021). *Rap w służbie narodu: Nacjonalizm i kultura popularna*. Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar.
- Malík, T. (2011). Kde se vzali nepřizpůsobiví. *A2*, 26. <http://www.advojka.cz/archiv/2011/26/kde-se-vzali-nepřizpusobivi>
- Malinowska, K., Winiewski, M., & Górka, P. (2016). 'Polska dla Polaków, Polacy dla Polski.' *Przekonania i preferencje uczestników Marszu Niepodległości 2015*. Centrum Badań nad Uprzedzeniami. http://cbu.psychologia.pl/wp-content/uploads/sites/410/2021/02/Marsz_2016.11.07v2.pdf
- Malinowski, P. (2019, August 11). Godek: Konfederacja miała być odważna. Stracili fason. *Rzeczpospolita*. <https://www.rp.pl/Konfederacja/190819926-Godek-Konfederacja-miala-byc-odwazna-Stracili-fason.html>
- Maly, I. (2022). Populism as a mediatized communicative relation. The birth of algorithmic populism. In C. W. Chun (Ed.), *Applied Linguistics and Politics* (pp. 33–58). Bloomsbury Academic.
- Mapa voličů*. (2017). Behavio. <https://mapavolicu.behavio.cz>
- Mareš, M. (2011). Czech extreme right parties an unsuccessful story. *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 44(4), 283–298.
- Mareš, M. (2014). Leadership and Right-Wing Extremist Violence: Case Studies from the Czech Territory. In M. Milosevic & K. Rekawek (Eds.), *Perseverance of Terrorism: Focus on Leaders* (Vol. 117, pp. 103–110). IOS Press.
- Mareš, M. (2015). The impact of the Czech radical right on transformation and (de-) consolidation of democracy after 1989. In M. Minkenberg (Ed.), *Transforming the Transformation? The East European radical right in the political process* (pp. 206–223). Routledge.

- Mareš, P., & Katrňák, T. (2010). Hodnota práce u české veřejnosti v letech 1991–2008. *Sociální Studia/Social Studies*, 7(4), 121–143.
- Mariański, J., Słotwińska, H., Mąkosa, P., & Buk-Cegiełka, M. (2023). Religiosity and Secularisation of Polish Youth in the 21st Century. Quantitative Research Analysis. *Rocznik Teologii Katolickiej*, 22, 186–202.
- Maříková, H. (2016). Skleněný strop pro ženy v politice: Česká realita. In M. Vohlídalová, H. Maříková, M. Čermáková, & R. Volejníčková (Eds.), *Sólo pro soprán: O ženách v české politice* (pp. 25–33). Sociologický ústav AV ČR.
- Marmola, M., & Olszanecka, A. (2012). Partycypacja polityczna kobiet a wprowadzenie ustawowych kwot wyborczych. *Political Preferences*, 3, 195–214.
- Marsz Równości, Marsz Normalności i zgromadzenia. Sobota w Świdnicy pod znakiem manifestacji.* (2024, June 21). Swidnica24.pl. <https://swidnica24.pl/2024/06/marsz-rownosci-marsz-normalnosci-i-trzy-zgromadzenia-sobota-w-swidnicy-pod-znakiem-manifestacji/>
- Marzęcki, R. (2012). Konfliktowy styl uprawiania polityki a widoczność medialna. *Zeszyt Naukowy/Wyższa Szkoła Zarządzania i Bankowości w Krakowie*, 26, 279–294.
- Maškarinec, P., & Novotný, L. (2024). In the Name of “Freedom” and “Democracy” Causes of Voting for the Radical Right in the Czech Republic. *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 1–26.
- Massad, J. (1995). Conceiving the masculine: Gender and Palestinian nationalism. *The Middle East Journal*, 467–483.
- Matejskova, T. (2013). “But One Needs to Work!”: Neoliberal Citizenship, Work-Based Immigrant Integration, and Post-Socialist Subjectivities in Berlin-Marzahn. *Antipode*, 45(4), 984–1004.
- Matusiak, T. (2023, June 10). *Piwo z Mentzenem w Łodzi. Polityk radzi 20-latkom: ‘Uczcie się, ciężko pracujcie i pijcie alkohol’*. Gazeta Wyborcza. <https://lodz.wyborcza.pl/lodz/7,35136,29854873,piwo-z-mentzenem-w-lodzi-polityk-radzi-20-latkom-uczcie-sie.html>
- Mayer, N. (2015). The closing of the radical right gender gap in France? *French Politics*, 13, 391–414.
- Mayer, S., Ajanovic, E., & Sauer, B. (2014). Intersections and inconsistencies. Framing gender in right-wing populist discourses in Austria. *NORA-Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research*, 22(4), 250–266.
- Mazzoleni, G. (2014). Mediatization and political populism. In F. Esser & J. Strömbäck (Eds.), *Mediatization of politics: Understanding the transformation of Western democracies* (pp. 42–56). Springer.
- Mazzoleni, G., & Schulz, W. (1999). ‘Mediatization’ of politics: A challenge for democracy? *Political Communication*, 16(3), 247–261.
- McAdams, A. J. (2024). Far-Right Newspeak and the Fragility of Liberal Democracy. In A. J. McAdams & S. Piccolo (Eds.), *Far-right Newspeak and the Future of Liberal Democracy* (pp. 3–24). Taylor & Francis.

- McClintock, A. (1993). Family feuds: Gender, nationalism and the family. *Feminist Review*, 44, 61–80.
- Meardi, G., & Guardiancich, I. (2022). Back to the familialist future: The rise of social policy for ruling populist radical right parties in Italy and Poland. *West European Politics*, 45(1), 129–153.
- Meiering, D. (2022). Überblick: Biedermann und Brandstifter: Antimuslimischer Rassismus und Antisemitismus. In D. Meiering (Ed.), *Schlüsseltex te der ‚Neuen Rechten‘ Kritische Analysen antidemokratischen Denkens* (pp. 179–183). Springer.
- Melegh, A. (2016). Unequal exchanges and the radicalization of demographic nationalism in Hungary. *Intersections. East European Journal of Society and Politics*, 2(4), 87–108.
- Mentzen, S. (2021, February 20). *Brutalna prawda jest taka, że trzeba było się uczyć, pracować i oszczędzać*. X (formerly Twitter). <https://x.com/SlawomirMentzen/status/1363190920473161729>
- Meret, S. (2015). Charismatic female leadership and gender: Pia Kjærsgaard and the Danish People’s Party. *Patterns of Prejudice*, 49(1–2), 81–102.
- Meret, S., & Siim, B. (2013). Gender, populism and politics of belonging: Discourses of right-wing populist parties in Denmark, Norway and Austria. *Negotiating Gender and Diversity in an Emergent European Public Sphere*, 78–96.
- Meret, S., Siim, B., & Pingaud, E. (2016). Men’s parties with women leaders: A comparative study of the right-wing populist leaders Pia Kjærsgaard, Marine Le Pen and Siv Jensen. In G. Lazaridis & G. Campani (Eds.), *Understanding the populist shift: Othering in a Europe in crisis* (pp. 122–149). Routledge.
- Messerschmidt, J. W. (2018). *Hegemonic masculinity: Formulation, reformulation, and amplification*. Rowman & Littlefield.
- Messing, V. (2017). Differentiation in the making: Consequences of school segregation of Roma in the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Slovakia. *European Education*, 49(1), 89–103.
- Mierzyńska, A. (2023, May 11). #Aferamailowa: Był układ między PiS-em a narodowcami! Chodziło o poparcie Dudy. Co dostali w zamian? OKO.Press. <https://oko.press/aferamailowa-by-l-uklad-miedzy-pis-em-a-narodowcami>
- Miller-Idriss, C. (2022). *Hate in the homeland: The new global far right*. Princeton University Press.
- Minkenberg, M. (2013). From pariah to policy-maker? The radical right in Europe, West and East: Between margin and mainstream. *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, 21(1), 5–24.
- Minkenberg, M. (2017). *The radical right in Eastern Europe: Democracy under siege?* Springer.
- Minkenberg, M., & Pytlas, B. (2013). The radical right in Central and Eastern Europe: Class politics in classless societies? In J. Rydgren (Ed.), *Class politics and the radical right* (pp. 206–223). Routledge.

- Mlejnková, P. (2024). Far-Right Politics in the Czech Republic. Tomio Okamura's Liberal Language and Populist Playbook. In A. J. McAdams & S. Piccolo (Eds.), *Far-right Newspeak and the Future of Liberal Democracy* (pp. 65–84). Taylor & Francis.
- Młodzi dla Wolności. (2023, September 14). *Sławomir Mentzen: Podatek od spadku i darowizn trzeba znieść, jest wybitnie niesprawiedliwy* [Online post]. Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/MlodzidlaWolnosci/posts/s%C5%82awomir-mentzen-podatek-od-spadku-i-darowizn-trzeba-znie%C5%9B%C4%87-jest-wybitnie-niespr/687610926735039/>
- Młodzież Wszechpolska - Kraków. (2020). *Dość tęczowego ucisku!* [Online post]. Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/events/304018307480961>
- Moffitt, B. (2016). *The global rise of populism: Performance, political style, and representation*. Stanford University Press.
- Moffitt, B., & Tormey, S. (2014). Rethinking populism: Politics, mediatisation and political style. *Political Studies*, 62(2), 381–397.
- Mokrzanowska, A. (2023, December 12). *Grzegorz Braun wykluczony z obrad Sejmu. Szymon Hołownia zapowiada wniosek do prokuratury*. Wprost. <https://www.wprost.pl/kraj/11511214/sejm-grzegorz-braun-wykluczony-z-obrad-szymon-holownia-zapowiada-wniosek-do-prokuratury.html>
- Molek-Kozakowska, K. (2012). Multiple Ideologies in The Media Construction of Women in Politics: A Case Study of Gender Parity Debate in Poland. *Critical Approaches to Discourse Analysis Across Disciplines*, 5(2).
- Mondon, A. (2016). *The mainstreaming of the extreme right in France and Australia: A populist hegemony?* Routledge.
- Mondon, A. (2025). Populism, public opinion, and the mainstreaming of the far right: The 'immigration issue' and the construction of a reactionary 'people'. *Politics*, 45(1), 19–36.
- Mondon, A., & Dawes, S. (2023). The mainstreaming of the far right in France: Republican, liberal and illiberal articulations of racism. *French Cultural Studies*, 34(3), 329–339.
- Mondon, A., & Winter, A. (2020a). From demonization to normalization: Reflecting on far right research. In S. D. Ashe, J. Busher, G. Macklin, & A. Winter (Eds.), *Researching the far right: Theory, method and practice* (pp. 370–382). Routledge.
- Mondon, A., & Winter, A. (2020b). *Reactionary democracy: How racism and the populist far right became mainstream*. Verso Books.
- Mondon, A., & Winter, A. (2020c). Whiteness, populism and the racialisation of the working class in the United Kingdom and the United States. In *Whiteness and Nationalism* (pp. 10–28). Routledge.
- Mosse, G. L. (1985). *Nationalism and Sexuality: Respectability and Abnormal Sexuality in Modern Europe*. University of Wisconsin Press.
- Motocykl, pirotechnika, prezentacja hasła wyborczego. 'Wielka Konwencja Konfederacji'. (2023, September 23). TVN24. <https://tvn24.pl/wybory-parlamentarne-2023/wybory->

parlamentarne-2023-konfederacja-konwencja-w-katowicach-prezentacja-hasla-wyborczego-st7357766

- Mrovlje, M., & Kirkpatrick, J. (2023). Beauvoir and Lorde confront the honorary man trope: Toward a feminist theory of political resistance. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 101, 1–9.
- Mrozowicki, A., & Kajta, J. (2021). Young people, precarious employment and nationalism in Poland: Exploring the (missing) links. *European Review*, 29(4), 470–483.
- Mrozowicki, A., Trappmann, V., Seehaus, A., & Kajta, J. (2019). *Who is a right-wing supporter? On the biographical experiences of young right-wing voters in Poland and Germany*.
- Mudde, C. (2004). The populist zeitgeist. *Government and Opposition*, 39(4), 541–563.
- Mudde, C. (2005). *Racist Extremism in Central & Eastern Europe*. Routledge.
- Mudde, C. (2007). *Populist radical right parties in Europe*. Cambridge University Press.
- Mudde, C. (2017). Introduction to the populist radical right. In C. Mudde (Ed.), *The populist radical right. A reader* (pp. 1–10). Routledge.
- Mudde, C. (2019). *The far right today*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Mudde, C., & Kaltwasser, C. R. (2015). Vox populi or vox masculini? Populism and gender in Northern Europe and South America. *Patterns of Prejudice*, 49(1–2), 16–36.
- Mudde, C., & Kaltwasser, C. R. (2017). *Populism: A very short introduction*. Oxford University Press.
- Mulholland, K. (2003). *Class, gender and the family business*. Springer.
- Mulinari, D., & Neergaard, A. (2014). We are Sweden Democrats because we care for others: Exploring racisms in the Swedish extreme right. *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 21(1), 43–56.
- Nagel, J. (1998). Masculinity and nationalism: Gender and sexuality in the making of nations. Ethnic and racial. *Studies*, 21(2), 242–269.
- Nagel, J. (2003). *Race, ethnicity, and sexuality: Intimate intersections, forbidden frontiers*. Oxford University Press.
- Najstarszy kandydat na posła ma 92 lata. Średnia wieku najmniejsza w Konfederacji. (2019, September 27). Polsat News. <https://www.polsatnews.pl/wiadomosc/2019-09-27/najstarszy-kandydat-na-posla-ma-92-lata-srednia-wieku-najmniejsza-u-konfederacji/>
- Názor veřejnosti na současný režim. (2013, January 30). STEM. <https://www.stem.cz/nazor-verejnosti-na-soucasny-rezim/>
- Nissen, A. (2022). *Europeanisation of the contemporary far right: Generation Identity and Fortress Europe*. Routledge.
- Norocel, O. C. (2009). Globalisation and its male contenders?: The question of conservative masculinities within the radical right populist discourses across the EU. In

- Globalisation: Challenges to research and governance* (pp. 237–250). East-west books.
- Norocel, O. C. (2010). Constructing radical right populist resistance: Metaphors of heterosexist masculinities and the family question in Sweden. *Norma*, 5(02), 170–183.
- Norocel, O. C. (2017). Åkesson at Almedalen: Intersectional tensions and normalization of populist radical right discourse in Sweden. *NORA-Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research*, 25(2), 91–106.
- Norocel, O. C., Hellström, A., & Jørgensen, M. B. (2020). *Nostalgia and hope: Intersections between politics of culture, welfare, and migration in Europe*. Springer Nature.
- Nováček, P., Čermáková, J., & Herget, J. (2015, February 10). *Hnutí Úsvit se rozpadá. Jeho poslanci chtějí založit novou stranu*. Český rozhlas. <https://radiozurnal.rozhlas.cz/hnuti-usvit-se-rozpada-jeho-poslanci-chteji-zalozit-novou-stranu-6268185>
- Novák Večerníček, J., & Okamura, T. (2010). *Tomio Okamura – Český sen*. Nakladatelství Fragment.
- Nowak, M. (2021, March 24). *Przeczytałam wywiady z posłami Konfederacji. Zapraszam na najlepsze kawalki [13 CYTATÓW]*. ASZdziennik.pl. <https://aszdziennik.pl/132573,przeczytalam-wywiady-z-poslami-konfederacji-oto-13-najlepszych-cytatow>
- O Fundacji*. (n.d.). Fundacja Kobiety Wolności i Niepodległości. Retrieved 30 April 2022, from <https://kobietywolnosci.pl/>
- Off, G. (2023). Complexities and Nuances in Radical Right Voters' (Anti)Feminism. *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State & Society*, 30(2), 607–629.
- Okamura a jeho harém: S ex vydělává, s milenkou si užívá*. (2013, April 22). Blesk.cz. <https://www.blesk.cz/clanek/celebrity-ceske-celebrity/195442/okamura-a-jeho-harem-s-ex-vydelava-s-milenkou-si-uziva.html>
- Okamura je v sexu chladný, tvrdí Ornella! Tomio to popírá a dál se soudí*. (2017, October 25). Blesk.cz. <https://www.blesk.cz/clanek/celebrity-ceske-celebrity/502157/okamura-je-v-sexu-chladny-tvrdi-ornella-tomio-to-popira-a-dal-se-soudi.html>
- Okamura, T. (2011, February 14). Bud'me politicky nekorektní ! *Blog iDNES.cz*. <https://blog.idnes.cz/okamura/budme-politicky-nekorektni.Bg11021676>
- Okamura, T. (2013a, April 3). Sociální programy vyrábí podvodníky a lenochy. *Blog iDNES.cz*. <https://blog.idnes.cz/okamura/socialni-programy-vyrabi-podvodniky-a-lenochy.Bg13040186>
- Okamura, T. (2013b, April 9). *Můj názor na náš současný systém výplat sociálních dávek* [Online post]. Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/posts/379613235486390>
- Okamura, T. (2014a, March 30). *Na snímku se dvěma oběťmi romského* [Online post]. Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=776681125676038&set=a.185333081477515>

- Okamura, T. (2014b, May 3). *Tak už visí naše volební* [Online post]. Facebook.
<https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=794899557187528&set=a.185333081477515>
- Okamura, T. (2014c, August 15). *Zítra v Praze proběhne pochod gayů a leseb Prague Pride* [Online post]. Facebook.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/posts/pfbid0nozPo3UrfSBT5PpTCSKjANLHwW88mF5Lv9kqMshdmmjgKFkLbiQuWbW4uooKgYCB1>
- Okamura, T. (2015a, January 3). *Přemýšlel jsem nad radikálním islámem* [Online post]. Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/photos/922862724391210/>
- Okamura, T. (2015b, June 7). *Nic neumí, budou jen zevlovat a znásilňovat naše ženy, promluvil Okamura o migrantech.* [Online post]. Facebook.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/photos/a.185333081477515/1018951104782371/?type=3>
- Okamura, T. (2015c, June 7). *Strmý růst romské populace je podle mého názoru jedním ze dvou největších bezpečnostních rizik pro Českou republiku. Samozřejmě tím druhým jsou imigranti.* [Video]. Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1017260391618109>
- Okamura, T. (2015d, August 29). *Dnes mám pro Vás absolutně šokující informace o ilegálních imigrantech v ČR, které ještě nebyly zveřejněny.* [Online post]. Facebook.
https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1069585966385551?locale=af_ZA
- Okamura, T. (2015e, October 31). *Imigranti ve velkém znásilňují evropské ženy a dívky* [Online post]. Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1104739802870167>
- Okamura, T. (2015f, November 4). *Bojuji za zákony omezující islám v ČR* [Online post]. Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1102886869722127/>
- Okamura, T. (2016a, April 10). *Ve zdravém těle zdravý duch* [Online post]. Facebook.
<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=1202776853066461&set=a.185333081477515>
- Okamura, T. (2016b, July 26). *Každodenní brutální islámský teror v Evropě pokračuje.* [Video]. Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1275370719140407/>
- Okamura, T. (2016c, August 11). *Nejteplejší týden v roce* [Online post]. Facebook.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1287652491245563>
- Okamura, T. (2016d, September 2). *Cvičení prsou se 100 kg* [Online post]. Facebook.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1306627079348104/>
- Okamura, T. (2016e, September 20). *Okamura a Grznár—100 kg na bench* [Online post]. Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1311478092196336/>
- Okamura, T. (2016f, November 29). *Islamizace ČR běží na plné obrátky* [Online post]. Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1376238592386952/>
- Okamura, T. (2017a, March 8). *Za práva žen* [Online post]. Facebook.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1495705590440251/>
- Okamura, T. (2017b, March 8). *Ženy miluju* [Online post].
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1492466384097505/>

- Okamura, T. (2017c, October 5). *Podle agentury CVVM jsem druhým nejdůvěryhodnějším politikem v České republice*. [Online post]. Facebook.
https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/photos/a.185333081477515.45875.179497582061065/1767938586550282/?type=3&theater&paipv=0&eav=AfYs7oY8ZQmYYATvwOU9HWUoEKCm3E0r2tA6cL3Lc_c7M7J0Lfa3AD2NLR6wht7L9Mk&_rdr
- Okamura, T. (2017d, November 12). *Ve zdravém těle zdravý duch, dnešní večer jsem strávil cvičením a je to skvělý pocit* [Online post]. Facebook.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/posts/pfbid0RY6P73wDYfPDAYoHfDUnh2Dv9tcjskybpvZ9zn2FyJyS7koaBhtRkvsZHTghtCGul>
- Okamura, T. (2018a, February 15). *Podle sociologické agentury CVVM jsem prý nadále druhým nejdůvěryhodnějším politikem v České republice* [Online post]. Facebook.
https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/photos/a.185333081477515.45875.179497582061065/1915821361762003/?type=3&theater&paipv=0&eav=AfYSEHhuQ9a5mb4gU9BWmJ5tl4upPgoIF-IYV1srSC3C2bx2agC8HCcC3KNz8b0Eaes&_rdr
- Okamura, T. (2018b, March 31). *Právě jsem mezi lidmi v Kutné hoře na Sedlecké pouti, diskutujeme a opravdu moc děkuji mnoha lidem za otevřenou podporu SPD, je tady tisíce lidí, skvělá atmosféra a nabral jsem spoustu konkrétních podnětů, s jejichž řešením budeme pomáhat*. [Online post]. Facebook.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1969427809734691/>
- Okamura, T. (2018c, May 18). *Útok na rodinu* [Online post]. Facebook.
https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/2018260861518052/?hc_ref=ARSSAeqP6vvyYIfP2XBsLikQAvTBrjuOch0OezDALnsgbPJMuS_EKdHTDi8vEEh2wSc
- Okamura, T. (2018d, June 5). *Další novinářská žumpa* [Online post]. Facebook.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/2041562599187878/>
- Okamura, T. (2018e, August 15). *NE neomarxistické pavědě. Považuji za* [Video].
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/2162648040689255/>
- Okamura, T. (2018f, December 9). *Hnutí ANO připravuje zákon, že* [Online post]. Facebook.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/posts/pfbid02JZjBSNAQvMEWGp9ivp2moNT9TLFCB3LvGaNiYrQrAttLFaXhRK6z3t3MToZh1bTG1>
- Okamura, T. (2019a, March 8). *Milé dámy, maminky, babičky, dcery, vnučky, slečny—Přeji Vám všem všechno nejlepší k dnešnímu svátku všech žen*. [Online post]. Facebook.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/posts/pfbid02d6cnpF9fQeKFNSTDXYLrrdYG4GpgYDL11uqAzbbTUsHBrNbnxV9Nea33S8qkw5Wxl>
- Okamura, T. (2019b, May 12). *Všem maminkám přeji všechno nejlepší k dnešnímu Dni matek* ❤️ [Online post]. Facebook.
https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/posts/pfbid0YA1hDbGobi6K4qTFoajmTq1ajj6PXVUCWNHFyjjxqDpkeayJdYw1Bbf2a4gAs1uf1?comment_id=2563768623633937

- Okamura, T. (2019c, August 5). *To snad není možné*. [Online post]. Facebook.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/posts/pfbid02QH4qdRTPu1pRW4d82xdyvYG3Un2aHSxpWsp1ckscqVr35R5NjEcWjHTwcsWJZxl>
- Okamura, T. (2019d, November 19). *To je mega-bizár. :-)* Český gender aktivista [Online post]. Facebook.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/posts/pfbid02fjo8WboCGvuiRhL44MBfex4EXbNqMwvS5i2a8ttfpWjodUfENmpPspXkzN7LUqWl>
- Okamura, T. (2019e, December 5). *Rodina musí být v České republice na prvním místě. Ekonomická situace bohužel brání rodičům v ČR mít více dětí*. [Online post]. Facebook.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/posts/pfbid0viT7KxjwEvia1SDwxpmpxQKFT97ep9gWbhzhCu6njkn7ZAFPLUXq3TeshjeVymcl>
- Okamura, T. (2019f, December 12). *Lidé si stěžují na chování nepřizpůsobivých* [Online post]. Facebook.
https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/posts/pfbid02k37cBphknpt5XANo1Lmfo8SnVudftuJdkDVt7xwrsfFkYmMUJr4oVpbPBG9M8D6kl?locale=hi_IN
- Okamura, T. (2020a, April 8). *Řady poslaneckého klubu SPD posílil Jaroslav Foldyna. Jaroslav Foldyna byl vždycky rváč za lidi a vlastenec*. [Online post]. Facebook.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/posts/pfbid0njupuwUzo1v7DQs9sviBnYERSW5vm9NGuP2Y9GEDzUg8uoCzgv2o2wA6VeBxVEZnl>
- Okamura, T. (2020b, May 10). *Den Matek* [Online post]. Facebook.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/244963446754762/>
- Okamura, T. (2020c, July 29). *Konečně BEZ CENZURY - Tomio Okamura na CNN Prima o soukromí a zákulisí* [Online post]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=urEw-ZTTauQ>
- Okamura, T. (2020d, August 7). *Nepodpoření LGBT ideologie*. SPD - Svoboda a přímá demokracie. <https://www.spd.cz/nepodporeni-lgbt-ideologie/>
- Okamura, T. (2020e, November 1). *13. Komnata Tomia Okamury na* [Online post]. Facebook.
<https://www.facebook.com/100044413300319/posts/3886977204646399/>
- Okamura, T. (2021, September 13). *Dnes odpoledne jsem byl v Liberci na volebním mítinku SPD "Český jarmark", přišlo zase obrovské množství fajn lidí, byla skvělá atmosféra a moc děkuju lidem za doslova fantastickou podporu* [Online post]. Facebook.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/posts/pfbid02kcuX2cMtVMw8MDgN9uSmGVGkzw22giq7v2aimFFGasb4FsgXFnvTWQgiXS3k8q6xl>
- Okamura, T. (2022a, November 19). *Nestydím se za to, že* [Online post]. Facebook.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/posts/pfbid02WiH3a5qW4tHeGxVFqzhbK92CvBA3WkoW12WJJwPbQPJNnvGMKziSPdhFpnaXN8zl>
- Okamura, T. (2022b, November 26). *Evropská unie nám vnucuje další šílenost* [Online post]. Facebook.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/posts/pfbid0kWP1e7DNo5EVJfj9P1hWpHRbbA2jFNdSdM3GXa4qQTjtzTDbE9FSSoM2ntxV6yA5l>

- Okamura, T. (2023a, February 4). *“Druhým nejdůvěryhodnějším politikem v ČR je předseda SPD Tomio Okamura, kterému věří 43 procent lidí.* [Online post]. Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/posts/pfbid02Bp7n71GdNQKheGmHdAvZ2R9srjESTYcJqSggfcg2k8qynMEH5xfesUedGyvqG9SLl>
- Okamura, T. (2023b, February 17). *Náš poslanec SPD Jarda Foldyna má v tomto podle mě pravdu* [Online post]. Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/posts/pfbid025zw18q2L4yPqjU6f1iqdCRMxZDyiqRqCY4EtEaatwW7eNtbGpVGjhA2FAgMUYBVwl>
- Okamura, T. (2023c, August 30). *Jak jsem slíbil, protože byla prokázána* [Online post]. Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/posts/pfbid036L5JicxchyjxFJZsF9vprpvSytPexbBGSPeSDoqaLU21TUfr7J5sHcQbftwZ6qNC1>
- Okamura, T. (2024a, March 19). *Dnešní tisková konference hnutí SPD—Bezpečnostní hrozby pro ČR, vyslání českých vojáků na Ukrajinu, nedostupná zubařská péče, prudký nárůst infekčních nemocí, zdražování bydlení, příspěvek na péči* [Online post]. Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/425266353196811/>
- Okamura, T. (2024b, May 20). *Obrovská podpora v Ostravě!* [Online post]. TikTok. <https://www.tiktok.com/@tomiospd/video/7371160404858342689>
- Okamura, T. (2024c, August 2). *Necháme ve jménu zvrácené generové ideologie masakrovat ženy?* [Online post]. Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/photos/nech%C3%A1me-ve-jm%C3%A9nu-zvr%C3%A1cen%C3%A9-generov%C3%A9-ideologie-masakrovat-%C5%BEeny-v-al%C5%BE%C3%ADrsk%C3%BDch-barv%C3%A1c/1069905877833179/>
- Okamura, T. (2024d, November 1). *Extrémně vzrostla kriminalita Ukrajinců na našem území – o 45 procent* [Online post]. Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/posts/pfbid031HQ7Co169hWEBRRQbzwEkR2xQXk2n32bofwKzENz6D1EeEXgCP9CVTDThgK7gvrwl>
- Okamura, T. (2024e, November 20). *Mladíci z Ukrajiny bojují každý víkend v pražských ulicích a lidé mají strach* [Video]. Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1726776954532225>
- Okamura, T. (2025, February 9). *Kvůli Fialově vládě český národ vymírá* [Online post]. Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=1202374094586356&id=100044413300319&set=a.776576327166137>
- Okamura vyvenčí psa proti Arabům a pak ho sní, vtipkuje herec Jordan Haj. (2015, July 23). Blesk.cz. <https://www.blesk.cz/clanek/zpravy-politika/332553/okamura-vyvenci-psa-proti-arabum-a-pak-ho-sni-vtipkuje-herec-jordan-haj.html>
- Okamurovy přifouknuté svaly. Na upravených fotkách z posilovny zapomněli narovnat sloupky. (2017, November 16). Lidovky.cz. https://www.lidovky.cz/relax/lide/okamura-si-graficky-prifoukl-svaly-na-fotkach-kamarad-mi-ji-jen-zesvetlil-brani-se.A171115_134312_ln_domov_ele

- Olejarczyk, P. (2023, June 15). *Z Chrystusem Królem Polski to na serio? 'Pan Mentzen tym razem podziękuje'*. Onet Wiadomości. <https://wiadomosci.onet.pl/kraj/slawomir-mentzen-niskie-podatki-zakaz-aborcji-wielka-polska-katolicka/ev15htj>
- Olender, Ł. (2021, December 8). *Górny: Liczba Ukraińców w Polsce wróciła do poziomu sprzed pandemii; statystyki mogą być zaburzone*. Bankier.pl. <https://www.bankier.pl/wiadomosc/Gorny-Liczba-Ukrajncow-w-Polsce-wrocila-do-poziomu-sprzed-pandemii-statystyki-moga-byc-zaburzone-8239097.html>
- Ost, D. (2004). Politics as the Mobilization of Anger: Emotions in Movements and in Power. *European Journal of Social Theory*, 7(2), 229–244.
- Ost, D. (2005). *The Defeat of Solidarity: Anger and Politics in Postcommunist Europe*. Cornell University Press.
- Ostiguy, P. (2009). The high and the low in politics: A two-dimensional political space for comparative analysis and electoral studies. *Helen Kellogg Institute for International Studies*, 360.
- Ostrowska, E. (2004). Matki Polki i ich synowie. Kilka uwag o genezie obrazów kobiecości i męskości w kulturze polskiej. In M. Radkiewicz (Ed.), *Gender kontesktty* (pp. 215–227). Rabid.
- Ostry, J. D., Loungani, P., & Furceri, D. (2016). Neoliberalism: Oversold? Instead of delivering growth, some neoliberal policies have increased inequality, in turn jeopardizing durable expansion. *Finance & Development*, 53(2), 38–42.
- Ouellet, L. (1994). *Pedal to the metal: The work life of truckers*. Temple University Press.
- Pacewicz, K. (2019, August 10). *W Polsce Bóg umiera dzisiaj. Młodzi porzucają religię, w tym tempie wierzący za 7 lat będą mniejszością*. Gazeta Wyborcza. <https://wyborcza.pl/magazyn/7,124059,25073908,rodzice-i-dziadkowie-nie-odwrocili-sie-od-kosciola-po.html>
- Páľková, Š. (2011, March 3). *Okamura se zastal rasistického vraha. 'Konečné řešení otázky cikánské' prý není problém*. Lidovky.cz. https://www.lidovky.cz/domov/okamura-se-zastal-rasistického-vraha-konecne-reseni-otazky-cikanske-pry-neni-problem.A110303_163745_in_domov_spa
- Pankowski, R. (2010). *The populist radical right in Poland: The patriots*. Routledge.
- Pasieka, A. (2015). *Hierarchy and pluralism: Living religious difference in Catholic Poland*. Springer.
- Pasieka, A. (2019). Anthropology of the far right: What if we like the 'unlikeable' others? *Anthropology Today*, 35(1), 3–6.
- Pasieka, A. (2022). "Tomorrow belongs to us": Pathways to Activism in Italian Far-Right Youth Communities. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 64(1), 150–178.
- Pasieka, A. (2024). *Living Right: Far-Right Youth Activists in Contemporary Europe*. Princeton University Press.
- Pateman, C. (1988). *The Sexual Contract*. Stanford University Press.

- Paternotte, D., & Kuhar, R. (2017). The anti-gender movement in comparative perspective. In R. Kuhar & D. Paternotte (Eds.), *Anti-gender campaigns in Europe: Mobilizing against equality* (pp. 253–276). Rowman & Littlefield.
- Pavlova, M. K., Silbereisen, R. K., & Sijko, K. (2014). Social participation in Poland: Links to emotional well-being and risky alcohol consumption. *Social Indicators Research*, 117, 29–44.
- Peck, J. (2003). The rise of the workfare state. *Kurswechsel*, 3, 75–87.
- Pehe, V. (2020). *Velvet Retro: Postsocialist Nostalgia and the Politics of Heroism in Czech Popular Culture* (Vol. 2). Berghahn Books.
- Pels, D. (2003). Aesthetic representation and political style. In J. Corner & D. Pels (Eds.), *Media and the restyling of politics: Consumerism, celebrity and cynicism* (pp. 41–66). Sage.
- Pertold-Gebicka, B. (2020). Parental leave length and mothers' careers: What can be inferred from occupational allocation? *Applied Economics*, 52(9), 879–904.
- Peterson, V. S. (1999). Political identities/nationalism as heterosexism. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 1(1), 34–65.
- Petřík, L. (2013, July 1). *Cikáni, vystěhujte se, napsal Okamura a začal nářez. I kniže se zapojil*. Parlamentní Listy. <https://www.parlamentnilisty.cz/arena/monitor/Cikani-vystehujte-se-napsal-Okamura-a-zacal-narez-I-knize-se-zapojil-277312>
- Pettersson, K. (2017). Ideological dilemmas of female populist radical right politicians. *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 24(1), 7–22.
- Pielużek, M. (2017). *Obrazy świata w komunikacji polskiej skrajnej prawicy*. Wydawnictwo Libron.
- Pika, T. (2023, September 2). *OVĚŘOVNA: Případ složenky s příspěvkem na děti. Ilustruje, jak je důležité být zdrženlivý, říká expert*. iROZHLAS. https://www.irozhlaz.cz/zpravy-domov/overovna-slozenka-pridavky-na-deti-manipulace-hoax-mpsv_2309020500_pik
- Piketty, T. (2013). *Le Capital au XXIe siècle*. Éditions du Seuil.
- Pilkington, H. (2016). *Loud and proud: Passion and politics in the English Defence League*. Manchester University Press.
- Pirro, A. (2015). *The populist radical right in Central and Eastern Europe: Ideology, impact, and electoral performance*. Routledge.
- Pirro, A. (2023). Far right: The significance of an umbrella concept. *Nations and Nationalism*, 29(1), 101–112.
- PiS z głosami rolników i robotników. Przedsiębiorcy za Koalicją Obywatelską*. (2023, October 15). TVN24. <https://tvn24.pl/wybory-parlamentarne-2023/jak-glosowaly-grupy-zawodowe-wybory-2023-7392886>
- Plątek, D., & Płucienniczak, P. (2017). Mobilizing on the extreme right in Poland: Marginalization, institutionalization and radicalization. In E. Korolczuk & K.

- Jacobsson (Eds.), *Civil Society Revisited. Lessons from Poland* (Vol. 9, pp. 286–312). Berghahn.
- Politický dlouhodobý program SPD*. (n.d.). SPD - Svoboda a přímá demokracie. Retrieved 17 March 2024, from <https://www.spd.cz/program-vypis/>
- Popova, S., Rehm, J., Patra, J., & Zatonski, W. (2007). Comparing alcohol consumption in central and eastern Europe to other European countries. *Alcohol & Alcoholism*, 42(5), 465–473.
- Pracháč Okamura přiznal příjmy: Koupil luxusní byt i auto! Kolik vydělává?* (2013, June 22). Blesk.cz. <https://www.blesk.cz/clanek/zpravy-udalosti/200222/prachac-okamura-priznal-prijmy-koupil-luxusni-byt-i-auto-kolik-vydelava.html>
- Prague Pride – deviance, nebo ochrana lidských práv?* (2012, August 18). Česká televize. <https://ct24.ceskatelevize.cz/clanek/domaci/prague-pride-deviace-nebo-ochrana-lidskych-prav-282809>
- Přítelkyně Tomio Okamury přitvrzuje: Z bílé labutě je sado-maso barbie!* (2013, March 22). Blesk.cz. <https://www.blesk.cz/clanek/celebrity-ceske-celebrity/193228/pritelkyne-tomio-okamury-pritvrzuje-z-bile-labute-je-sado-maso-barbie.html>
- Program hnutí | Úsvit Přímé Demokracie Tomia Okamury*. (2013, August 25). Internet Archive. <https://web.archive.org/web/20131025011909/http://www.hnutiusvit.cz/program-hnuti/>
- Prokop, D., Komárek, J., & Fabšíková, N. (2021, November 1). *První povolební analýza: Jak volily skupiny voličů? A jak se přelévaly hlasy během roku?* PAQ Research. https://www.paqresearch.cz/post/analiza_volby_2021/
- Prowadzenie firmy w Polsce—Wyzwanie dla odważnych*. (n.d.). Konfederacja. Retrieved 25 January 2024, from <https://konfederacja.pl/grafika/prowadzenie-firmy-w-polsce-wyzwanie-dla-odwaznych/>
- Pšenička, J. (2018, March 27). *Tomio je jako můj bratr. Prošel si peklem, proto neudrží nervy na uzdě, říká ideolog SPD Večerníček*. Aktuálně.cz. <https://zpravy.aktualne.cz/domaci/tomio-je-jako-muj-bratr-prosel-si-pekle-proto-neudrzi-nervy-r~c30f043830f411e8a44c0cc47ab5f122/>
- Ptak, A. (2023, June 15). *‘Not one more’: Thousands protest abortion law after latest death of pregnant woman in Poland*. Notes From Poland. <https://notesfrompoland.com/2023/06/15/not-one-more-thousands-protest-abortion-law-after-latest-death-of-pregnant-woman-in-poland/>
- Puar, J. K. (2007). *Terrorist assemblages: Homonationalism in queer times*. Duke University Press.
- Pytlas, B. (2015). *Radical right parties in Central and Eastern Europe: Mainstream party competition and electoral fortune*. Routledge.
- Pytlas, B. (2018a). Populist radical right mainstreaming and challenges to democracy in an enlarged Europe. In L. E. Herman & J. Muldoon (Eds.), *Trumping the Mainstream. The Conquest of Democratic Politics by the Populist Radical Right* (pp. 165–184).

- Pytlas, B. (2018b). Radical right politics in East and West: Distinctive yet equivalent. *Sociology Compass*, 12(11), 1–15.
- Rakušanová, P. (2006). *Česká politika: Ženy v labyrintu mužů?* Fórum 50%. <https://padesatprocent.cz/docs/zeny-labyrint-muzu.pdf>
- Ralph-Morrow, E. (2022). The right men: How masculinity explains the radical right gender gap. *Political Studies*, 70(1), 26–44.
- Ramalingam, V. (2020). Overcoming racialisation in the field: Practising ethnography on the far right as a researcher of colour. In S. D. Ashe, J. Busher, G. Macklin, & A. Winter (Eds.), *Researching the far right: Theory, method and practice* (pp. 254–269). Routledge.
- Rataj, J., Dlouhý, M., & Háka, A. (2020). *Proti systému!: Český radikální konzervativismus, fašismus a nacionální socialismus 20. A 21. Století*. Auditorium.
- Rataj, J., & Mihálik, J. (2019). The Czech Extreme Right of the 21st Century at the Time of the Migration Crisis. In J. Bardovič & J. Mihálik (Eds.), *Migration: The Challenge of European States* (pp. 133–148). ibidem Verlag.
- Rathgeb, P. (2024). *How the radical right has changed capitalism and welfare in Europe and the USA*. Oxford University Press.
- Recepta na problemy na polskiej granicy? Pozwolić żołnierzom strzelać!* (2024, July 2). Konfederacja. <https://konfederacja.pl/recepta-na-problemy-na-polskiej-granicy-pozwolic-zolnierzom-strzelac/>
- Reinischová, M., & Soukup, P. (2013, March 12). *Důvěřivý pracháč Okamura: Své holce klidně půjčí kreditku*. Blesk.cz. <https://www.blesk.cz/clanek/video-odjinud-svet-showbyznysu/192409/duverivy-prachac-okamura-sve-holce-klidne-pujci-kreditku.html>
- Rooduijn, M., Van Kessel, S., Froio, C., Pirro, A., De Lange, S., Halikiopoulou, D., Lewis, P., Mudde, C., & Taggart, P. (2023). *The PopuList: An overview of populist, far right, far left and Eurosceptic parties in Europe*. <https://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/2EWKQ>
- Rozhovor. Tomio Okamura*. (2012, January 8). LUI. <https://www.lui.cz/lide-zivot/item/663-rozhovor-tomio-okamura>
- Rozvoral, R. (2018, September 29). *Mnichovská dohoda byla zrada na* [Online post]. Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/338729052930562/photos/a.338740166262784/1347351322068325/>
- Rozvoral, R. (2020, January 7). *Pro hnutí SPD je pracující rodina základem našeho státu!* [Online post]. Facebook. https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=pfbid022c8TEL33PtZcQ9qBPiP4vnh2KsMjD8EsrhEe4Je5hSRhQcKYUK4Ka2GjSse2Lc6el&id=338729052930562
- Różycka, J. (2023, September 8). *Konfederacja liczy na głosy osób LGBT? Skrajna prawica chce likwidacji 'podatku od gejów'*. gazeta.pl. <https://wiadomosci.gazeta.pl/wiadomosci/7,143907,30167423,konfederacja-liczy-na-glosy-osob-lgbt-skrajna-prawica-walczy.html>

- Rubin, G. (2011). *Deviations: A Gayle Rubin Reader*. Duke University Press.
- Rydgren, J. (2004). Explaining the emergence of radical right-wing populist parties: The case of Denmark. *West European Politics*, 27(3), 474–502.
- Rydgren, J. (2007). The sociology of the radical right. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 33(1), 241–262.
- Rydgren, J. (2013). Introduction: Class politics and the radical right. In J. Rydgren (Ed.), *Class politics and the radical right* (pp. 1–9). Routledge.
- Rydgren, J. (2018). *The Oxford handbook of the radical right*. Oxford University Press.
- Ryšavý, Z., & Samko, R. (2023, July 28). *Němcová a Čunek tvrdí, že velká část Romů nepracuje a bere jen sociální dávky. Romské organizace a romská vládní zmocněnkyně se proti rasistickým výrokům ostře ohrazují*. Romea.cz. <https://romea.cz/cz/domaci/nemcova-a-cunek-tvrdi-ze-velka-cast-romu-nepracuje-a-bere-jen-socialni-davky-romske-organizace-a-romska-vladni-zmocnenkyne-se-proti-rasistickym-vyrokum-ostre-ohrazuji/>
- Saad, L., Jones, S. E., & Fioroni, S. (2024, September 12). *Exploring Young Women's Leftward Expansion*. Gallup. <https://news.gallup.com/poll/649826/exploring-young-women-leftward-expansion.aspx>
- Sauer, B. (2020). Authoritarian right-wing populism as masculinist identity politics. The role of affects. In G. Dietze & J. Roth (Eds.), *Right-Wing Populism and Gender: A Preliminary Cartography of an Emergent Field of Research: Vol. Right-Wing Populism and Gender* (pp. 23–40). transcript Verlag.
- Savage, L. (2023). Preferences for redistribution, welfare chauvinism, and radical right party support in Central and Eastern Europe. *East European Politics and Societies*, 37(02), 584–607.
- Saxonberg, S., & Hašková, H. (2012). *Péče o nejmenší: Boření mýtů*. Slon.
- Saxonberg, S., & Sirovátka, T. (2020). Failing family policy in post-communist Central Europe. In I. Geva-May, B. G. Peters, & J. Muhleisen (Eds.), *Regional Comparisons in Comparative Policy Analysis Studies* (pp. 193–210). Routledge.
- Sayyid, S. (2018). Islamophobia and the Europeanness of the other Europe. *Patterns of Prejudice*, 52(5), 420–435.
- Scheffer, J. (2024, July 22). Polish MEP's Ursula von der Leyen-Bashing Rant Goes Viral. *Hungarian Conservative*. https://www.hungarianconservative.com/articles/current/ursula-von-der-leyen_ewa-zajackowska-hernik_rant_viral_european-parliament_illegal-migration_green-deal/
- Schippers, M. (2007). Recovering the feminine other: Masculinity, femininity, and gender hegemony. *Theory and Society*, 36(1), 85–102.
- Schleusener, S. (2020). “You’re Fired!” Retrotopian Desire and Right-Wing Class Politics’. In G. Dietze & J. Roth (Eds.), *Right-Wing Populism and Gender: European Perspectives and Beyond* (pp. 185–208). transcript Verlag.

- Schneider, J. (2024). Demands as the black box of discourse theory: The German integration debate, demanding a 'leading culture' and the mainstreaming of the far-right. *Critical Discourse Studies*, 1–17.
- Schrock, D., & Schwalbe, M. (2009). Men, masculinity, and manhood acts. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 35(1), 277–295.
- Schulz, W. (2004). Reconstructing mediatization as an analytical concept. *European Journal of Communication*, 19(1), 87–101.
- Scrinzi, F. (2024). *The Racialization of Sexism: Men, Women and Gender in the Populist Radical Right*. Taylor & Francis.
- Šebek, S. (2011, April 17). Nemám žádné starosti a každý den dobrou náladu. *Domažlický deník*. <https://domazlicky.denik.cz/podnikani/tomio-okamura-nemam-zadne-starosti-a-kazdy-den-dob.html>
- Sedgwick, E. K. (1985). *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire*. Columbia University Press.
- Sehgal, M. (2009). The veiled feminist ethnographer: Fieldwork among women of India's Hindu right. In M. K. Huggins & M.-L. Glebbeek (Eds.), *Women fielding danger: Negotiating ethnographic identities in field research* (pp. 325–352). Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Sejm: Projekt inicjatywy 'Stop pedofilii' skierowany do komisji. (2020, April 16). Polska Agencja Prasowa. <https://www.pap.pl/aktualnosci/news%2C627400%2Csejm-projekt-inicjatywy-stop-pedofilii-skierowany-do-komisji.html>
- Sejm skierował do dalszych prac w komisji projekt ustawy 'Stop LGBT'. (2021, October 29). TVN24. <https://tvn24.pl/polska/projekt-ustawy-stop-lgbt-sejm-skierowal-projekt-do-prac-w-komisji-5471459>
- Shields, S. (2021). Domesticating neoliberalism: 'domification' and the contradictions of the populist countermovement in Poland. *Europe-Asia Studies*, 73(9), 1622–1640.
- Shmidt, V., & Jaworsky, B. N. (2020). *Historicizing Roma in Central Europe: Between critical whiteness and epistemic injustice*. Routledge.
- Shoshan, N. (2016). *The management of hate. Nation, Affect, and the Governance of Right-Wing Extremism in Germany*. Princeton University Press.
- SIEĆ NA WYBORY. (2023, July 26). Donald Tusk przywraca zwykłym ludziom nadzieję! [Online post]. TikTok. <https://www.tiktok.com/@siec.na.wybory/video/7260196834449100059>
- Simi, P., & Futrell, R. (2009). Negotiating white power activist stigma. *Social Problems*, 56(1), 89–110.
- Simi, P., & Futrell, R. (2010). *American swastika: Inside the white power movement's hidden spaces of hate*. Rowman & Littlefield.
- Slačálek, O. (2018). The Leadership of the Czech Far Right 1990-2017. Changes in Practical Ideology? *Intersections. East European Journal of Society and Politics*, 4(4), 125–136.

- Slačálek, O. (2021a). Czech Republic: Populism without Culture Wars? In P. Barša, Z. Hesová, & O. Slačálek (Eds.), *Central European culture wars: Beyond post-communism and populism* (pp. 158–202). Humanitas.
- Slačálek, O. (2021b). Inadaptable Gypsies’ and ‘Dangerous Antiziganists. In M. D. Frederiksen & I. Harboe Knudsen (Eds.), *Modern Folk Devils* (pp. 181–202). Helsinki University Press.
- Slačálek, O. (2021c). The Dynamics of the Polish Culture Wars. In P. Barša, Z. Hesová, & O. Slačálek (Eds.), *Central European culture wars: Beyond post-communism and populism* (pp. 127–157). Humanitas.
- Slačálek, O., & Šitera, D. (2021). Czechia 30 years On: An Imperfect Oligarchy Without Emancipatory Alternative. In O. Slačálek & A. Gagyí (Eds.), *The Political Economy of Eastern Europe 30 years into the ‘Transition’ New Left Perspectives from the Region* (pp. 133–150). Springer.
- Slačálek, O., & Svobodová, E. (2017). Professionalised ‘civil society’ vs. Grassroots ‘uncivil society’? The ‘Little Czech’ 20 years later. *Socio.Hu Társadalomtudományi Szemle*, 23–52.
- Slačálek, O., & Svobodová, E. (2018). The Czech Islamophobic movement: Beyond ‘populism’? *Patterns of Prejudice*, 52(5), 479–495.
- Šmídová, I. (2009). Changing Czech Masculinities?: Beyond “Environment-and Children-Friendly” Men. In E. H. Oleksy (Ed.), *Intimate citizenships: Gender, sexualities, politics* (pp. 193–206). Routledge.
- Śmieja, W. (2021). Between Traditions and Technology: Political Radicalism and the Spectacle of Masculinity in Contemporary Poland. *Society Register*, 5(1), 159–172.
- Smolík, J. (2015). The skinhead subculture in the Czech Republic. *Kultura-Społeczeństwo-Edukacja*, 7(1), 91–103.
- Snipes, A., & Mudde, C. (2020). “France’s (Kinder, Gentler) Extremist”: Marine Le Pen, Intersectionality, and Media Framing of Female Populist Radical Right Leaders. *Politics & Gender*, 16(2), 438–470.
- Snow, D. A., & Benford, R. D. (1988). Ideology, frame resonance, and participant mobilization. *International Social Movement Research*, 1(1), 197–217.
- Sokolová, V. (2008). *Cultural politics of ethnicity: Discourses on Roma in communist Czechoslovakia* (Vol. 82). ibidem-Verlag.
- Solomos, J. (2014). Stuart Hall: Articulations of race, class and identity, Ethnic and Racial. *Studies*, 37(10), 1667–1675.
- Solska, J. (2023, July 3). *Konfederacja: Darwinizm z kompleksami. W jednym mają rację, ale terapia przeraża*. Polityka. <https://www.polityka.pl/tygodnikpolityka/rynek/2218324,1,konfederacja-darwinizm-z-kompleksami-w-jednym-maja-racje-ale-terapia-przeraza.read>
- SPD a Trikolora budou ve většině krajů kandidovat s Rajchlovým PRO*. (2024, July 11). ČTK České noviny. <https://www.ceskenoviny.cz/zpravy/2542448>

- Sperling, V. (2014). *Sex, politics, and Putin: Political legitimacy in Russia*. Oxford University Press.
- Spierings, N. (2020). Why gender and sexuality are both trivial and pivotal in populist radical right politics. In G. Dietze & J. Roth (Eds.), *Right-Wing Populism and Gender. European Perspectives and Beyond* (transcript Verlag, pp. 41–58).
- Spierings, N., & Zaslove, A. (2015). Gendering the vote for populist radical-right parties. *Patterns of Prejudice*, 49(1–2), 135–162.
- Spierings, N., & Zaslove, A. (2017). Gender, populist attitudes, and voting: Explaining the gender gap in voting for populist radical right and populist radical left parties. *West European Politics*, 40(4), 821–847.
- Stacey, J. (1988). Can there be a feminist ethnography? *Women's Studies International Forum*, 11(1), 21–27.
- Stala se z nás „sekta přímé diktatury“, museli jsme psát do diskusí, popisuje bývalá členka SPD. (2019, March 26). Česká televize. <https://ct24.ceskatelevize.cz/clanek/domaci/stala-se-z-nas-sekta-prime-diktatury-museli-jsme-psat-do-diskusi-popisuje-byvala-clenka-spd-68322>
- Stanley, B. (2016). Defenders of the cross: Populist politics and religion in post-communist Poland. In N. Marzouki, D. McDonnell, & O. Roy (Eds.), *Saving the people: How populists hijack religion* (pp. 109–128). Oxford University Press.
- Stanley, B. (2019). Working in the gaps left behind: Radical right movement parties in a consolidating party system. In M. Caiani & O. Císař (Eds.), *Radical Right Movement Parties in Europe* (pp. 168–183). Routledge.
- Stanley, B., & Cześniak, M. (2019). Populism in Poland. *Populism around the World: A Comparative Perspective*, 67–87.
- Starck, K. (2020). I am a bull trader by nature: Performing Nigel Farage. *NORMA*, 15(1), 43–58.
- Stejskalová, M. (2012). Vylučujúca povaha utvárania českej národnej identity v súvislosti s rómskym obyvateľstvom. *Sociální Studia/Social Studies*, 9(4), 45–65.
- Stelmach, Ł. (2020, July 1). *Śłuchajcie, myślę, że JKM zauważył, że to już nie żarty i wyhodował na własnej piersi faszystę z poparciem 7% narodu, więc teraz heroicznie stara się całkowicie skompromitować całą Konfederację, żeby nie było jeszcze gorzej. Dzięki, Panie Januszu!* <https://t.co/P5g7zlamcW> / X. X (formerly Twitter). <https://x.com/lstelmach89/status/1278286867524472832>
- Sternhell, Z. (2010). *The anti-enlightenment tradition*. Yale University Press.
- Stojarová, V. (2018). Populist, Radical and Extremist Political Parties in Visegrad countries vis à vis the migration crisis. In the name of the people and the nation in Central Europe. *Open Political Science*, 1(1), 32–45.
- Stolcke, V. (1995). Talking culture: New boundaries, new rhetorics of exclusion in Europe. *Current Anthropology*, 36, 1–24.

- Stop ukrainizacji Polski*. (2022). Konfederacja Korony Polskiej.
<https://konfederajakoronypolskiej.pl/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/SUP-01.23-widok.pdf>
- Středa 7. Února 2024, stenozáznam části projednávání bodu pořadu schůze*. (2024, April 9). Poslanecká Sněmovna Parlamentu České Republiky.
<https://www.psp.cz/eknih/2021ps/stenprot/092schuz/bqbs/b05800901.htm>
- Stubbs, P., & Lendvai-Bainton, N. (2020). Authoritarian neoliberalism, radical conservatism and social policy within the European Union: Croatia, Hungary and Poland. *Development and Change*, 51(2), 1–21.
- Suchecka, J., & Jadczyk, S. (2020, July 8). *Bosak: Praktykowany homoseksualizm to zło*. TVN24. <https://tvn24.pl/premium/krzysztof-bosak-praktykowany-homoseksualizm-to-zlo-st4632106>
- Suwada, K. (2021a). Genderizing consequences of family policies in Poland in 2010s: A sociological perspective. *Society Register*, 5(4), 41–60.
- Suwada, K. (2021b). *Parenting and work in Poland: A gender studies perspective*. Springer Nature.
- Svatoňová, E. (2021). Gender activists will kidnap your kids’: The construction of feminist and LGBT+ rights activists as modern folk devils in Czech anti-gender campaigns. In M. D. Frederiksen & I. Harboe Knudsen (Eds.), *Modern folk devils: Contemporary constructions of evil* (pp. 135–156). Helsinki University Press.
- Svatoňová, E. (2022). The Dark Side of Laughter: Humour as a Tool for Othering in the Memes of Czech Far-Right Organization Angry Mothers. In A. Sevelsted & J. Toubøl (Eds.), *The Power of Morality in Movements: Civic Engagement in Climate Justice, Human Rights, and Democracy* (pp. 239–263). Springer Nature.
- Svoboda a přímá demokracie. (2024). In *Wikipedie*. https://cs.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Svoboda_a_přímá_demokracie&oldid=24420268
- Svoboda a přímá demokracie - SPD. (2017, August 26). *POLITICKÝ PROGRAM SPD*. SPD - Svoboda a přímá demokracie.
<https://web.archive.org/web/20170826072615/http://www.spd.cz/program>
- Svoboda a přímá demokracie—SPD*. (n.d.). Facebook. Retrieved 20 April 2023, from <https://www.facebook.com/hnutispd/>
- Switzer, R. (2024). *Affective landscapes of the far right social movement: Mobilizing place and emotion in the Nordic countries*. Stockholm University.
- Szczerbiak, A. (2016). An anti-establishment backlash that shook up the party system? The October 2015 Polish parliamentary election. *European Politics and Society*, 18(4), 1–24.
- Szczerbiak, A. (2023, October 31). Why did the opposition win the Polish election? *The Polish Politics Blog*. <https://polishpoliticsblog.wordpress.com/2023/10/31/why-did-the-opposition-win-the-polish-election/>
- Szczerbiak, A. (2024, August 1). *What is the outlook for Poland’s radical right Confederation?* The Polish Politics Blog.

- <https://polishpoliticsblog.wordpress.com/2024/08/01/what-is-the-outlook-for-polands-radical-right-confederation/>
- Szcześniak, M. (2016). *Normy widzialności: Tożsamość w czasach transformacji*. Fundacja Nowej Kultury Bęc Zmiana.
- Szelewa, D., & Polakowski, M. (2020). The “ugly” face of social investment? The politics of childcare in Central and Eastern Europe. *Social Policy & Administration*, 54(1), 14–27.
- Tamás, G. M. (2000). On post-fascism. *East European Constitutional Review*, 9, 48.
- Teitelbaum, B. R. (2017). *Lions of the north: Sounds of the new Nordic radical nationalism*. Oxford University Press.
- Tempest, R. (2016). The charismatic body politics of President Putin. *Journal of Political Marketing*, 15(2–3), 101–119.
- Thieme, T. (2024, December 6). *Wie umgehen mit dem Rechtsextremismus in der AfD?* Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung. <https://www.bpb.de/themen/parteien/rechtspopulismus/557267/wie-umgehen-mit-dem-rechtsextremismus-in-der-afd/>
- Thompson, K. (1998). *Moral Panics*. Routledge.
- Tichý, O. (2012, October 26). *Okamura i Paroubek mají slabost pro tlumočnice: Krásná Monika pomáhá jazykem*. Blesk.cz. <https://www.blesk.cz/clanek/zpravy-politika/184214/okamura-i-paroubek-maji-slabost-pro-tlumocnice-krasna-monika-pomaha-jazykem.html>
- Tilles, D. (2022, September 26). Anti-Ukrainian protest in Poland attracts no participants. *Notes From Poland*. <https://notesfrompoland.com/2022/09/26/anti-ukrainian-protest-in-poland-attracts-no-participants/>
- Todorova, M. (2010). Introduction: From Utopia to Propaganda and Back. In G. Zsuzsa & M. Todorova (Eds.), *Post-Communist Nostalgia* (pp. 1–13). Berghahn Books.
- Tomasiewicz, J. (2020). Confederacy—The polish new right wing between tradition and modernity. *Studia Politicae Universitatis Silesiensis*, 30, 7–32.
- Tomio Okamura. (2015, June 10). *Jsem vlastenec a nestydím se za to* [Online post]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SnVaFTzGkD0>
- Tomio Okamura nám dal BAN. (n.d.). [Online post]. Facebook. Retrieved 3 July 2024, from <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1215511288852239/>
- Tomio Okamura obhájil post předsedy hnutí SPD. Zeman jako host popřál straně vládní angažmá s ANO. (2024, April 13). iROZHLAS. https://www.irozhlas.cz/zpravy-domov/tomio-okamura-obhajil-post-predsedy-hnuti-spd-na-celostatni-konferenci-nemel_2404131507_vtk
- Toscano, E. (2019a). Conclusions. Doing research on far-right movements. In E. Toscano (Ed.), *Researching far-right movements: Ethics, methodologies, and qualitative inquiries* (pp. 140–145). Routledge.

- Toscano, E. (Ed.). (2019b). *Researching far-right movements: Ethics, methodologies, and qualitative inquiries*. Routledge.
- Treisman, R. (2024, August 2). What to know about the gender controversy sweeping Olympic boxing. *NPR*. <https://www.npr.org/2024/08/02/nx-s1-5061280/olympic-womens-boxing-gender-imane-khelif-lin-yuting>
- Tuček, M. (2023, May 2). *Vztah české veřejnosti k národnostním skupinám žijícím v ČR – únor/březen 2023*. Centrum pro výzkum veřejného mínění. <https://cvvm.soc.cas.cz/cz/tiskove-zpravy/ostatni/vztahy-a-zivotni-postoje/5665-vztah-ceske-verejnosti-k-narodnostnim-skupinam-zijicim-v-cr-unor-brezen-2023>
- Turska-Kawa, A., & Olszanecka-Marmola, A. (2016). A Woman in Politics or Politics in a Woman Perception of the Female Leaders of Polish Political Parties in the Context of the 2015 Parliamentary Election. *Communication Today*, 7(2).
- Úsvit odstartoval kampaň, cílem je „druhé Švýcarsko“. (2013, September 17). Česká televize. <https://ct24.ceskatelevize.cz/clanek/domaci/usvit-odstartoval-kampan-cilem-je-druhe-svycarsko-315490>
- Válková, H. (2014, April 11). *Počet členů ANO strmě roste, Okamurův Úsvit zamrzl na devíti členech*. iDNES.cz. https://www.idnes.cz/zpravy/domaci/pocty-clenu-politickych-stran-usvit.A140409_171109_domaci_hv
- Vallo, Z., Jaworek, R., & Matlach, V. (2020). Islamophobic Discourse of Czech Politicians and Political Parties on Twitter during the 2015 Migration Crisis. *Journal of Nationalism, Memory & Language Politics*, 14(2).
- Van Hauwaert, S. M. (2019a). On far right parties, master frames and trans-national diffusion: Understanding far right party development in Western Europe. *Comparative European Politics*, 17, 132–154.
- Van Hauwaert, S. M. (2019b). Riding the wave of success: The role of trans-national diffusion mechanisms in the development of far right parties. *Journal of European Integration*, 41(4), 507–523.
- Vaughan, A., Tinsley, M., Mondon, A., & Braune, J. (2024a). Introduction. In A. Vaughan, M. Tinsley, A. Mondon, & J. Braune (Eds.), *The ethics of researching the far right: Critical approaches and reflections*. Manchester University Press.
- Vaughan, A., Tinsley, M., Mondon, A., & Braune, J. (Eds.). (2024b). *The ethics of researching the far right: Critical approaches and reflections*. Manchester University Press.
- Verdery, K. (1994). From parent-state to family patriarchs: Gender and nation in contemporary Eastern Europe. *East European Politics and Societies*, 8(02), 225–255.
- Villa, P.-I. (2017). Anti-genderismus”: German angst? In R. Kuhar & D. Paternotte (Eds.), *Anti-gender campaigns in Europe: Mobilizing against equality* (pp. 99–116). Rowman & Littlefield.
- Virchow, F. (2007). Performance, emotion, and ideology: On the creation of “collectives of emotion” and worldview in the contemporary German far right. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 36(2), 147–164.

- Vohlídalová, M. (2015). *Výzkumná zpráva z dotazníkového šetření 'Ženy a muži v rovnováze'* (p. 64). Sociologický ústav AV ČR. http://www.soc.cas.cz/sites/default/files/soubory/zprava_rovnovaha_dotazniky_final.pdf
- Volby do Poslanecké sněmovny Parlamentu České republiky konané ve dnech 8.10. – 9.10.2021.* (n.d.-a). Český statistický úřad. Retrieved 17 September 2023, from <https://www.volby.cz/pls/ps2021/ps2?xjazyk=CZ>
- Volby do Poslanecké sněmovny Parlamentu České republiky konané ve dnech 14. - 15.6.2002.* (n.d.-b). Český statistický úřad. Retrieved 7 February 2023, from <https://www.volby.cz/pls/ps2002/ps2?xjazyk=CZ>
- Volební účast: Aktuální data a historické srovnání | Volby.* (2023, January 28). E15.cz. <https://www.e15.cz/volebni-ucast-v-cr>
- Výzkum mezi středoškoly 2017.* (2017, September 7). Člověk v tísni. <https://www.clovekvtsni.cz/vyzkum-mezi-stredoskolaky-skolni-vyuka-propada-jako-zdroj-informaci-o-soucasnych-spolecenskych-a-politickych-tematech-pro-tretinu-studentu-muze-byt-autoritativni-zpusob-vladnuti-lepsi-nez-demokraticky-4521gp>
- Walach, V. (2020). Envy, corruption and 'hard racism': Studying antigypsyism as an ideological fantasy. *Slovenský Národopis*, 68(4), 324–339.
- Walby, S. (2009). *Globalization and inequalities: Complexity and contested modernities*. Sage.
- Walby, S. (2020). Varieties of gender regimes. *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State and Society*, 27(3), 414–431.
- Waleński, T. (2023, September 24). *Pani jest chamką!* wiadomosci.wp.pl. <https://wiadomosci.wp.pl/grubo-mocno-mocno-awantura-w-debacie-tvn24-6945113474026240a>
- wally_nowak. (2018, December 5). *Mno jo, Tomio Okamura, slavný internetový BanKing... Přímou demokracii prosazuje diktátorský 😏* <https://t.co/QEuZM6Qp8O> / X [Online post]. X (formerly Twitter). https://x.com/wally_nowak/status/1070245763333193729
- Warner, M. (1993). Introduction. In M. Warner (Ed.), *Fear of a queer planet: Queer politics and social theory*. University of Minnesota Press.
- Werbner, P. (1999). Political motherhood and the feminisation of citizenship: Women's activism and the transformation of the public sphere. In N. Yuval-Davis & P. Werbner (Eds.), *Women, Citizenship and Difference* (pp. 221–245). Zed.
- West, L. (Ed.). (1997). *Feminist nationalism*. Routledge.
- Whiteley, P., Larsen, E., Goodwin, M. J., & Clarke, H. (2021). Party activism in the populist radical right: The case of the UK Independence Party. *Party Politics*, 27(4), 644–655.
- Whiteley, P., & Seyd, P. (2002). *High-intensity participation: The dynamics of party activism in Britain*. University of Michigan Press.
- Wilk, J. (2019, September 21). *A tu ładniejsza strona polityki i ładniejsza strona Konfederacji. Mamy na listach wicemiss świata :-)* I kto jest debesciakiem?

- <https://t.co/fSXEZL4i0b> [Online post]. X (formerly Twitter).
<https://twitter.com/jacekwilkpl/status/1175423721949081600>
- Wilk, J. (2021a, April 21). *Męski znaczy: - Zdecydowany - agresywny - nie bojący się ryzyka - decyzyjny - wyrazisty i (w wielu sprawach) bezkompromisowy* [Online post]. X (formerly Twitter). <https://x.com/JacekWilKPL/status/1384937747237023745>
- Wilk, J. (2021b, April 21). *To proste: Jesteśmy jedyną męską partią w Polsce.* [Online post]. X (formerly Twitter). <https://x.com/JacekWilKPL/status/1384934664780066816>
- Witkowski, P. (Ed.). (2023a). *Śmierć Wrogom Ojczyzny! Anatomia polityczna uczestników Marszu Niepodległości*. Instytut Wydawniczy Książka i Prasa.
- Witkowski, P. (2023b). Struktura ideologiczna Marszu Niepodległości. Geneza manifestacji oraz jej organizatorzy i polskie organizacje polityczne uczestniczące w największej nacjonalistycznej demonstracji Europy. In P. Witkowski (Ed.), *Śmierć Wrogom Ojczyzny! Anatomia polityczna uczestników Marszu Niepodległości* (pp. 143–201). Instytut Wydawniczy Książka i Prasa.
- Witkowski, P. (2023c). Wprowadzenie. In P. Witkowski (Ed.), *Śmierć Wrogom Ojczyzny! Anatomia polityczna uczestników Marszu Niepodległości* (pp. 19–33). Instytut Wydawniczy Książka i Prasa.
- Wodak, R. (Ed.). (1997). *Gender and discourse*. Sage.
- Wodak, R. (2015). *The politics of fear: What right-wing populist discourses mean*. Sage.
- Wodak, R., De Cillia, R., & Reisigl, M. (1999). The discursive construction of national identities. *Discourse & Society*, 10(1–24), 149–173.
- Wodak, R., De Cillia, R., Reisigl, M., & Liebhart, K. (2009). *The Discursive Construction of National Identity*. Edinburgh University Press.
- Wondreys, J. (2021). The “refugee crisis” and the transformation of the far right and the political mainstream: The extreme case of the Czech Republic. *East European Politics*, 37(4), 722–746.
- Woodcock, S. (2010). Gender as catalyst for violence against Roma in contemporary Italy. *Patterns of Prejudice*, 44(5), 469–488.
- Woroncow, J. (2023). Marsz Niepodległości jako węzeł kontaktowy europejskiej sceny neofaszystowskiej. In P. Witkowski (Ed.), *Śmierć Wrogom Ojczyzny! Anatomia polityczna uczestników Marszu Niepodległości* (pp. 203–272). Instytut Wydawniczy Książka i Prasa.
- Woźniak, W., Kossakowski, R., & Nosal, P. (2020). A squad with no left wingers: The roots and structure of right-wing and nationalist attitudes among Polish football fans. *Problems of Post-Communism*, 67(6), 511–524.
- Wrzosek, T. (2010). *Nacjonalizm i hegemonia: Przypadek Młodzieży Wszechpolskiej*. Wydawnictwo Wschód-Zachód.
- Wybory parlamentarne w Polsce w 2001 roku*. (n.d.). Wikipedia. Retrieved 22 September 2022, from https://pl.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Wybory_parlamentarne_w_Polsce_w_2001_roku&oldid=73500105

- Yuval-Davis, N. (2008). *Gender & Nation*. Sage.
- Yuval-Davis, N. (2011). *The Politics of Belonging: Intersectional Contestations*. Sage.
- Zaborowski, L. (2020). *Przeciw systemowi w imię 'Wielkiej Polski'? Geneza Ruchu Narodowego i jego działalność w latach 2012-2015* [PhD thesis]. Uniwersytet Warszawski.
- Zajączkowska-Hernik, E. (2024a, May 18). *Nowa Nadzieja pozdrawia z Poznania!* [Online post]. Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/EwaZajaczkowskacom/posts/pfbid038BhbBthagEe1ASANDpUQPikWXZwVH4unqx1oPCHedHvJ38hS1EEsfY8S8ZWEvpRI>
- Zajączkowska-Hernik, E. (2024b, September 22). *Pani minister @Ula_Zielinska puszcza emocje. Nie nadaje się na polityka* [Online post]. X (formerly Twitter). <https://x.com/EwaZajaczkowska/status/1837740024940425222>
- Zajíc, F., & Andrlé, V. (2023, December 30). *Kolik mají sněmovní strany členů? Lidovci nejvíc, Piráti nejméně, SPD roste a ANO pro nábor nevidí důvod*. iROZHLAS. https://www.irozhlas.cz/zpravy-domov/clenska-organizace-clenove-strany-ano-ods-pirati-spd-kdu-csl_2312302233_jgr
- Zajíčková, D., Zajíček, M., & others. (2021). Gender Pay Gap in the Czech Republic-Its Evolution and Main Drivers. *Prague Economic Papers*, 30(6), 675–723.
- Žarkov, D. (2007). *The Body of War: Media, Ethnicity, and Gender in the break-up of Yugoslavia*. Duke University Press.
- Zastoupení žen v poslanecké sněmovně ČR*. (n.d.). Fórum 50 %. Retrieved 12 November 2023, from <https://padesatprocent.cz/cz/statistiky/zastoupeni-zen-a-muzu-v-politice/poslanecka-snemovna>
- Žižková, M., & Janík, M. (2012, October 22). *Vozí do Česka Japonce, prodává módu pro lolitky a chce na Hrad*. Lidovky.cz. https://www.lidovky.cz/domov/okamura-vozi-k-nam-japonce-prodava-modu-pro-lolitky-a-chce-na-hrad.A121021_210342_ln_domov_ziz
- Zollinger, D. (2024). Cleavage identities in voters' own words: Harnessing open-ended survey responses. *American Journal of Political Science*, 68(1), 139–159.
- Zubrzycki, G. (2009). *The Crosses of Auschwitz: Nationalism and Religion in Post-Communist Poland*. University of Chicago Press.
- Zúquete, J. P. (2018). *The Identitarians: The Movement against Globalism and Islam in Europe*. University of Notre Dame Press.

APPENDIX I

- 1 „Więc można powiedzieć że trochę mnie wychował w takim duchu” (Patrycja)
- 2 „Oni dzieciaka wychowali mnie ‘Bóg, Honor, Ojczyzna’, ale jakieś tabliczki były takie czytałem albo... albo te pieśni patriotyczne” (Dominik)
- 3 “Korwin-Mikke to jest taka sztandarowe osoba, która od 30 lat nie zmienia zdania, tak. To jest jedyna osoba w partii on był na początku w Sejmie bo się dostał. Korwin-Mikke się dostał na początku, ale później został nie wybrany i on nigdy nie zmieniał i tak naprawdę ja od niego na nowo uczyłam się wolności, uczyłam się... On mnie wprowadził w takie meandry tego świata, tak? Tylko tej polityki. Że jednak... jakby nasze pokolenie a przede wszystkim pokolenie, właśnie nasze pokolenie dzięki Korwin Mikkemu mamy to co dzisiaj mamy czyli Konfederację na takim zasadzie.” (Elżbieta)
- 4 „No i właśnie poglądy takie liberalne gospodarczo przede wszystkim mnie tutaj przyciągnęły no i oczywiście wypowiedzi naszego lidera Janusza Korwin-Mikkego. Ja w tym, ja w tych kontrowersjach widziałam coś... coś fajnego, coś dobrego, coś oryginalnego.” (Weronika)
- 5 „pomimo tego, że prezes jest kontrowersyjną postacią i lubi wywołać chaos, zamieszanie, to jednak ludzie za nim idą. To on od 30 czy nawet więcej lat tworzy ideę konserwatywno liberalną w Polsce. To on sprawił że w ogóle w Polsce została rozpowszechniona idea wolnościowa. I to on jest jednak twarzą i takim filarem tworzącym... Czy to Kongres Prawicy wtedy czy to później partii Wolność Korwin.” (Magdalena)
- 6 „Ale to nie wiedzieliśmy za bardzo na jaką partię, ale wiedzieliśmy że nasze wartości narodowe są nam bliskie, że nie lubimy socjalizmu i interwencjonizmu i po prostu to wiedzieliśmy, że to nie jest dobry kierunek. Na razie nie wiedzieliśmy dlaczego ale tak po prostu w takim środowisku byliśmy od starszych czy coś w tym stylu też, że tam się oglądało tego Korwina właśnie w internecie też. Po prostu czuliśmy, że ma rację, tak?” (Maciej)
- 7 „No, i od tamtej pory zaczęłam się bardziej identyfikować, bo jak już zdjęcie zrobiłem dalej, no to bardziej się zacząłem tym interesować. I tak doszedłem do wniosku, że rzeczywiście te poglądy są właściwe.” (Patryk)
- 8 „nie jest tajemnicą, że Platforma Obywatelska ma większe, ma bardziej interesy z Niemcami prowadzone, bo to co do nich jeżdżą do ambasady niemieckiej tak jakimiś wytycznymi, tak, dosłownie. PiS jeździ do Izraela” (Dominik)
- 9 „rzeczywiście oni mówią mniej więcej to samo, tylko że PiS bardziej uderza w elektorat katolicki a PO bardziej w taki świecki elektorat, i tym się w zasadzie różni” (Antoni)
- 10 „chciało mi się iść na marsze, bo fajnie być Polakiem, chciałem pokazać się, że, że kocham ojczyznę, że chcę świętować to święto, prawda?” (Adam)
- 11 „To dla mnie było... to gdzie jest to miejsce gdzie mogłem świętować, po prostu świętować, po prostu świętować, wziąć flagę pokrzyzczeć, pomanifestować, pomachać flagą, przejść, pokazać ludziom, co jest dla mnie ważne, nie, że flaga biało-czerwona, kraj...” (Adam)
- 12 nie byli tacy bardzo propolscy, tylko odpuszczali nasze propolskie idee na rzecz... na rzecz Unii... Unii Europejskiej tylko, tak, czyli kosmo-, kosmopolityzm, to wielkie słowo kosmopolityzm, rozumiesz, ten co tylko co bardziej bardziej światowo niż... niż narodowo, tak, kosmopolita, czy jakoś tak, nie, no to... to... to myśmy chcieli pokazać swoją polskość, przywiązanie do Polski i suwerenność Polski, tak. Za PO faktycznie było wesoło. Był taki marsz kiedy można było powiedzieć tak PiS PO jedno zło i tak dalej można było swoje postulaty pokazać, to był jedyny marsz antysystemowców, [...] ja się identyfikowałem, bo o to chodziło i pokazać władzy, że źle robi, a kiedy... kiedy nie lepiej jak... jak... jak *Independence* czyli Dzień Niepodległości.” (Dominik)
- 13 „w trzecim roku, ja stwierdziłem, no kurde, no koniec, koniec tego słuchania, coś trzeba zrobić, więc jeśli chodzi o przeżycie i postanowiłem zaangażować się” (Adam)
- 14 „Narodowcy po prostu mi się podobały, to jakby, że się sprzeciwiają rządowi tak na tych marszach, że po prostu się z nimi solidaryzowałem bo wiadomo byli tam brutalnie tłumieni na tych Marszach Niepodległości, po prostu... no wiadomo jak komuś się dzieje krzywdę, to łatwiej i łatwiej go jakby popierać” (Maciej)
- 15 „I to było takie uderzające, że rzeczywiście takie było wrażenie, że prawica jest prześladowana w kraju, patrioci są prześladowani przez rząd” (Antoni)
- 16 „Szukałem ruchu patriotycznego w duchu miłości do narodu, miłości do ojczyzny, kultywowania naszej historii, tradycji, kultury w duchu również wartości chrześcijańskich, katolickich” (Marcin)

- 17 „po urodzeniu drugiego to już tak mówię: ‘to są te dzieci trzeba dla nich walczyć o lepszą Polskę po prostu tak że to co się dzieje to to to nie jest to co nas zadowala i po prostu już mamy teraz dla kogo walczyć’.” (Natalia)
- 18 „chodзіłam do liceum i nagle jak moja klasa dowiedziała się że startuję z listy Kongresu Nowej Prawicy, gdzie liderem jest Janusz Korwin-Mikke, to straciłam wszystkie koleżanki, wszystkie koleżanki... Koledzy się ze mną trzymali, mówili że fajnie, kibicowali mi, z kolei koleżanki nawet ode mnie odsiadły z ławki. To był taki trend, że dziewczyny lubią się nazywać feministkami.” (Magdalena)
- 19 „Hlavně to byla... shůry prostě požehnaný“ (Miloš)
- 20 „A to, co bylo předtím, s tím už se žít nedalo.“ (Josef)
- 21 „obyčejná rozkrádačka“ (Josef)
- 22 „To bylo hrozny, jako, no, začlo to privatizací a už to bylo podvod na podvod, všechno.“ (Monika)
- 23 „ty lidi všeobecně, prostě se cítili uvězněný v něčem v nějakém systému a ono ve finále zjistí, že se dneska žije ještě hůř než tenkrát, jo?“ (Jana)
- 24 „Ale řekni mi, co je teď Česká republika, která byla i za komunistů strojírenská velmoc, textilní velmoc, potravinová velmoc, soběstačná. Dneska? Dneska není nic z fabriky. Vždyť se tady podívej po [...]. Tady je takovejch rozbouřených fabrik.“ (Václav)
- 25 „Tak já ti řeknu takhle... v podstatě... dneska každý říká, jak Československo za komunistů v podstatě trpělo, nebo netrpělo... a co bylo? Když to vezmu zpětně... Byly tam politický přehmaty, bylo tam, jako, byla ta nesvoboda, ale vybudovali spoustu věcí. Po převratu se ta spousta věcí v podstatě rozkradla, nevybudovalo se vůbec nic. Já si neumím, jako, neumím představit, že by se dneska stavily, dělaly projekty jako tenkrát. A byla zde jak kdyby taková nostalgie nebo snaha, aby opravdu politika sloužila lidem, aby opravdu si dělali projekty pro lidi. A je to tak. Nebo jak bylo vidět, tak se jen dělaly a dnes to slouží opět zájmům, skupinám vlastně finančníků.“ (Jaroslav)
- 26 „A teď se vrátím zpět do doby totality, kdy moje mamina a nebo moje rodiče měli v podstatě všechno.“ (Petr)
- 27 „A když, tak to už jste musel být na na hranici úmrtí z hladu, aby vám něco někdo přidal.“ (Petr)
- 28 „Byla zajímavá strana Miroslava Sládka. Republikáni byla pro mě zajímavá, tam mě oslovila“ (Petr)
- 29 „Jak byl takový ty první volby, tak jsme jenom tak ze srandy volili Sládka, jo, toho Republikána. No a já říkám to nám bylo 19, to jsme to spíš jako brali, že se nám líbilo, že v tý sněmovně dělá neplechu, ne?“ (Jan)
- 30 „To bylo na střídačku s komunisty, protože si říkám jako dyť oni to byli kouzelníci, ty komunisti, protože jak říkám, nebyly žádný dluhy, všichni byli, všichni pracovali, všichni museli pracovat.“ (Monika)
- 31 „Takže když se vrátím k otázce, tak vstoupil jsem do ANO, když jsem si opravdu myslel, že se to tam někam pohne a něco to udělá s korupcí.“ (Jaroslav)
- 32 „A asi jsem si myslel, že je to konečně někdo, kdo by mohl něco změnit, protože lidi z mého okolí tam vstoupili, začli se angažovat a oslovili mě“ (Milan)
- 33 „všechny tyhle ty polistopadový strany, který jako prostě ty lidi tady tahali za nos“ (Josef)
- 34 „Proto něco, tak já jsem to volil proto, že jsem chtěl, aby hlavní byla změna v tom státě s těma, s těma cikánama, aby prostě někdo prostě přestal jim vyplácet dávky. Tady se kolem nich dělo takový věci, že, že člověku jako zůstával rozum stát, že jo.“ (Václav)
- 35 „že se nedokážou vcítit do normálního člověka, do obyčejného pracujícího člověka“ (Václav)
- 36 „poznal jsem, že to jsou takový přímí, rovní chlapi, a co je pro mě důležitý, že jsou to vlastenci.“ (Václav)
- 37 „Mě Tomio Okamura velmi oslovil na té schůzce. Samozřejmě, byl to výrazný strach z toho exodu těch nelegálních migrantů, pak vlastně mi se strašně líbila ta švýcarská demokracie, jinak řečeno ta přímá demokracie“ (Zdeněk)
- 38 „přečet sem si těch deset bodů, že jo, programových, jo? A říkám si hele, to jako kdybych napsal já ne, já jsem na to kliknul, odkázal mi to na webový stránky, já jsem asi dvě hodiny jsem to pročítal všechno. No a někdy ve čtvrt na dvě ráno jsem podával přihlášku.“ (Jan)
- 39 „Mám holku devítiletou, kluka třináctiletého, a já nechci, aby vyrůstali... nebo potom dospělý život strávili v něčem, v čem jsem do těch šestnácti let žil já. Já to prostě nechci. Takže jsem si říkal, já se prostě... a jak člověk může ovlivnit to dění ve státě? No, jedine přes tu politiku“ (Miloš)

- 40 „už jsem vzteky neviděla ohledně Evropský unie a cikánů“ (Monika)
- 41 „já jsem si jako zjišťovala, že tam chodí jako takoví, jako normální běžní lidi, že tam nejsou jenom prostě fakt, jako prostě lidi, který jsou nějaký něčím fanatizovaný, jak se říkalo vo všech těch členech, jako je SPD, nebo že prostě jim nejde jenom o ty migranty, ne, protože fak jako jsou to hodní, přátelští lidi, kterej chtěou něco změnit, no tak asi tak.“ (Tereza)
- 42 „Já si myslím že nic lepšího než Evropská unie nikdy nebylo.“ (Jiří)
- 43 „prowadząc gospodarstwo, to naprawimy za dwa miesiące (...) Natomiast, jak się demoralizują ludzie, tak to jest problem naprawdę na dwa pokolenia, i to jest podstawowa sprawa.”
- 44 „Příklad to co obserwowaliśmy z tymi strajkami kobiet, to tam bylo zvrócenie uwagi tylko, že dziecko to jest ciężar, že dziecko to jest wręcz jakis pasożyt a w ogóle tak społecznie nie patrzy się na to jako dar” (Antoni)
- 45 „Europa Zachodnia przez to że zniszczyła wartości, na których była oparta, umiera” (Dominik)
- 46 „Płonąca #NotreDame to symbol gasnącej Europy. Europy rosnących gej-barów i meczetów oraz burzonych pomników i kościołów. Europy bogatej pieniędzmi ale ubogiej wiarą, zdrową rodziną, patriotyzmem i poczuciem narodowym.”
- 47 „mamy do czynienia właśnie z takim, że próbuje się nam narzucać jakieś różne schematy normalności, trochę, trochę w kontrze do tego, co gdzieś zostało wywalczone, bo przez ileś tysięcy lat nasi przodkowie walczyli o to, żeby był taki ład społeczny a nie inny.” (Patrycja)
- 48 „Ich celem jest rozwalenie społeczeństwa. Trzeba rozwalić normalne społeczeństwo. Normalne społeczeństwo, tym jest normalna rodzina, w której dziecko ma tatę, ma mamę, prawda, i to trzeba zniszczyć.”
- 49 „oni już i z butami wchodzą do naszych domów i oni chcą edukować nasze dzieci.” (Natalia)
- 50 „Dość tęczowego ucisku!”
- 51 „to jest dla mnie utrudnienie prywatnie, jeżeli cała kultura wszędzie próbuje wmusić kobietom, że posiadanie rodziny jest złe... że to jest dla nich zniewolenie.” (Piotr)
- 52 „mężczyźni mają tam też coraz więcej problemów, bo jakby wychodzą z... mają taką potrzebę właśnie naturalnego realizowania, tworzenia rodziny” (Antoni)
- 53 „ciężko jest znaleźć właśnie taką dobrą kobietę, która by była dobrą matką, która by się nadawała na kandydatkę na żonę.” (Antoni)
- 54 w momencie kiedy mamy państwo opiekuńcze, państwo które chce wychowywać na przykład dzieci za nas zamiast rodziców przejmować coraz więcej funkcji rodziców. Wtedy ludzie nie czują, że ta rodzina jest im potrzebna. [00:51:01] Natomiast tradycyjnie właśnie podejmowana rodzina może funkcjonować dobrze wtedy, kiedy, kiedy to państwo w nią nie ingeruje, tak? Kiedy rodzina może swobodnie funkcjonować, swobodnie wychowywać swoje dzieci, realizować swoje cele, i też wtedy, wtedy ludzie rzeczywiście czują, że mogą realizować się poprzez rodzinę.” (Paweł)
- 55 „Wydaje mi się, że to też dlatego lewica bardzo nie lubi rozmawiania o tradycyjnej rodzinie, bo doskonale zdaje sobie sprawę z tego, że nośnikiem cywilizacyjnym... nośnikiem wartości cywilizacji, której nie za bardzo lubią, można powiedzieć w ich mniemaniu konserwatyzmu, są właśnie te instytucje, edukacja, Kościół i rodzina przede wszystkim. [...] To są próby po prostu przerwania tego łańcucha przekazywania wartości z pokolenia na pokolenie.” (Damian)
- 56 „my widzimy rolę kobiety tradycyjnie, taką jaka była od zarania dziejów, że kobieta była w domu, wychowywała dzieci a to mężczyzna pracował i powinien i utrzymywał rodzinę.” (Mateusz)
- 57 „tutaj widać ten duży szacunek, tutaj bardzo często w zwykłych rozmowach wychodzi to, że mężczyźni są głową rodziny, że powinni brać w jakimś stopniu odpowiedzialność za swoje kobiety.” (Magdalena)
- 58 „uważam, jako konserwatysta, że różni ludzie nadają się do różnych rzeczy lepiej. I oprócz tego zdaję sobie sprawę z tego, że jeżeli moja żona urodzi kiedyś dziecko, no, to tak jakby fizycznie ona będzie się nim zajmować bardziej, bo ona będzie je karmić piersią, tak?” (Piotr)
- 59 „pewnych rzeczy biologicznie nie przeskoczymy jak chociażby tego, że kobieta musi urodzić dziecko, mężczyzna tego nie robi, więc...” (Patrycja)

- 60 „Gdybyśmy wycofali dotacje rządowe, samorządowe i unijne dla organizacji promujących ideologie homoseksualne, to one by padły. Nikt normalny nie płaci na takie organizacje, one są niepotrzebne zwykłym ludziom.”
- 61 „Etyka chrześcijańska podstawą ładu prawnego”
- 62 „Zasady prawa rzymskiego, wywodzące się z filozofii klasycznej prawo naturalne, etyka chrześcijańska oraz oryginalna polska tradycja ideowa i prawna tworzą cywilizacyjny fundament dla tworzenia norm prawnych. Oparcie prawa, instytucji i kultury nowego porządku na tych wartościach pozwoli usunąć najgorsze cechy obecnego nieładu: niestabilność prawa, niepewność co do kierunku jego ewolucji oraz konflikty ideologiczne rozsadzające niemal każdy obszar życia państwa i społeczeństwa.”
- 63 „Każdy musi umieć zatroszczyć się o siebie i każda osoba zdolna do pracy powinna pracować”
- 64 „Brutalna prawda jest taka, że trzeba było się uczyć, pracować i oszczędzać. Nauczylibyście się malować ściany, spawać, prowadzić TIRa, to byście z rodzicami nie mieszkali. Niestety, zamiast pracować, wolicie zabierać tym, którym chciało się brać odpowiedzialność za własne życie.”
- 65 „Każdy jest kowalem własnego losu”
- 66 „to jest przywrócenie normalności, to jest przywrócenie godności, przywrócenie godności, godność to jest to, żeby móc za własne, za własną pracę po prostu utrzymać siebie, utrzymać swoją rodzinę.” (Kacper)
- 67 „my wymieramy, a założmy, hindusi czy tam muzułmanie Arabowie czy Afrykańczycy się mnożą i po prostu jak z siłą rzeczy po prostu zdominują, tak, jak nie będziemy, nie będziemy mieć dzieci...” (Maciej)
- 68 „w tym wyścigu demograficznym jednak Polacy nie mają szans z muzułmanami, bo nie ma u nas takiej kultury, żeby mieć wiele żon i po ośmioro dzieci” (Patrik)
- 69 „rządzić muszą mężczyźni, a kobiety muszą ich słuchać. I jest to, oczywiście, w interesie kobiet – jeśli nie chcą skończyć w haremach.”
- 70 „jak nic nie zrobimy, to za 20 lat nasze matki i córki skończą w haremach”
- 71 „Jeżeli zarabiasz a nie przyjeżdżasz po to żeby korzystać powiedzmy z moich moich państwowych systemów socjalnych, to wszystko jest w porządku, super.” (Patrycja)
- 72 „Absurdalna polityka powoduje zalew Europy śmieciem ludzkim, który nie chce pracować. Niszczymy Europę! To polityka upadku Europy!”
- 73 „fundamentem stabilności państwa, gwarancją bezpieczeństwa Polaków, jak też najważniejszą przewagą konkurencyjną naszego kraju.”
- 74 „dezintegracja kulturowa społeczeństw i osłabienie pozycji własnego narodu we własnym państwie”
- 75 „z jakiegoś dzikiego kraju ze środka Afryki albo środka Azji”, „z krajów obcych kulturowo”
- 76 „Zastávámé názor, že jedna z prioritních investic musí směřovat na podporu pracujících rodin s dětmi, nebat' není jiná záruka budoucnosti naší vlasti než děti z českých rodin, které vedou rodiče svou výchovou k národní hrdosti, ke kladnému vztahu ke vzdělání a práci a k úctě ke starším osobám. Nechceme, aby rodiče vychovávali děti podle příruček EU a potlačovali u nich jejich mužské a ženské role, ale rozvíjeli jejich zdravý úsudek.“
- 77 „Kdokoliv si stěžuje na to, že je mu z nějakých rasových důvodů ubližováno, všem menšinám, které si stěžují, že jsou odstrkovány, radím jednoduchou věc – začněte ze všech sil pracovat.“
- 78 „Fuj, je tam plno cikánů!“ (Jana)
- 79 „Peníze slušným. Ne parazitům“
- 80 „Je pro nás nepřijatelné dále tolerovat systém, kde vzniká vrstva lidí, kteří již nemají zájem pracovat, neznají slova jako povinnost a odpovědnost a terorizují své okolí kriminalitou. Na druhé straně tento systém šikanuje a ponižuje řádné občany, kteří se ocitli v nouzi. Jsme proti pozitivní diskriminaci. Zjednodušíme systém a zavedeme strop pro výši sociální podpory pro občany, kteří nežijí řádným životem. Podpora nesmí umožnit lenochům žít lépe než lidem, kteří pracují. Podporu zaslouží pouze ti, kteří vedou řádný život a řádně vychovávají děti.“
- 81 „Můj názor na náš současný systém výplat sociálních dávek: Matky, které by jinak děti neměly, rodí stále dokola a berou děti jako výdělečný byznys, přičemž nejvíce rodí matky s nízkým intelektem, bez pracovních návyků a

- privádí na svět a vychovávají další generaci parazitů. Náš sociální systém cíleně vychovává z lidí lenochy a podvodníky a učí je parazitovat na systému.“
- 82 „Bohužel i tam ten sociální systém nahrává tomu, že oni v podstatě do-, dohání tu naši demografickou křivku, protože oni opravdu nemají problém, jak měli osm deset dětí, z toho dvě - tři postiženy, protože za to je víc peněz. Takže pro ně se děti staly v podstatě výrobním prostředkem. Jo, a nicméně výrobním prostředkem, který dál netvoří žádný hodnoty. Oni nikdy do práce nechodili, oni nic nedělají, nebo většina z nich.“ (Jaroslav)
- 83 „Tady se za posledních dvacet let událo jedna věc a to, že se přestala podporovat porodnost normálních lidí, jakože Čechů, a začal se podporovat porodnost menšin.“ (Pavel)
- 84 „No, vidím to špatně, protože podpora rodin bílejších neexistuje pomalu. A akorát tihle, těch prostě nemakačenků, těch cikánů, no.“ (Monika)
- 85 „Nic neumí, budou jen zevlovat a znásilňovat naše ženy“
- 86 „Prostě chovaj se slušně, pracujou tady. Jo a pohoda, jo? No, ale prostě to. A příručku jak mlátit ženu, to jako opravdu čist nechci, jo?“ (Jan)
- 87 „potom po nějaký době, když neuspějou v společnosti, což vzhledem k nižšímu intelektu anebo anebo k tomu, že, že nejsou schopni být tak výkonní jako Evropané, to drobný genetický rozdíl. Prostě Evropani jsou pracovitější. Tak, tak vlastně se zpátky vrací ke kořenům, k tomu islámu.“ (Michal)
- 88 „Už ani halíř Ukrajincům! Nula! Peníze českým občanům“
- 89 „Podporujeme tradiční hodnoty naší společnosti a považujeme fungující rodinu za její podstatu. Rodina zasluhuje ochranu a podporu. Za základ rodiny považujeme tradiční svazek muže a ženy. Odmítáme propagaci a podporu názorů a chování, které ohrožují fungování rodin a výchovu dětí v rodině.“
- 90 „Peníze pracujícím rodinám a důchodcům. Ne imigrantům, ne parazitům.“
- 91 „Myslíme si, že se vyplatí investovat do českých pracujících rodin než do imigrantů. Rodina je základ státu a je potřeba obnovit i její ekonomickou funkci, kterou měla v minulosti. Bez toho jako národ zanikneme a ekonomicky zkrachujeme.“
- 92 „Kvůli Fialově vládě český národ vymírá“
- 93 „Istanbulská úmluva zavádí do právního řádu ideologické mýty a snahy neomarxistů. Jde o genderismus a snahu ovládnout fungování rodiny. Rodinu vystavuje kontrole neziskových organizací, které mají neomarxistické postuláty naplňovat a kontrolovat. Jednostranná absolutizace některých mýtů o násilí mužů nebo absolutizace práv dětí nad rodiči je faktickým pokusem rozbít rodinu a její přirozený řád. V souvislosti s Istanbulskou úmluvou hnutí SPD podporuje odmítavé stanovisko českých biskupů. Jde o zálučný útok na rodinu a křesťanské hodnoty. Otevírá cestu udavačství, ničení rodin, ideologickému cenzurování výchovy a odebrání dětí. Jde o cestu k neomarxistické totalitě.“
- 94 „Je to genocida rodiny, genocida dětí, mužů i žen, otců i matek. Kdo souhlasí s ratifikací, souhlasí s genocidou svého národa.“
- 95 „To budeme ve jménu genderové ideologie "znásilňovat" i děti?“
- 96 „Jsme pro rovnost mužů a žen před zákonem, ale odmítáme sociální inženýrství a genderový neomarxismus!“
- 97 „Nevím, jak Vy, ale já si myslím, že existují jen dvě pohlaví – muž a žena. 😊 Žádné jiné jsem nikdy neviděl 😊 A myslí si to podle mě i normální lidé se zdravým selským rozumem. Normální rodina je táta a máma, a ne rodič A a rodič B, jak vnucují neomarxisti. A s panenkami si hrají holčičky, ne kluci. Hnutí SPD brání normální svět pro normální lidi. Braňte ho spolu s námi! 😊“
- 98 „Evropská unie jasně prokázala, že podporuje sluníčkářskou gender homosexualistickou ideologii“
- 99 „Hnutí SPD brání tradiční hodnoty a normální svět pro normální lidi a jasně vystupuje proti totalitní politické korektnosti, multikulturalismu, zvrácené teorii genderu, pozitivní diskriminaci či propagaci ideologie homosexuality, která pro homosexuály vyžaduje privilegia a adoraci. Uděláme vše pro to, aby se podobné zvrácenosti jako na „liberálně-demokratickém“ Západě neděly i u nás. Braňte prosím normální svět s námi.“
- 100 „já stále tvrdím, že základem státu je rodina a rodinu tvoří muž a žena. Žádnejch 60 jinejch pohlaví. Tato rodina vychovává děti. Vždyť kluk je kluk, holčička je holčička. Věnují se jím. Vychovávají zdraví, chodí do práce, platí daně. No, bohužel dneska se to stává pomalu minoritní, protože už je... ten, kdo nepracuje, se má líp než ten, kdo

- pracuje. A to... a to není jenom otázka České republiky, si myslím, to je i jinde. Formát tradiční rodiny se rozbíjí napříč Evropou.“ (Jaroslav)
- 101 „mně to připadá tak, že se nám snaží vysvětlit, že že tato menšina prostě jakoby měla najednou víc víc jak ta většina, já, já jim nechci ubírat žádný právo.“ (Zdeněk)
- 102 „já proti tomu nic nemám, když si pár takhle adoptuje. Já s tímhle nic jako nemám, takovejhle problém s tímhle normálníma lidma nemám, ale aby je, aby vymysleli, já nevím, 190 pohlaví, to je nesmysl, přece.“ (Monika)
- 103 „Je to prostě, to je ta zrůdnost, kdy mám prostě pocit, že ten svět šílí, jako. To je právě ta totální likvidace těch původních jako kulturních hodnot tohoto základu toho normálního světa.“ (Miloš)
- 104 „Ruszamy do walki o #WolnościNiepodległość!“, „Za naszymi postami stoi prawdziwa armia Polaków!“, „11 rewolwerowców“
- 105 „Uwielbiam odważnych mężczyzn“, „Prowadzę firmę w Polsce“
- 106 „Propaganda LGBT idzie na całego. Poza zniszczeniem młodzieży, poprzez redukcję pożytecznego oporu przed eksperymentami homoseksualnymi i rozmywanie moralnego potępienia takich zachowań, prowadzi to też do uderzenia w zdrową męską przyjaźń przez budowanie homoseksualnych skojarzeń.“
- 107 „To proste: Jesteśmy jedyną męską partią w Polsce.“
- 108 „popierają nas kobiety, które cenią sobie męski styl uprawiania polityki – niezastąpiony zwłaszcza w niepewnych czasach“
- 109 „Męski znaczy: - zdecydowany - agresywny - nie bojący się ryzyka - decyzyjny - wyrazisty i (w wielu sprawach) bezkompromisowy“
- 110 „Nie przegapcie tego 🇵🇱 Dr Sławomir Mentzen dał merytoryczny popis w TVP i całkowicie zdominował debatę!“
- 111 „Nie możecie tego przegapić 🇵🇱 Takiego merytorycznego nokautu lewicy, jakiego dokonał nasz przewodniczący Jakub Kulesza #NowePokolenie, nie było dawno.“
- 112 „Z jednej strony spokój, opanowanie i rzeczowe argumenty naszego posła, a z drugiej nerwy, ataki i brak wiedzy u pani poseł Wandy Nowickiej.“
- 113 „My absolutnie stosujemy styl męski czyli pragmatyzm, zimne myślenie, nie granie na emocjach i merytoryczna dyskusja z przeciwnikiem, wystawianie jednak na gospodarkę, na sprawy konserwatywne.“ (Łukasz)
- 114 „To jest banda jakichś zwyrodniałych dziewczyn“ (Elżbieta)
- 115 „Braun ma dużo odwagi osobistej“ (Elżbieta)
- 116 „Kobieta chce bezpieczeństwa, chce po prostu być prowadzona a mężczyzna chce prowadzić, chce skierować, chce wolności“ (Antoni)
- 117 „To jest wasze pole. Po pierwsze tak natura nas stworzyła, uważam że macie więcej do wzniesienia i poza tym macie więcej do stracenia. Bo my kobiety jednak z racji tego że jesteśmy kobietami. Te które założyły rodzinę mają ognisko domowe, my musimy pilnować jednak rodziny. Aby mężczyźni się bardziej narażacie... to wy się narażacie. To wy idziecie na wojnę, to wy oddajecie życie za ojczyznę. Oddajecie życie za żony i oddajecie życie za, za swoje dzieci. Teraz to się zmieniło, ale uważam że wy macie więcej do stracenia.“ (Elżbieta)
- 118 „To on to robi jako poseł a my mu po prostu podrzucamy tematy więc to nie jest tak że my musimy być w Sejmie żeby coś zrobić. My możemy sobie działać i jakby kolegom przekazywać tematy które są do zrobienia.“ (Natalia)
- 119 „To że tak powiem nam się nie należą ty jedynki. Za mało zrobiłyśmy za mało się udzielamy za krótko działamy po prostu tak? Więc jak sobie wypracuje któraś kobieta taką pozycję żeby mogła być tą jedynką no to wtedy automatycznie będzie, ale to nie jest tak, że my teraz z tytułu właśnie tego że jestem kobietą to wygrywam kolegę bo jednak oni działają dłużej to dlaczego tak ma być tak. Więc i też nie wiem czy któraś z kobiet ma parcie na takie jedynki po prostu.“ (Natalia)
- 120 „Ja nie zostałam [nazywa funkcję] BO jestem kobietą. Eee... tylko dlatego, że coś tam mam...umiem robić.“ (Patrycja)
- 121 „Nieraz na spotkaniu są dwie dziewczyny trzy nieraz jedna no to tam w zależności no i wiadomo że chłopaki jak gadają to oni są tacy donośniejsi, wiadomo...euh... łatwiej im się przebić i tak dalej.“ (Natalia)

- 122 „A w skład tej drużyny wchodzi także wiele środowisk społecznych, grup zawodowych, grup obywatelskich, tych wszystkich którzy są na naszych listach i jako pierwsze zapraszamy kandydatki i działaczki Konfederacji.”
- 123 „My nie potrzebujemy ideologicznego dyskryminującego parytetu. My potrzebujemy ekspertów również takich ekspertów chcemy wprowadzić do tego Sejmu.”
- 124 „Wicemiss świata, Roksana Oraniec, kandydatka Konfederacji w okręgu świętokrzyskim. Dzięki Konfederacji Polska może być naprawdę piękna! :)”
- 125 „A tu ładniejsza strona polityki i ładniejsza strona Konfederacji.
Mamy na listach wicemiss świata :-)
I kto jest debeściakiem?”
- 126 „A tu program – dzięki pięknemu zdjęciu może się przebić.”
- 127 ➡ "Konfederacja nie dla kobiet" - takie nagłówki krążą w mediach. Dziewczyny, mamy 4 lata, aby to zmienić! Kandydatki Konfederacji to wyjątkowe kobiety o poglądach wolnościowych i konserwatywnych. Nie dajmy się zakrzyczeć feministkom, które pod płaszczykiem "walki o prawa kobiet" chcą zabierać naszym rodzinom ciężko wypracowane pieniądze czy ograniczać nasze prawa do wychowania dzieci zgodnie z własnymi przekonaniami - jakiegokolwiek by one nie były. ➡ Nie udało mi się dostać do Sejmu RP, ale udało się to zrobić fantastycznej "jedenastce" kandydatów. Już dzisiaj zaczynam starania o to, aby jako Konfederacja głośno poruszyć temat REALNEGO polepszenia standardów opieki okołoporodowej. To jest jeden z aspektów prawdziwej polityki PROrodzinnej i praw kobiet do godnego porodu, który rządy PO-PiS-PSL-SLD jednym głosem od 30 lat ignorują! Działamy 🤝 Klaudia Domagała #KonfederacjaDlaKobiet #Konfederatki" (15/10/2019)
- 128 „OD KOBIET - DLA KOBIET! Bądźmy wolne! Fundacja Kobiety Wolności i Niepodległości powstała z myślą o wszystkich kobietach, które potrzebują wsparcia na wielu płaszczyznach swojego życia.”
- 129 „Opieka okołoporodowa
Opieka wytnieniowa dla mam
Bądź niezależna - rozwój osobisty
Profilaktyka zdrowotna dla samotnych matek
Lepsza opieka medyczna dla kobiet!”
- 130 „Dla Pań, które chcą realizować się w pracy zawodowej”
- 131 „No fajnie to poszło jakby moim wtedy tematem przewodnim była konfederacja dla kobiet tak jakby to właśnie na etapie kampanii wymyśliła. Bo jednak jestem kobietą jakby to macierzyństwo to jest coś takiego co mnie bardzo interesuje. Więc jakby chciałam się skupić na tych kobietach też też jest tak że jakby tymi kobietami tak. Tak się mówi że zajmują się jakby lewicowe partie ale one jakby w tym takim innym aspekcie bo one tutaj walczą o prawa kobiet czyli o prawa do aborcji o równouprawnienie. No a my tutaj jakby na prawicy troszkę od innej strony to jakby podchodzimy do tego tak że dla nas prawa kobiet to jest prawo też do urodzenia każdej kobiety tak więc tutaj walczymy o ochronę życia ale też jakby będąc mamą też miałam do czynienia z tą opieką okołoporodową która u nas w Polsce kuleje.”
- 132 „Wypierdalać”, „Jebać PiS”
- 133 „Tak to już nie była sama konwencja polityczna stricte tylko od razu jakbyś czymś na dla rodzin po prostu dla dzieci tak. No bo to jednak też też przełamuje taki stereotyp że właśnie to jest taka bardzo męska partia jakby tylko mężczyźni się w nią angażują. Tylko pokazuje, że my jesteśmy właśnie dla rodzin po prostu tak otwarci.” (Natalia)
- 134 „ludzi obcych nam kulturowo, którzy zagrażają bezpieczeństwu KOBIET!”; „którzy stają w naszej obronie”
- 135 „ile dziewczynek musi zostać zgwałconych, ile kobiet musi zostać zgwałconych, zabitych”
- 136 „Wiesz, że jestem waleczna, wiesz, że jestem bezkompromisowa w kwestiach interesu państwa. Wiesz, że nie daję sobie „w kaszę dmuchać” i mówię jak jest.”
- 137 „Jestem mamą dwuletniej Marysi i dwunastoletniego Leona i, szanowni państwo, obiecuję, że dla moich dzieci i dla wszystkich dzieci, a także ich mam, babć, siostr, przyjaciółek, będziemy walczyć o to, by w Polsce było bezpiecznie. Nie wyobrażam sobie, by jacyś pigmento-dodatni książęta orientu czy królowie buszu zostali wysłani

do Polski i tutaj w Polsce tworzyli swoje strefy no-go zones, byli utrzymywani z naszych podatków, napadali, gwałcili, i okradali nasze kobiety.”

138 „Jako mama dwójki dzieci i jako kobieta, chcę, by kobiety z dziećmi były bezpieczne w Europie!”

139 „Zwracam się do pani jak kobieta do kobiety, jak matka do matki. Jak pani nie wstyd promować coś takiego jak Pakt Migracyjny, który prowadzi do tego, że miliony kobiet i dzieci w Europie czują się zagrożone na ulicach swoich własnych miast? Odpowiada pani za każdy gwałt, za każdą napaść, za każdą tragedię spowodowaną napływem nielegalnych imigrantów.”

140 „Pokazujemy, że prowadzimy życie rodzinne i jesteśmy fantastycznymi mamami, a jednocześnie potrafimy drapieżnie i aktywnie działać”

141 „Pani minister @Ula_Zielinska puszcza emocje. Nie nadaje się na polityka.”

142 „Tak się rozmawia z blondynką”

143 „Za lidi férově hrát

Chránit svůj národ svůj stát“

144 „Dříve se mně tady, v České republice, lidé vysmívali, teď už nikoliv.“

145 „Považoval bych za absolutní vlastní selhání, kdybych nebyl jako muž sám schopný ekonomicky zajistit rodinu.“

146 „Kdokoliv si stěžuje na to, že je mu z nějakých rasových důvodů ubližováno, všem menšinám, které si stěžují, že jsou odstrkované, radím jednoduchou věc – začněte ze všech sil pracovat.“

147 „Lidé vidí, že za posledních dvacet let je republika úplně rozkradená, zloději se nám smějí do obličeje zleva i zprava. Běhají tady víceméně volně a normálním lidem se pouze zvyšují daně a věk odchodu do důchodu. A do toho nám politici pořád tvrdí, že nejsou na nic peníze. Klíčem k tomu, aby se nám žilo lépe, je zastavit rozkrádání našeho státu.“

148 „Billboardy nechme politikům.“

149 „o dětství v dětském domově, šikaně, koktání, začátcích jako popelář a pak jako prodáváč popcornu a coly v kině, o začátcích podnikání v 21 letech, o rodině...“

150 „Já bych byl rád abychom třeba nemluvili tolik o mně, ale pojd’me třeba mluvit o řešení problémů běžných občanů v České republice, to je to, co mě palí.“

151 „Podpora rodinám NE nepřizpůsobivým. Práci našim NE imigrantům“

152 „Právě jsem mezi lidmi v Kutné hoře na Sedlecké pouti, diskutujeme a opravdu moc děkuji mnoha lidem za otevřenou podporu SPD, je tady tisíce lidí, skvělá atmosféra a nabral jsem spoustu konkrétních podnětů, s jejichž řešením budeme pomáhat.“

153 „Nehledě na volby chodím celoročně nabírat podněty mezi lidmi, abych měl neustále přímou zpětnou vazbu.“

154 „Ne, tady kolega je naším voličem. (...) To je táta od rodiny.“

155 „Říkal, že mám nejvyšší hladinu testosteronu, která je ještě zdravá.“

156 „Žena je pro mě stvoření, o které bychom měli pečovat, chránit a pomáhat mu.“

157 „Jsem rád mužem a mám rád ženy, které jsou ženami. Mám rád vše, co nás spojuje. A odmítám genderfašismus.“

158 „Ženy miluju [...] A říkám a přeji si upřímně, ať ženy zůstanou i do budoucna ženami se vším, co k tomu patří, protože ženskost je to, co my muži na světě milujeme nejvíc.“

159 „když to vezmu podle celé republiky, tak nás bude tisícovka. Pro navenek se říká, že je nás deset tisíc nebo víc, ale není to tak.“

160 „Ve straně stejně jako ve firmě nemá demokracie co dělat. Partaj je svým způsobem armáda.“

161 „strašně pracovitej člověk“

162 „teď má vadu na kráse a to je pan Fiala. To je taková šedá eminence, která zadržuje... upravuje skutečnosti a zadržuje... udělal takovou hradbu kolem Tomia, že se k němu nic nedostane.“

163 „Jo, ale třeba to heslo „Odvahe říkat pravdu“, když ji řeknu, tak mě zablokují.“

164 Not related to the scholar Hana Maříková previously cited.

165 „Tady Lucka je taková drobná slečna ale velká bojovnice“

166 „Teď třeba vidím tu paní [...] a ta tady jde daleko, protože bude mlčet a bude dělat, co se po ní chce, jo?“ (Jana)

167 „Právě proto, že jsem ženská a že že se nebojím ničeho, fakt, ne.“ (Jana)

168 „kamarád jako ten SPD'ak mi řekl ,Hele seš, vole, takovej chlap, tak v pohodě!“ (Jana)