

Passions of Representative Politics

ABSTRACT

In this presentation I will introduce a very preliminary draft of the text “Passions of Representative Politics”. My ambition is to sketch a first chapter of my book project “Struggles of the people: nationalism, populism and democracy in Scandinavian politics, 1928-2010”. The passions of representative politics refer to the delicate balancing between the functional needs of the system and the emotive appeals to the people. Recognising the passions of representative politics, I emphasise the struggles of the people as a basis for how politics is performed and communicated between the citizenry and the mediated elites; how the Pathos continuum between the acceptable normalcy and the pathological deviance is established differently in Sweden, Denmark and in Norway.

The book aims to explain the appearance and development of three nationalist parties, by means of scrutinizing and comparing changing perceptions of the people in these countries. The main thesis is that the nationalist parties (Dansk Folkeparti in Denmark, Sverigedemokraterna in Sweden and Fremskrittspartiet in Norway), by acting as the true heirs of Social Democracy – i.e. the proponents of the people – gain resonance for their politics. The ambition is, by way of extrapolation, to illuminate differences and similarities concerning the contemporary debate on national self images (and threat images), integration and migration in contemporary Scandinavian politics.

- Work in Progress -

Anders Hellström
Post Doc Researcher
MIM
Malmö University

PASSIONS OF REPRESENTATIVE POLITICS

On the 18th of January 1928 Per-Albin Hansson, at the time minister of defence, made a speech to the second chamber in the Swedish parliament (Riksdagen). Six months later he was elected leader of the Social Democratic Party at the party congress. After a few years, in 1932, Hansson became Sweden's Prime Minister and for 44 years – with the exception of a short period in 1936 – the Social Democratic party (S) was in governmental position. Why is it, then, that this particular speech made its way to the history books? In the speech Hansson, quite explicitly declares his formula for the emergent people's home. The people's home metaphor has since then been attributed to the Social Democratic vision of the Swedish national community and the emergent welfare state that, step by step, ideally transgress class barriers to include the whole population. In Per Albin Hansson's rhetoric the people's home vision is tantamount to the reformist socialism of his party. Intuitively, this does not have to be the case, the party was not internally coherent and the other political parties had reason to assert the people's home to be "their" invention. In turn, the people's home had different connotations in the neighbouring countries of Norway and Denmark to which we later will return.

In the 19th century, the construction of the Swedish nation presupposed a complete convergence between the king and the people equivalent to the relation between the head of the family and his bourgeois family (Hall 1998: 71). "The people" was the prime motor of the national project in the early 19th century, and between 1800 and 1820, terms such as folk-song, folk-tale and national soul were introduced to solidify the Swedish nation (ibid). In this period, the people's home metaphor was associated with the ideals of organic conservatism that attracted many conservative scholars at the time, such as the father of geo-politics Rudolf Kjellén (see further Lagergren 1999: chp. 5). In this trajectory, the people's home metaphor connoted to ideals of national cohesion, order and inherited hierarchies (Dahlstedt 2009: 119).¹

At the wake of the 20th century when the Social Democratic evolved into a potent political force, few could possibly imagine that a Social Democratic leader was to employ a metaphor, previously associated with organic conservatism and nationalist romanticism, to rhetorically frame his political agenda. Yet from 1932 and on the People's Home has been used as a mobilising metaphor for the Social Democratic political project to realising and administrating social reforms. According to the party historiography, the modern Sweden's success tale came about in 1932 when the (S) embarked with the project of transforming the "poverty Sweden into the Swedish people's home", as it was phrased in a national school book from the 1950s (Berg 1957). On the internal party arena, the metaphor was invoked to discipline the party organisation. In 1917 the party dissolved in two conflicting parts, the splinter branch established the Swedish communist party, and the remaining members synchronised around a reformist political agenda; a vibrant workers movement elevated to the government position (Möller 2007: 107).

In her dissertation on the Social Democratic Party historiography, Linderborg (2001: 392) suggests that the party's transformation in the 1920's implied a reassessment of the concept of the people; from the alienated working class to the working population and thus the citizens of the nation. Considering this development, invoking the people's home metaphor signalled a shift from class to people to which Per-Albin Hansson returns to in his

¹ The metaphor may as well connote to republican ideals of citizenship; i.e. we all share the same rights and obligations and show allegiance to a common set of civic virtues.

speech. Furthermore, this move corresponds to changing perceptions of Swedishness. According to Magnus Dahlstedt (2009: 118), the people's home vision adhered to democratic maturity, and paved the way for perceptions of a particular Swedish mentality that was considered particularly well-adjusted to autonomous governance. By way of illustration, Per Albin Hansson suggested the Swedish temperament to be tailored to the Social Democratic reformist socialism (Linderborg 2001: 238). The people's home alluded to a trinity of democracy, the people and the nation that much contributed to establish the founding myth of the modern Swedish national community. The metaphor described a progressive vision of the modern Sweden, the means through which to achieve this goal and a particular mentality ascribed to the Swedish citizenry.

Few observers would overlook the clear nationalist or even racist tenets of this story, especially after having considered parallel movements in the Swedish society in the 1920s. Some seven years before that Hansson appealed to the people's home in his speech to the second chamber, in an unanimous vote the same assembly supported the founding of the institute for eugenics to be situated in Uppsala under the chairmanship of Herman Lundborg, an internationally recognised racial biologist. The institute started up measuring skulls and to documenting the various races that existed in the Swedish society, aiming to separate the Arian race from the inferior species such as the "Saami" or the "tinkers [ung. tattare]" (Hagerman 2006; Broberg & Tydén 1991; Pred 2000). This is not to dismiss the Swedish democracy as a racist project. If we would do so it would be fair to also debar the philosophy of i.e. Voltaire who argued that the civilised mind was limited to the non-barbarian occident²; Kant who wrote about "the different races of men" or Montesquieu who adopted biologist interpretations of the climate doctrine to mention but a few "enlightenment philosophers". Instead I believe it is worthwhile considering the message of Horkheimer and Adorno who recognised inherent contradictions in the heritage of the Enlightenment and the emergent progressive democratic state, according to them (1947:3): "...the fully enlightened earth radiates disaster triumphant". Modernisation processes, as many have observed, generate emancipation and alienation; progress and despair; companionship and anonymity. If the enlightenment project was about the disenchantment of the world, the model of unified science based on the myth of fatal necessity suggested the calculability of mankind (ibid: 7). Experiencing the manifestation of totalitarian ideologies during the second world war, Horkheimer and Adorno infer that the enlightenment project is "engulfed in mythology" (ibid: 12) and the development of the modern democratic state is everything but a linear path towards progression and emancipation.

THE CHAPTER'S RATIONALE

How do we make sense of the various connotations associated with the people's home metaphor? What are the main perceptions of the people and peoplehood in Hansson's speech? One approach would be to dwell further in the people's home's various contents; i.e. how it was translated by the Social Democratic party and the reforms that were implemented in the new regime. Another option would be to trace the genealogy of the concept - from e.g. Kjellén and the early feminist scholar Ellen Key in the 19th century, via the Social Democratic party in the 20th century and on to the (ab)uses of the concept in

² Also the 19th century proponent of political individualism, John Stuart Mill, suggested that his rather progressive ideas of individual freedom (freedom of speech, freedom of action) for both men and women should be limited to the civilized world, according to him Despotism is justified when you are dealing with barbarians (Mill 2000).

contemporary Scandinavian politics - in order to e.g. recognise the people's home dialectic. However, I am not merely interested in the *contents* of politics, but with the style, or *forms* of politics: how the political field is constituted in the interplay between the political representatives and the people that they claim to represent. This chapter suggest an analytical approach to the study of the struggles of the people in a Scandinavian context between 1928 and on to our days. Introducing some key concepts, I will then turn to specify the explicit aims and the further outline of the study.

FORMS OF POLITICS

The political style, the way the political representatives articulate their messages including body language and symbol gestures, is perhaps extra significant today. Our voting preferences do not merely depend on party programmes or class allegiance. In many countries it has become more common to vote for individual politicians who sometimes run their separate campaigns. Given the vast exposure of the politicians' public and private life, the changing features of the media landscape demand increased focus on the political style. This is not to say that the ideological rivalries no longer matter; politics devoid of content would be something like a great spectacle orchestrated by the tabloid press.³ This is certainly to trivialise the role of ideological conflicts in contemporary politics (Sim 1999: 44) and it is not the route followed by the author of this book.

Exploring the link between the political representatives and "the people", we need to take into account how the political content and the political forms vary according to the organisation of political communities. The oft-cited distinction between *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*, elaborated by Ferdinand Tönnies more than a century ago (see further Deflem 2001), represents two ideal-types of how societies are organised. The former corresponds to pre-modern forms of organisation, based on families, kin-ship loyalties and community cohesion, whereas the latter concept refers to the organisation of larger-scale societies such as the metropolis or the nation.⁴ It is perhaps enticing to assume that we today live in complete *Gesellschaft* societies⁵, in this scenario everything from football teams, cities to entire nations can be sold as merchandises on the global market. In this hypothetical world, the forms of politics are more important than the content and "who you are" matters more than what you actually say or do. Whereas some appreciate this development others would put forward nostalgic images of a lost *Gemeinschaft* community that safe-guard certain essential values. The key issue is (as already Tönnies noted) that the organisation of modern societies feature both principles. Slavoj Žižek (2002) refers to the passion of the real to account for the current fascination for differences; of what separates "us" from "them" whereas Arjun Appuraj (2007) explains the extended fear of small minorities as a fear of incompleteness, of not knowing what separates "us" from "them" and thus a need to (again) install the difference in order to understand who "we are". In other words, markers of certainty and notions of fixed belongings still matter for how we perceive ourselves in relation to others.

³ According to some observers, after the Cold War and the collapse of communism there is no longer any ideology rivalry, at least not in the "West" (See e.g. Fukuyama 1992).

⁴ The expression of social formations, according to Tönnies, follows from differing articulations of the human will. The *essential will* derivate from a person's temper, mentality or character and flourish in *Gemeinschaft* societies. In the *Gesellschaft* society, conversely the human will corresponds to the *arbitrary will* based on the capacity to choose between the best means for any given end

⁵ The complete *Gesellschaft* community, in the literature, has been refereed to as e.g. post industrial information societies (Bell 1967), network societies (Castells 1993) or postmodern societies (Baudrillard 1988; Lyotard 1984).

The salience of the political style does not make the political content obsolete; rather we should pay acknowledge how politics is manifested both in form, and in content. In Per-Albin Hansson's speech, the people's home is both a form of politics (a way or a style of packaging a political vision) and a specific content (a distinct political vision, the means through to achieve this goal and ideas of a specific mentality ascribed to the Swedish citizenry).

Considering the forms of politics, it is essential to emphasise rhetoric, gestures and style as regards to how politics is performed and communicated. In the analysis of political rhetoric and political persuasion, the three concepts *Logos*, *Ethos* and *Pathos* are often used to classify and assess, for instance, a political speech. According to Aristotle, these three components are the basis for all political argumentation and communication. I will employ the same categories not to assess the validity of a specific political rhetoric, but to specifying three dimensions of political communication (see figure 1).

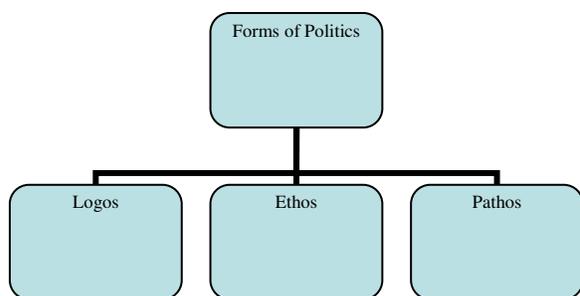


Figure 1. The forms of politics

Logos refers to rational political communication. It is based on facts and its' ultimate virtue is reason. *Ethos* refers to the speaker's ability to establish reliable arguments. The ultimate virtue is credibility. *Pathos* appeals to emotions and the ability of the speaker to invoke feelings and generate enthusiasm. The ultimate virtue is passion. Ideally a political speech should manage to balance all three virtues. The failure to reach equilibrium may twist virtue in the reverse; i.e reason risks turning into dogmatism, credibility risks pervert into moralism and passion can degenerate into pathology. In a logocentric political argumentation, the distinction between content and form dissolve: the way we talk correspond with what we intend to say. After the (re)-discovery of the linguistic turn in social sciences, though, it is quite ordinary to claim that the way we talk has constitutive effects.⁶ We should not go into details here, but emphasising that political communication is ambiguous (or "undecidable, to paraphrase Derrida), and for that reason has productive force. If we were living in the ideal Plato state, (Aristocracy or rule-by-the wise), we would perhaps come to that conclusion. However, since in democratic societies political authority rests ultimately on the *demos*, political communications also serves to rationalise and justify political authority in view of the public; i.e. the need for credibility (ethos) and passion (pathos). The basic paradox of liberal democracy, according to Chantal Mouffe (2000), is that it combines the incongruent ideals of the universal (liberal) rights of the individual to be protected from both state

⁶ As noted by among other Jacques Derrida (2004: 365), there is no undivided point of reference [logos] – from which we can derive unbiased facts, but supplements to temporarily compensate for this "lack". And in his ideal of communicative rationality, Jürgen Habermas (1998) abandons the ideal of mere instrumental rationality to account for ethic considerations and social validity and public acceptance. Habermas' ideal speech act theory does perhaps not acknowledge the Pathos dimension, but it acknowledges certain substantial democratic criteria such as tolerance, mutual respect, accountability that transcend pure logocentrism.

oppression and the “tyranny of the masses” (cf. Mill 2000) with the particularistic democratic right of a predestined demos to popular sovereignty by means of majority rule. This paradox constitutes the dynamic of representative democracy, and provides a space for the political communication between the citizens and the elites to situate the rule of the game vis-à-vis the constitutional principles based on the division of power as a system of checks and balances. The question how we authorise political power in representative democracies balance between the direct demands of the citizenry and the representative elites’ mediated power.

The passions of representative politics refer explicitly to the pathos dimension of political communication, as it highlights the neat balance between the direct emotive appeals to the people and the long-term need to securing constitutional rights of i.e. rule-by-the-law and minority rights. In the mobilisation of voters it is not merely the populists who rely on the pathos dimension, conversely all major political projects in representative democracies, I will argue, allude to the populist divide between the people and the elite to mobilise support for a certain political agenda. The category of “the people” is elusive and thus undecidable, but it also manifests a certain degree of continuity and contingency. The concept of the “people” connotes to, on the one hand, the “masses” or the lower strata of the population⁷ and on the other hand to the citizenry of the state or the nation. This ambiguity constitutes “the people” as a legitimising force in politics. According to the Political Scientist Sofia Näsström (2007: 624): “The people has in its power to confer legitimacy upon governments, parties and policies, a fact which makes it one of the more used and abused concept in the history of politics”. The constitution of the people and the popular will is not a historical given, but evolves in the political process of representation (Laclau 2005; Mouffe 2005; Bourdieu 1999; Hall 1997; Näsström 2007). To put it differently, the categories of “the people” and the popular will are constituted in the act of representation; something which Hannah Pitkin refers to as “symbol representation” (1972: 92) – to represent something which is not yet present – and Pierre Bourdieu (1999: 248) explains as:

the mystery of the process of transubstantiation, whereby the spokesperson becomes the group he expresses, can only be explained by a historical analysis of the genesis and functioning of representation, through which the representative creates the group which creates him.

In this metonymical operation the represented object is ascribed to a tangible form and (re)presented as a comprehensible totality. According to Ernesto Laclau (2005: 108) “the unity of the object is a retroactive effect of naming it”. The various rhetorical mechanisms in play in this process of naming and defining the people constitute the anatomy of the social world. To sum up, the passions of representative politics refer to the delicate balancing between the functional needs of the system and the emotive appeals to the people. Analysing representation as a constitutive activity, I will acknowledge different, and sometimes contrasting, perceptions of the people and peoplehood. These perceptions shift along a Pathos continuum between normalcy and pathology to which we later will return. In the next section, I will consider the other side of the coin and thus discuss the pathology of representative politics.

⁷ What is at stake here is the particularising synecdoche of letting a “part standing for the whole” used in e.g. discourse-historical analysis to account for the crystallisation of in- and out-groups in the linguistic construction of imagined communities (see further Reisigl & Wodak 2001: 57).

PATHOLOGY

Of course we may rely on a hope that mankind has elevated from the brutalities and aggressiveness associated with the totalitarian ideologies of the previous century. We may consider us de-attached from theories of race supremacy, bearing in mind that Hitler gave racism a bad reputation (Motturi 2007: 11) and today, we the citizens of European states jointly commemorate the Holocaust in order to recognise a common responsibility for not repeating the past; to enjoying pan-European companionship beyond state borders. In this framework, Gerard Delanty and Chris Rumford recognise a certain europeanisation of memory (2004: 99-100); if before the crimes of the past were considered a strict national matter, Europeans have now realised their common share. In the outskirts of European societies, some maladjusted adolescents may gather in small Neo-Nazi groupings but they will remain in the periphery as “we” (the established citizens of the European societies) have learned our lesson.

In this vision of a europeanised people’s home, we can expect new expressions of peoplehood as the commemoration in Europe, following Delanty & Rumford (ibid: 102) has “entered a post-historical moment”. Are we now done with this project, as long as we stand up to fight against the evil whether we decide to call it (neo)-racism, Extreme Right, nationalism or populism?⁸ Is this the end of the story? I believe it is not, which is the foremost reason why I have decided to write this book. In Denmark elected representatives of the national parliament (Folketinget) straightforwardly and unscrupulously compared the resistance towards Nazism during the Second World War with a, in their view, justified repugnance for Islamism. To defend their case, articulations of Islamophobia is associated with the democratic principle of freedom of speech; that “we” (the real Danes) have a right, and even a duty to stand up for what “we” believe, which typically is perceived as a confirmation that Islam is at best incongruent with Danish values and at it worst an imminent threat to the Danish community.⁹ Xenophobia is thus justified by democratic means to stand up against the “totalitarian” Islamist ideology. The resistance to the non-west foreigner has been transformed into common-sense knowledge, reproduced in news media and widely spread among people on the streets, at least if we listen to the Danish anthropologist Peter Hervik (forthcoming). How are we to make sense of these reactions to Islam and Islamism (the two terms are often conflated in the debate)? Is Islamophobia the cultural pathology of contemporary Europe as suggested by some contemporary observers (see e.g. Malm 2009)?

According to the Oxford dictionary, pathology signifies on the one hand the scientific study of sickness and that is clearly not what we are dealing with here. On the other hand, pathology implies: “an aspect of somebody’s behaviour that is extreme and unreasonable and that they cannot control”. This definition applies to certain extreme individuals, i.e. people who in one way or the other do not conform to established norms and practices, yet it does not help us to understand pathologies shared by a broader strata. Investigating the crisis of legitimacy and the feelings of frustration generated by representative politics, Paul Taggart turns to the concept of populism to explain the manifestation of societal pathologies. He

⁸ Parallel to the development towards a more inclusive europeanised memory, or even a cosmopolitan people’s home, Italy is currently governed by a three party coalition; hence, the neo-fascist party "National Alliance" under the chairmanship of Fini, the regionalist xenophobic party "League Nord" with Bossi and the “plastic” (anti)-political party "Forza Italia" led by the Prime Minister Berlusconi an alliance of overt xenophobic and neo-fascist parties. The Prime Minister is sometimes saluted by his followers as “Il duce” which certainly brings back memories of a totally different kind than Delanty & Rumford are referring to.

⁹ This rhetorical maneuver is noticeable also in the Norwegian political debate (see further Marsdal 2007).

(2002: 62) suggests that populism “provides us with a useful tool for understanding the pathology of representative politics”. Populism, following Taggart, breeds on these feelings but the arena of representative politics is also the means by which populism expresses itself. In his analysis of the Populist Radical Right (RRP), Cas Mudde (2008: 11-2) suggests that these parties represent a pathological normalcy, “a radicalization of mainstream politics” and a difference in degree, rather than in kind. We are no longer dealing with an aspect of somebody’s behaviour that is extreme, but with the pathology of our common sense. The RRP parties aim to gain political influence, by means of passionate appeals to the people and yet avoid degenerating into deviant pathology. Following Taggart and Mudde, populism teeters on the edge of the acceptable, neither evidently extreme nor perfectly normal. In this perspective, populism makes explicit the undecidable nature of representative politics.¹⁰ What Mudde refers to as pathological normalcy¹¹ is not a sign of sickness and it does not denote to unreasonable thinking, but pushes the rational, reasonable mind. The Pathos dimension of political communication has a distinct affective appeal, and it relates to instinct and passion rather than to rational reasoning. It puts representative politics to test (Taggart 2000) and thus display the passions of representative politics, thereby balancing its’ functionalist bias.¹²

THE CRAVE TO RESIST THE EVIL

The pathos dimension of political communication involves a desire, and a crave to be “good” and by this means also a plead to resist the evil. The figure of the enemy (which must be resisted) has shifted over time and yet continue to haunt us. In popularised psychoanalysis, well spread in the news reporting, we are both disgusted and thrilled about the manifestation of evilness among us. The trial – referred to as the trial of the century - against Josef Fritzl who locked in his daughter in a cellar for 24 years, raped her and let her give birth to their children has triggered much media attention, fascination and repulse all across the globe. The activities of Fritzl seriously challenge our capacity and will to understand. Apart from its’ morbid dramaturgy, it also provokes a series of pathological reactions (various facebook groups are formed to discuss by which means Fritzl should be executed). Certainly, the Fritzl event epitomises the limit of the rational mind, is he a man or a monster? One day to work, I passed by placards displaying the message: “Today the monster will receive his sentence”. To treat Fritzl, I intuitively reacted, as an ordinary human being risk implying that he could be either one of us, and thus blur the barrier between our selves and “the evil”. To portray him as a monster, alternatively to bring forth the monstrous past of Austria (that “they” have not yet learned to deal with) or to consider his monstrous childhood is not only an attempt to explain the inexplicable, but to reassert a firm distance

¹⁰ The notion of undecidability suggests that representative politics always remain indeterminable, in the sense that there is no final solution to the democratic paradox by means of e.g. rational deliberation. However, we should avoid conflating undecidability with arbitrariness, conversely Chantal Mouffe (2000: 136-7) suggests that “Undecidability is not a moment to be traversed or overcome” and is thus highly political. Following Mouffe all political decisions are simultaneously undecidable; hence open for alteration and constant revision.

¹¹ The notion of common sense pathology alludes to domesticated behaviour in a certain context that from the outset may appear as despicable or extreme. One clear example would be the post world war II trauma; hence, Nazism and the Holocaust. Definitely, by a larger majority in European societies today this is utterly despicable and thus pathological.

¹² In a functionalist perspective, ideally, representative politics should basically ideally fulfill the articulated needs and interests of the citizens despite their sometimes ideological connotations. Acknowledging the Pathos dimension of political communication, we also need to consider how these needs and interests are framed in the first place.

between us and him, the despicable monster.¹³ Following Richard Kearney (2002: 121): ‘What monsters reveal (*monstrare*) to us is nothing less than our craving to put a face on phobia’.

What does it mean that Fritzl says that he is sorry? In an ideal world of deliberative democracy, we would hypothetically respond to him and respect his appeal for apology. But how does this ideal handle the inexplicable, the horrifying acts committed by a human being that challenge our desire to understand and forgive?¹⁴ Josef Fritzl lives in the city of Amstetten in Niederösterreich. A few years ago I conducted a study of the conceptualisation of strangers and strangeness in settled communities in Europe, focusing on Havlicuv Brod in the Czech Republic and Amstetten in Austria (Hellström 2005). Empirically, the article set out to analyse images of ‘the stranger’ as manifested in two local newspapers. Introducing my subject, I turned to the screenplay by Lars von Trier, *Dogville* to illustrate a worst case scenario of how strangers risk be treated in settled small-sized communities. In the beginning the arrival of Grace, the daughter of a Gangster leader, caused much attention in the small town of Dogville. She was given two weeks to prove herself worthy of the acceptance of the Dogvillers. They decided to let her stay, the town people could look themselves in the mirror and feel good about themselves, the village philosopher, Tom, inferred. Things got worse, though. Grace was confronted by some women in town because she has been seen in an inappropriate situation with the apple harvester. As a punishment, her little collection of wooden figures bought from the local store was destroyed. She cried. The figures symbolised the offspring of her successfully integrating in the small town. She tried to escape, but is betrayed. Grace is chained with a special escape prevention mechanism; she got spitted at and also frequently raped by the male population something which was considered equivalent with a ‘hillbilly having sex with a cow’. Grace was thus chained, abused and denied any sense of dignity. Eventually the gangsters arrived and Grace’s father told her to sit back in the car:

- “You are so arrogant. You forgive dogs. Like these people”, says the father.
- “Why should we not forgive dogs”, Grace replies captured between her willingness to escape from her father and the harassment of the Dogvillers.
- Sometimes, yes. Not every time they obey their nature”
- So, I am arrogant because I forgive?, asks Grace again.
- The father replies: “You forgive with excuses you would never allow for yourself. All human beings are accountable for their actions; you did not give them a chance. That is the most arrogant thing”.

Grace left the car and decided to take a walk. She realised that if she had acted like them, she would not be able to defend any of them. Imagine if, one day, another stranger arrives to Dogville. Grace returned to the car and told her father that she wants to make this world a little better: In the name of humanity, they should all be shot dead; the inhabitants of Dogville, a friendly little town at the foot of the Rocky Mountain. The Dogvillers were scapegoated in the name of humanity. A reminder that we are not like them, even a Gangster (or possibly because he is a Gangster, a frequent theme in the TV-series *Sopranos*) can tell

¹³ I can not resist the temptation to consider Derrida’s discussion on the zombies in this regard (nowadays it seems more accurate to talk about the fascination with vampires, though); he illustrates how cinematic zombies appear as undecidables between life and death thus infect the oppositions grouped around them (see further Collins & Mayblin 2001: 22; Kearney 2003).

¹⁴ We could perhaps add that certain pathological activities are depicted as too extreme to be accommodated in the social complex of established norms and principles.

right from wrong. Killing the village people, exterminating the evil, the ordinary people of Dogville who according to Grace did their best under rough circumstances, the father solved the moral dilemma.

What do we make out of this story? In the article I used this screenplay to illustrate different conceptualisations of the stranger (guest or intruder), reminding the reader how difficult it can be for “us” to live with “strangers” whoever is placed into that category. This book does not engage further with the Fritzl trial and we shall not dwell further in the social cartography of Amstetten or the imagined town of Dogville. However, the overarching questions of who we are as people and how we relate to those positioned as outsiders are key aspects of how politics is performed. Any conceptualisation of the people presupposes a demarcation line towards what we are not (as long as we remain hesitant of being representative of the entire globe).¹⁵ The way that we perceive strangers reveals something about how we picture ourselves, i.e. perceptions of the people merge with perceptions of the strange and the strangers. Among others Chantal Mouffe (2005) have emphasised that politics is increasingly being played out in the moral register between good and evil, rather than between left and right. To speak the language of morality in the sphere of politics is to explicate the passions of representative politics; it alludes to instinct rather than to rational deliberation. Alternatively, however, we could say that politics has never been completely rational or technocratic [Logos] - but involving elements of credibility, a sense of fairness and the salience of moral standards [Ethos]; feelings of redemption, frustration and also passion [Pathos].¹⁶ Elaborating on the pathos dimension, my analysis of the perceptions of the people and peoplehood, of what brings us together and what brings us apart, involves an inquiry of the crave to resist the evil (illustrated by the Fritz trial), which is adjacent to the moral facet of politics and thus the Ethos dimension of political communication (illustrated by Dogville).

The Pathos dimension of political communications resides in a continuum between normalcy and pathology. Both Taggart and Mudde indicate that representative politics display certain pathological features, though, and especially the so-called populist parties explicitly appeal to peoples’ emotions rather than to merely rational reasoning. In addition, many of these parties present xenophobic, and sometimes even racist, arguments to support their politics. Xenophobia and racism are certainly likely candidates to occupy the position of the pathological other in contemporary European politics. Of course it might be that we employ blatant racist rhetoric to justify ill treatment of the other, but it might also be out of anger or simple disinterest, not because the significant other is “ethnically” deviant from us. Racism was barely the reason why Grace was chained and abused in the little town of

¹⁵ Ulrich Beck (1998: 133) enthusiastically anticipates, in the era of reflexive modernity more and more people lose their unambiguous positions, identities are increasingly mingled and previously fixed boundaries no longer hold. This implies that we all become equally strange to one- another; hence, following Beck we live in a global risk society that blurs the distinction between the strange and the well-known; i.e. “universal estrangement”. However, given the fact that some people continue to be categorised as more deviant than others and whole group of people are depicted as strangers (and others not) it is more accurate, I believe, to acknowledge manifestation of *selective estrangement* and the contingent construction of lines of demarcation between people and (non-)people (see further Hellström 2005).

¹⁶ In political philosophy, ‘the politics of faith’ has been contrasted with the ‘the politics of scepticism’ (Oakeshott 1996), and again reformulated by Margaret Canovan (1999) as a distinction between pragmatism and redemption. The concept of the people in representative politics, in my view, straddles these different levels. An analysis of the perceptions of the people over time may thus reveal something about the passions of representative politics, something which tend to be largely omitted in the political debate and in the scholarly discussion alike (see e.g. Näsström 2007).

Dogville, if we do not choose to stretch the concept, in my view, way to far.¹⁷ Nevertheless, common perceptions of contemporary Scandinavian politics indicate that we have moved away homogenous societies dominated by universal Social Democratic regimes to multi-cultural societies. This narrative suggests that we do no longer live in a *Gemeinschaft* society. However, long before we were talking about multi-culturalism it was considered normal to regard black people as inferior. None of the Scandinavian countries were strong colonial powers, but the colonial hierarchies were manifest here as well. It was the order of the day. We could continue hold on to that perception without ever having encountered a black person in the streets, and even less been losing our jobs due to a thriving “ethnic competition” (see e.g. De Witte & Klandermans 2000). Racism - or what we today tend to refer to as “cultural racism” (Taguieff 1990), “neo-racism” (Balibar 1991) or a “racism without races” (Miles & Brown 2003) - risk to blossom in either homogenous or heterogeneous communities. Nevertheless, to be considered one of the good guys, we need to distance ourselves from racism which virtually all political parties do in Europe today, including for instance Front National and Vlaams Blok. Racism is another name for what we are not, it is them (either those marginalised groups in the periphery or those living before us) not us who risk being seduced by racist ideologies. In sum, contemporary perceptions of the people as the given denominator in settled, imagined communities reject overt racism. The categories of race and also ethnicity are employed by various political actors to rationalise activities that we (as in “we, the good guys”) find inappropriate or even despicable.¹⁸

From this discussion, we could extrapolate a particular crave to resist the evil; i.e. we condemn the evil in others and thus become the good guys *vis-à-vis* the racist prone majority

¹⁷ Let me turn to anti-racism discourses to further illustrate this point. In 2005, the major ice cream retailer (GB) launched its new ice cream “Nogger Black”. Many commentators were upset because of its’ connotation with the words “nigger” and “black”. As a consequence, the ice cream was withdrawn from the stores (see further Pripp & Öhlander 2008). It could be considered a morally good thing to do, but it should be noted that the debate never really engaged those who were supposed to be stigmatised, i.e. people with black skin living in Scandinavia. Similarly, scholars of racism bring to attention the racialised structures of the Scandinavian societies: the democratic institutions are built along racist lines and we should therefore pay attention to institutionalised racism also in communities considered tolerant (see further e.g. Pred 2000). Certainly, following this strand of anti-racist thinking we may be able to illuminate a series of structural injustices affecting those who do not look the same (as “we do”), or behave differently. It is indeed important to recognise discriminatory activities in the society as these risk to stigmatise those people categorised as bogus refugees, illegal immigrants or perhaps second generation immigrants. Important to note is also that individuals risk being positioned as members of groups without active consent. With admirable clarity Frantz Fanon gave voice to this feeling when he worked as a psychiatrist and black lecturer in the 1950s France. In his first book, “Black Skin and White Masks” from 1952 – recognised as a post-colonial classic (see e.g. Bhabha 1994: 112) – he remarks that he experiences both disgust and frustration because of his blackness (1995: 107-110; Hellström 2006: 44-5): if people like him, it is despite his skin colour and if people choose not to like him, it is because of his skin colour. Being black, he infers, is never conceived of as a neutral category. If he did not completely comply with his blackness - something he was ambivalent to do - he would most certainly face discrimination on a daily basis. There was no easy way out and his experiences epitomise the frustration of not being able to choose your own categories of belonging just as the main character of Imre Kertész’ “Man without destiny (1998) barely could emancipate from his predestined Jewish destiny after his return to Krakow after the World War II.

¹⁸ To mention but one example, Jörg Haider the late leader of the populist party “Die Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs” (FPÖ) in Austria said in an interview that perhaps the other parties have to face their share of Austria’s diffuse past whereas the FPÖ represents a new generation of Austria de-attached to the Nazi-infected history (Purvis & Leuker 2000). The blame game is thus reversed, it is “them” not “us” who might be guilty-of-association and thus be closer affiliated to Austria’s diffuse past.

society. The risk is evident that we as researchers posit ourselves outside the logic of structural racism and racism, though; i.e. from our enlightened position we can educate others on the issue of tolerance just as did the village philosopher Tom in the screenplay *Dogville*. Chantal Mouffe (2005: 74) acknowledges a similar phenomenon in the reactions to the newly formed governmental alliance in Austria between the so-called Right-Wing populist party FPÖ and the conservative party ÖVP (the Conservative People's Party) back in 2000:

The condemnation of racism and xenophobia in Austria become a useful way to guarantee the unity of the 'good democrats', who could thereby proclaim their allegiance to democratic values, while evading any critical examination of their own policies at home. We should realize that a particularly perverse mechanism is at play in those moralistic reactions. This mechanism consists in securing one's goodness, through the condemnation of the evil in others.

The blame-game risks turning to a blind alley. Depending on which definitions we employ, almost all political movements and parties denounce overt discrimination and blatant racism. It might be, to paraphrase Hannah Arendt that the banality of evil (Arendt 1994: 252) and feelings of redemptions remain a possibility embedded in modern democratic societies that continue to rely on the support by large numbers of people (Arditi 2004: 141; Canovan 2002). We can, of course, continue to haunt the spectres of Right-Wing Populism, and make explicit the difference between "us" and "them". However, the politics of the RRP is domesticated in many European societies. After that the EU-14 lifted the sanctions towards Austria when the FPÖ seized the governmental position in 2000, the position of the RRP parties have been increasingly domesticated. The Extreme Right is no longer evidently extreme. Xenophobia is neither to be treated as disease from the past nor something which is merely represented by the so-called populist parties. Analysing shifting conceptualisations of the people in Scandinavian politics and fluctuations in the party system over time, I suggest we elaborate further on the pathos dimension of political communication. Representative politics is not pathological *per se*, rather to explore the passions of representative politics I will now turn to introduce a continuum between normalcy and pathology (see figure 2 below).

THE PATHOS CONTINUUM

For analytical purposes, I will now introduce a continuum to account for the pathos dimension in political communication. Pathology is thus the perversion of the pathos ideal, however, if a political underdog moves to close to the other side of the spectrum [the acceptable normalcy] the potential voter may not consider the party to be radical, provocative or challenging enough; thus not worth voting for. In other words, to gain political influence a political underdog - such as the Sweden Democrats (SD) in Sweden - risks being ignored if it does not manage to evoke passions. On the other hand, if it exploits the pathos ideal (too much), their politics risks pervert into pathology (figure 2).



Figure 2. The Pathos Continuum

Passions provoke a moment of discontinuity and disjuncture in the political field. The political supply-side; i.e. the changing positions in the political field and the framing of issues

fluctuate accordingly. Hypothetically, the party A is ($t=1$) regarded as a pathological deviance by the established parties and thus banned from the activities of everyday politics and deliberation. For instance, the established parties can choose to jointly conform to the principle of *cordon sanitaire*¹⁹ and thus refuse any encounter with the party A. However, at another juncture ($t=2$) the politics of the political underdog generates passions rather than mere revulsion and whereas some people continue to regard the newcomer as a pathological deviance, yet others tend to accept them. It might be the case that the established parties continue to resist them; however a considerable amount of voters may feel attracted by their politics, and eventually the party A may shift from the pathological deviant position to the passion position. At ($t=3$) the political underdog does no longer occupy the position of the political underdog and it is not evident what distinguishes the newcomer from the established parties. The Social Democratic movement has during the 20th evolved from a pathological deviance (their presence allegedly risked to overthrow the system) to an acceptable normalcy, up to an extent that Swedish politics is almost made synonymous with the Social Democratic political project. The Social Democrats' identity crisis (See e.g. Dahlstedt 2009; Berman 1998) can, following this model, be interpreted as a shift from passions to acceptable normalcy; i.e. an alleged failure to appeal to the people; to invoke passions in accordance with the Pathos ideal. Turning to the SD, they balance on the tightrope between pathological deviance and passions, as they endeavor to move towards a more normalised position in Swedish politics, yet some of their political adversaries continue to refuse any encounter with them.

To sum up, the pathos dimension of politics alludes not only to the so-called populist parties, but remains a permanent feature of how politics is performed in representative democracies. Analysing how the parties shift positions according to this axis over time, we are able to identify fluctuations in the party system. In this book, I will explicitly deal with the emergence of the nationalist parties in Scandinavian politics, straddling between the positions of pathological deviance and passions.²⁰ The passions of representative politics concern the various rhetorical mechanisms that constitute the national citizenry as an object of representation, fluctuating between the acceptable normalcy and the pathological deviance. The public debate around the nationalist parties in the Scandinavian countries, to which we return in the next section, gives rise to various conceptualisations of peoplehood and claims to naming “the people”.

A BRIEF EMPIRICAL OUTLOOK

When the nationalist party, also referred to as populist, Sverigedemokraterna (SD) scored 2.93 per cent of the votes in the Swedish general elections in 2006 and secured their greatest

¹⁹ The notion of *cordon sanitaire* was used by the established parties in Belgium to justify their joint decision not to involve themselves with the Vlaams Blok (See e.g. Mudde 2007b).

²⁰ In comparative research on nationalist parties, such as the SD, there are several different ways of labelling this rather ambivalent party family (see further eg Taggart 2000; Ignazi 2006; Mudde 2008b; Ivarsflaten 2008). The label “populism” is used to describe various kinds of movements, from the left to the right, that appeals to a discourse of “the people” (see further eg Westlind 1996). In my view, it is too vague and thus risks obscuring the analysis, which will be developed in some greater detail in the third chapter. The terms “Extreme Right” or “Radical Right”, on the contrary, seems rather limited and thus deceptive, since the SD – at least in its own wording – positions itself as a centre party. For pragmatic reasons, while not referring to other studies, we employ the notion of “nationalist” to describe the Scandinavian parties put into scrutiny in this study. To be more precise, it might be reasonable to apply the notion of nativism (see further Mudde 2007b) to specify which “nationalism” I refer to (see further chapter 2).

victory to date, this relatively limited success (they did not cross the threshold to the national parliament) was fully dramatised in the public debate that followed the elections (Hellström & Nilsson forthcoming). They were considered pariah and treated as political clowns and/or devils in disguise in the political debate. The established parties resisted any association with them, at least rhetorically. This debate suggests that in Sweden there are no racists, which relates to a positive self presentation of the Swedish national community that out of kindness rejects everything that risks be considered stigmatising towards the significant other (Pred 2000). This perception relies on a notion of the “real Swede” as being particular welcoming to strangers; conversely the SD brings forth a notion of the “real Swede” as not being accustomed to the multi-cultural politics of the established elites. The strong reactions by all the established parties to their rather limited success in the general elections 2006 may be explained not merely by references to the SD as an anomaly in Swedish politics, the SD also represents a continuum in Swedish politics of imagining the nation and the national demos as something worth fighting for, and protecting against (too) much foreign influences. The SD political style is much devoted to the pathos dimension, as they explicitly appeal to peoples’ emotions and advances nostalgic visions of a long-lost utopian Swedish society. They aim to situate this perception in a common sensual nationalist frame, though, drawing upon i.e cultural mythology and the popular consciousness associated with the people’s home metaphor. It is clear that the SD straddles between the positions of pathological deviance and passions (see figure 2).²¹

In Denmark the public debate privileges freedom of speech (“We say it out loud”) as a principle that hardly can be compromised, it is considered a specific Danish virtue together with the Danish humour which the outsider (whether treated as “guest” or “intruder” is unable to apprehend. This debate is perfectly linked to the so-called “Cartoon Crisis” in 2005 when the Danish newspaper “Jyllandsposten” let publish twelve cartoons portraying the prophet Muhammed in perhaps less favourable situations. The cartoon affair and the debate that followed throughout the world could have been interpreted as an outburst of anti-Islamic ideology, in the domestic debated it was instead framed as free speech issue (Hervik & Berg 2007; forthcoming: 249). Freedom of speech thus becomes part of a nationalist arsenal to frame which issue this principle does and should apply to. In this debate, it was obvious that the position of the nationalist party Dansk Folkeparti (DF) proved to be rather domesticated in the Danish political debate. The perception of the popular will was framed as being, if not hostile, at least sceptic of Islamism and Islam in Denmark. The political underdog’s position in the political field shifts according to how the established parties perceive the people and the popular will.

In Norway, the somewhat remarkable progress of the nationalist party Fremskrittspartiet (Frp) also corresponds to shifting positions in the partisan structure. According to Magnus Marsdal (2007) the Norwegian Socialdemocratic party (arbeiderpartiet) has become an elite party that no longer represents the common man, which paves the way for another political party to represent the decent workers of the Norwegian citizenry. Considering the

²¹ It is evident that also the Ethos dimension of political communication is important to recognise in order to come to terms with the public reactions to the SD in contemporary Swedish politics. According to Hall (1998: 135), an established state such as Sweden operates as an agent that realises the national identity of its citizens. In this process, the territory of Sweden is attributed a set of moral messages. The antagonistic divide between SD and their antagonists is particularly interesting in this regard, as it brings to the surface a set of moral principles that separate “them” (the SD as the “bad nationalists” that mobilise around a nationalist response to the political establishment) from “us” (the mainstream parties that ascribe to a set of moral principles that serve to preserve Sweden as a democratic state and national community).

continuum introduced above (see figure 2), they thus fail to spur people's imaginations and have thus moved closer to the position of acceptable normalcy. The Frp represents almost one quarter of the electorate, nevertheless the established elites (journalists, cultural workers and established politicians) tend to portray them as stint or egoist, an object of hatred and thus a pathological deviance (ibid: 20). Recently, the Social Democrats in Norway have decided to openly engage and confront Frp's politics (Arbeiderpartiets stortingsgruppe 2007) through means of rational argumentation, though. The Frp are thus recognised as a regular adversary, however deviant given their distinct Right-Wing political profile. In Denmark the DF which received less than 10 per cent of the votes in the 2001 elections occupies a privileged position of supporting, and thus also affecting governmental politics. The DF seems more tamed in the Danish political field than the Frp in Norway. In Sweden, the SD scored less than 3 per cent in the recent national elections and has nevertheless become something like a spectre of Swedish politics; provoking media attention and scholarly alert to an extent that does not match their limited progress at the polls in 2006 (see e.g. Johansson 090415). Let us now take a step back and consider how ideas of peoplehood were framed and institutionalised in the Scandinavian countries when the democratic projects merged with the nationalist ambitions of creating a people's home. In other words, let us return to the speech delivered by Per-Albin Hansson in 1928.

FROM CLASS TO PEOPLE

The home, Hansson states, rests on commonality and the feeling of belonging together; of sharing a sense of duty that encourage us to consider the larger collective of citizens to be on equal footing with one- another. The good home, according to Hansson, does neither recognise privileged people nor any retrograded. To realise the "good home", we need to tear down the barriers between the pillagers and the pillaged; between the rulers and the ruled. "While some people live in palaces others are happy to find a resort in their summer cottages also during the winter season", he adds, and while some people live in the lap of luxury, others have to beg. He infers that "If the Swedish society is to become the good citizen home the class ruptures need to be abolished" and we further need to develop a functioning social care system, obtain economic equalization and the democratic principles shall be implemented, also socially and economically. The purpose of any democratic policy, Hansson continues, should be about transforming the Swedish society into the good citizen home.

From this view, Hansson urges the sitting government to conclude agreements between the employers and the employees in a spirit of mutual understanding and respect. He claims that the workers collective now fully dedicates itself to obtaining peaceful solutions to labour market disputes. In the words of Hansson, the Social Democracy is the carrier of progress and equally well equipped to finalise the transformation from autocracy to democracy in Sweden. The Social Democratic *raison d'être*, as it seems, is to step by step realise the old liberal dictums of freedom, equality and brotherhood in the Swedish context. In the struggle for national hegemony, Linderborg claims, the Social Democracy embraces nationalism as a founding principle of this transformation of the class divided Swedish society into the people's home. The people's home turns into a national project, and old conservative national symbols are restored under the auspices of the Social Democratic Party.

In my analysis of the struggles of the people in a Scandinavian context the speech by Per Albin Hansson - the symbolism and the significance associated with it - is essential for at least three reasons. First, our understanding of contemporary Swedish politics is much framed by a perception of the people's home as the signifying element. Before the 1990s,

generally speaking, the Swedish party system was dominated by five parties which all, more or less, adhered to the vision of the people's home. In fact, they all claimed precedence to the (proud) heritage of the modern Sweden. While the liberals in the "People's party" aspired to be acknowledged for the introduction of universal suffrage in Sweden, the agrarian Center party (Bondeförbundet) claimed their fair share of the crisis agreement in 1933 that facilitated the realisation of the "Swedish model".²² According to Linderborg (2002), in the 1930s all the parties tried to present themselves as the parties for and to a varying extent also of the people.

Second, then, the speech illustrates the close semblance between nationalism as a political principle and the emergent democratic state and third, the speech emphasises the role of the people as a common denominator for any political project that aspire to attain governmental position. While the continuing part of this chapter will outline and further specify the core arguments of this book, the second chapter shall specifically deal with the relation between nationalism and democracy in the Scandinavian countries up to 1945. The third chapter, then, will explicitly approach the concept of populism as a means to further a conceptual framework for the analysis of the populist divide between the people and the elite in Scandinavian politics.

A SPACE OPENS UP

Recently, the people's home has been much disputed in the public debate in Sweden. Many contemporary political observers, mainly from the bourgeois bloc, indicate that the Social Democratic people's home has delayed economic progression. In addition, the people's home vision features authoritarianism and thus provides little space for individual freedom, they say. Some even associate the metaphor with the notion of *Volk*, which is connected to Nazi Germany (Linderborg 2001: 378-9) and thus epitomises a pathological manifestation of "the people". The debate about the forced sterilization and the centre of eugenics in Uppsala further triggered this kind of criticism (see further Hagerman 2006; Witoszek & Trägårdh 2002; Pred 2000; Lagergren 1999). The people's home, previously indicative of the success story of the national progression in Sweden monopolised and administrated by the Social Democratic party, was now considered a burden for the party. The popular history consciousness of the people's home is by no means merely a Social Democratic invention or construction; nevertheless it was by now considered a particular Social Democratic problem. Also internally, the party critically reconsidered the narrow perception of the people's home as a success story.

Influenced by the third way of Social Democracy and the progress of Tony Blair in Great Britain, the Social Democratic party started to move toward a centre position in Swedish politics. In the 2006 general elections, the conservative party (Moderaterna), presented themselves as the "new workers' party". The struggle of the voters tightened, which have generated discussions on the heralding of the end of politics. Recognised by among others Peter Mair (2002: 85), there has been a significant blurring of the political identities of the mainstream parties. Indeed, it is perhaps more difficult for the (S) to continue rely on the populist divide between the elite and the people as the foundation for their politics. They have been in governmental position for decades, their politics has turned into étatism. According to Anders Isaksson (2002) the former radical underdog now occupies the conservative position in the sense that the Social Democrats rather aspire to

²² The Swedish model refers to a mutual understanding between employees and employers, collective agreements on the labour market and the lack of severe disputes.

preserve the existing system than to radically alter it (Tingsten 1941). The positions remain, but are reversed compared to 80 years ago. At least the bourgeois bloc does not, as before, constitute an evident ideological antithesis (see further Mouffe 2005). There is reason not to conflate this development with the end of politics, though. In his book on populist reason, Ernesto Laclau (2005: 222) argues instead that:

Perhaps what is dawning as a possibility in our political experiment is something radically different from what postmodern prophets of the 'end of politics' are announcing: the arrival at a fully political era, because the dissolution of the marks of certainty does not give the political game any aprioristic necessary terrain but, rather, the possibility of constantly redefining the terrain itself

It is nothing strange about parties changing positions in the political field. What is perhaps more extraordinary is that the party system, at least in Sweden but also in Norway and Denmark, have proven to be remarkably stable. Between 1921 and 1988 the same five parties occupied the seats in the Swedish national parliament. The Swedish development was a perfect example of what Lipset & Rokkan (1967) labelled the 'freezing hypothesis'.²³ No doubt the political field is more flexible in Sweden these days. New parties enter the parliamentary arena, in the local elections (Erlingsson 2005) and also in the European Parliament new parties have managed to cross the electoral threshold as the established parties lose sympathisers.²⁴ At the national level, as well, the political field is more indeterminate than perhaps some decades ago. Scholars of populism have acknowledged this development on the supply side of politics (see Mudde 2007b) to explain the recent progress of so-called populist parties, whether labelled as Extreme Right Parties (ERP) or Populist Radical Right Parties (RPP). Certainly, the intensification of the European Integration process has furthered this development as it has become more difficult for to discern accountability. Jack Hawyard (1996; cf. Arditì 2004: 236), for instance, argues that the failure of the mediation role of the impersonal elites is an open invitation for populist to step in to counteract the democratic deficit of the EU. Yannis Papadopoulos (2002: 45) explains, tentatively, the rise of populism as a reaction to the de-formalisation of the Rechtsstaat; i.e. the introduction of diffuse and uncertain policy networks put to risk fundamental principles of accountability and the populists may occupy a market niche. It is striking that after the end of the cold war, populism seems to be the only source of protest (Abbott 2007). Abbott recognises the poignant aspects of populism and attributes to these a potential positive role in public mobilisation. Furthermore, "The expectation that democratic leaders govern rhetorically through direct appeals to the people has become a norm of democratic politics in general" (ibid: 434). The definitional problems of populism, following Abbott, is tantamount to its' close resemblances to modern democratic politics. Does this mean that contemporary politics is populist *per se*? Certainly, most scholars of populism would disagree with Abbott concerning the positive assessment of the populist challenge – something that we shall return to in the third chapter – for now it suffices to say that whatever movements we refer to as populists seem to play a fundamental part in the transformation of contemporary European politics after 1989.

Kitschelt adheres to the idea that the increased convergence between the conventional left and right parties opens up a space for new political competitors (2002: 181). This is the foremost reason, Kitschelt argues, why the Italian Lega Nord and the FPÖ succeeded better than their sibling parties up to 1999. Austria and Italy, according to Kitschelt, also had the

²³ The freezing hypothesis was introduced to make party system stability intelligible.

²⁴ In the European Parliament elections in 2004, the new party "Junilistan" scored 14.5 per cent.

most developed patronage systems. According to him the decreasing support of clientelist linkages between citizens and politicians in the 1980s among the citizens also led to a decline in support for democratic institutions, something which prompts the rise of anti-statist populist parties. In Austria, the so-called Proporz system allowed the governing alliance between the Social Democratic party (SPÖ) and the conservative party (ÖVP) to also assign posts in the higher public administration. Returning to the Pathos continuum, the FPÖ breakthrough in the 1999 elections can be at least partly explained by that the established parties have tended to conform to the acceptable normalcy position (see figure 2).

Paul Taggart (2004) brings forth the argument that populism cannot be reduced to the far-right, not to Europe, and in addition, also parties and movements normally described as non-populist may display populist traits. The unitary nature of the heartland makes for a politics of simplicity (2004: 278) and that is what we, according to Taggart, are witnessing today. The distinction between right and left has been replaced by the notion of right and wrong; a shift attributed to the populists, Taggart says (2002; 2004: 279). Indeed, it is not evident these days how we can distinguish between left and right in contemporary politics, something which has been attributed to the internal crisis of social democracy (Mair 2002; Bobbio 1998; Berman 1998). Again, this is perhaps not extraordinary. The political parties' positions on the political field tend to oscillate. Declair explains the rise of the Front National, the archetypical Extreme Right Party (Rydgren 2002), in the early 1970s as a symptom of an inherent crisis in the mainstream right, which suffered from the immense resistance of the De Gaulle government in the late 1960s. Whereas the mainstream right seemed paralysed, the left dominated the student sector and mobilised around a new reformist political agenda. According to Declair (1999: 35), the Front National successfully utilised this void to create a common program that resisted both Gaullism and socialism in France.²⁵

This example illustrates how the new nationalist parties may occupy a market niche both at the left and at the right side of the political spectrum, and also that it is nothing unique that new parties rise when established parties lose popular support. Partisan politics is built around conflicting positions and whereas Paul Taggart tend to argue that the populists dissolve the distinction between left and right, Chantal Mouffe (2000: 2005) could instead assume that the established parties have themselves eroded the dynamic of the political field. My project, in this regard, acknowledges the occasional crystallisation of a void, the opening up of the political space for new political parties in Scandinavian politics between 1928 and 2010.

If what we are witnessing today is, albeit not historically unique, an opening up of the political space; a void that can be filled by new political movements, it is reason to take a closer at the rise of the nationalist parties in Scandinavia. Firstly, all three parties present themselves as representative of the peoples versus a consensus oriented political elite that has betrayed the trust of the people (see also Žižek 2000). Secondly, they claim to be the defenders of the nation against processes normally associated with globalization, but also European Integration. Only a few years ago in the late 1990s, the Party President of the Left party, Gudrun Schyman, claimed to be the contemporary acclaimer and defender of the people's home (Linderborg 2001: 423). However, the Left Party dissolved in two branches, the traditionalists and the reformists and Schyman left the party. In this context, the political

²⁵ The FN example may encourage to focusing on the pathology of representative politics. However, speaking the language of morality [Ethos] and utilising emotive appeals to the people [Pathos], the FN progress challenges a logocentric understanding of representative politics.

field provided a space for any party to adhere to the popular memory of the people's home. The SD representatives employ the people's home metaphor, to persuade the electorate that they are the only true heirs of the Social Democratic heritage (see further Hellström & Nilsson forthcoming). They even proclaimed Per Albin Hansson to be their role model and historic predecessor. For the SD, this move can be considered an attempt to move away from a diffuse party history infected by records in the crime register and Neo-Nazi tinges to become democratically trustworthy in the view of the electorate.

In Norway after the Nazi occupation, the Social Democratic party "Arbeiderpartiet" (Ap) under the chairmanship of Einar Gerhardsen aspired to unite the Norwegian people. They initiated and administrated a series of social reforms to enhance the power of the working population. However, they never managed (or wanted) to turn Norway into a socialist community. After a while, at least if we listen to Magnus E. Marsdal, the Ap developed into party for the established elites and it was increasingly difficult to distinguish between the Ap and their bourgeoisie counterpart. Marsdal infers that the blurring of mainstream politics and the Social Democratic shift to the right explain the progress of the Frp as the party of "the ordinary man".

In Denmark, the results from the parliamentary elections in 2001 showed that the Social Democratic had lost eleven seats in the national parliament and was no longer the grandest party in the Danish parliament (Folketinget), a position it had held since 1920 (Hervik forthcoming: 213). The Liberal Party (Venstre) with Anders Fogh Rasmussen was elected Prime Minister of a governmental coalition together with the conservative party, supported by the Danish People's Party (DF). "In 2002 Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen proudly presented what he considered the world's most restrictive immigration policy" (Hervik forthcoming: 214). The Prime Minister later launched a culture war, a debate about the culture values of the Danish society. It seems relevant to tentatively assert that the DF represents a difference in degree, rather than in kind as anticipated by Cas Mudde (2007a).

In short, this book seeks to explore how the nationalist parties challenge, and also alter the forms and contents of mainstream politics in the Scandinavian countries. Recognising the passions of representative politics, I emphasise the struggles of the people as a basis for how politics is performed and how the Pathos continuum between the acceptable normalcy and the pathological deviance is established differently in Sweden, Denmark and in Norway. I shall now turn to specify the aim of this study.

AIM OF THE STUDY

This book aims to explain the appearance and development of three nationalist parties, by means of scrutinising and comparing changing perceptions of the people in three Scandinavian countries. The main thesis is that the nationalist parties in Sweden, Denmark and in Norway, by acting as the true heirs of Social Democracy - i.e. the proponents of the people - gain resonance for their politics. From this perspective, it is relevant to also consider the Social Democratic parties' perceptions of the people over time. This book endeavours to offer a plausible explanation to why the nationalist parties emerge and develop differently in the Scandinavian countries and it also offers explanations to why the reactions to these parties differ in the three countries. The ambition is, by way of extrapolation, to illuminate differences and similarities concerning the contemporary debate on national self images (and threat images), integration and immigration in the Scandinavian countries. Three questions guide the further direction of this book:

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- What perceptions of the people are articulated by the Swedish Democratic parties in Sweden, Norway and Denmark between 1928 and 2010?
- What perceptions of the people are articulated by the Sweden Democrats, Fremskrittspartiet and Dansk Folkeparti?
- How do the Sweden Democrats, Fremskrittspartiet and Dansk Folkepartiet employ distinct perceptions of the people to generate strategies to define and handle contemporary challenges for the national state?

Comparatively, the Scandinavian countries are typically defined as strong Welfare universal states with long lasting Social Democratic governments (Esping Andersen 1990). As previously indicated, the Social Democratic parties have developed from popular movements in opposition to state preserving parties (Dahlstedt 2009). In different ways they have mobilised support for their politics, emphasising the relation between the people and the elite. These parties have to a large extent framed the national perceptions of the people and the extension of the popular community (*demos*). During the inter war period the Scandinavian Social Democratic parties mobilised around a reformist political agenda, which for instance differed from the German Social Democratic party during the same period (Berman 1998; Witoszek & Trägårdh 2002). However it has become increasingly difficult for the Social Democratic parties to maintain the relation between the people and the elite as a catalyst for progressive politics. This is due to the durable governmental position, but it is also due to the blurrification of mainstream politics in general. The difference, as was argued in the previous section, between the blocs appears to be diminishing (Mouffe 2005; Mair 2002; Kitschelt 2002). The three nationalist parties take advantage of this void in two different ways. Firstly, they present themselves as the true democratic option; i.e. the peoples' proponents against the established elites and the values that these elites allegedly cherish (Žižek 2000). Secondly, they present themselves as the defenders of the nation against the supra-nationalisation of the EU and globalisation (Mudde 2007b; Taggart 2004). The nationalist parties all around Europe have quickly adjusted their rhetoric to circumstances that - also according to the established parties (Appadurai 2006; Bauman 2004; Hellström 2008) - leaves European societies more apprehensive. To analyse this development and the intricate relation between the nationalist parties and the established parties, I suggest that we critically engage not only the political content, but also with the forms of politics; i.e. the political style. In the following, I consider some methodological issues before I present the outline of this book.

METHODOLOGICAL REMARKS

This study concerns the study of ideas, more precisely perceptions of the people as manifest in the Scandinavian countries from the 1920s and on to our days. Ideas represent both perceptions of reality (IS) and normative prescriptions on how to act (CAN) to achieve certain goals (OUGHT). Ideas constitute specific cognitive filters through which we perceive the world, as opposed to for instance less durable impressions and attitudes (Bergström & Boréus 2000: 149). As previously noted, the idea of people's home was in the speech by Per Albin Hansson described as both a vision of a future class less national community and a concrete plan of action of how to achieve this aim. In the speech, the popular community condense the whole population, something which challenged perceptions of the people as representing only a part of the population; the working class according to the Left and the patriotic citizens according to the right. According to Ernesto Laclau (2005: 224), it is "in

this contamination of the universality of the *populus* by the partiality of the *plebs* that the peculiarity of ‘the people’ as a historical actor lies”. The struggles of the people consists of contrasting perceptions of the configuration of the popular community; of what constitutes the societal body and what demarcates its’ demos. Perceptions of the people may stem from ideas of origin and inherited heritage (*ius sanguis*), but may also relate to the territorially affiliated citizens who are entitled to vote in the national elections (*ius soli*). As was shown before, perceptions of the people also correspond to a certain mentality (or what we today tend to refer to as culture or cultural differences); i.e. ideal types of the real Swede or the real Dane. Perceptions of the people separate “us” (we, who belong to the demos) from “them” (they, who do not). By way of illustration, DF representatives in Denmark claimed that the Muslims do not understand the particular Danish humour typical for all Danish people, for that reason they cannot be considered “real Danes” unless they choose to assimilate well and thus let go with their original “culture” (Hervik: forthcoming).

The choice of the Social Democracy as a point of reference to explain the appearance and development of the nationalist parties in the three countries is due to that disappointed Social Democrats are, to some extent, inclined to vote for these parties. However it is also the case that voters from all over the political spectrum show to be attracted to the nationalist parties’ politics, both in content and in form. Perhaps more important is that the progress of the nationalists cohere in time with a significant decline in voter support for the Social Democratic parties. In other words, the progress of the nationalist parties coincides with the crystallisation of a void. In the early 1970s the Social Democrats in Denmark and in Norway lost many voters at the same time as nationalist parties were formed and soon established on the political arena (Widfeldt 2000; Fryklund & Peterson 1981). In Sweden there was a similar development in the early 1990s when Ny Demokrati entered the parliament in 1991 (Westlind 1996) and now also after 2006 when the Social Democratic lost the elections to an alliance of liberal and conservative parties, and the SD took seats in half the country’s municipalities (Hellström & Nilsson forthcoming).

The study is based on a similar case design. The advantage is that one can assume that many contextual variables are similar and it is thus easier to explain varieties between the cases. The analysis is based on relatively open questions: what constitutes the people (and the popular will)? What constitutes the elite? How is the relation between the people and the elite manifested? What is that threatens the popular community?

	WHAT CONSTITUTES THE PEOPLE?	WHAT CONSTITUTES THE ELITE?	HOW IS THE RELATION BETWEEN THE PEOPLE AND THE ELITE MANIFESTED?	WHAT THREATENS THE POPULAR COMMUNITY?
Social Democratic Party (Sweden)				
Sweden Democrats (Sweden)				
Arbeiderpartiet (Norway)				
Fremskrittspartiet (Norway)				
Arbeiderpartiet (Denmark)				
Dansk Folkeparti (Denmark)				

Figure 3. Analytical scheme for analyzing the populist divide.

Asking these questions, I expect to identify changing perceptions of the people for each party over time; for instance the shift from class to people in the 1920s or a perception of a whole population (the Danes) that fear Islamism after 2001. The ambition is to as far as possible avoid making rash, and anachronistic inferences based on the historical material put into scrutiny. My approach is not based on *a priori* assumptions of that the Scandinavian countries are either racist or not-racist, rather I highlight continuities and ruptures in the Scandinavian countries as regards to how peoplehood is imagined, how differences are accommodated in the national imaginary and how common-sense knowledge is established in the public discourse. The struggles of the people involves antagonistic articulations of peoplehood as manifest in the public debate around immigration and integration. The average man does not exist in reality, however perceptions of him do. So how is ‘the people’ constructed in the Scandinavian established national-states societies; what separates citizens from non-citizens; and what characterises the wills, needs and interest of the people and what does not; what is that the people are afraid of and what changes do they embrace? Exploring the semantic field of the people in various historical contexts, I assess the concordance of the nationalist parties and the historically rooted people’s discourse in each country, and I also recognise how the nationalist parties endeavor to tackle current challenges for the national state.

OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

In this section, I will briefly present the contents of the rest of the book following this outline (figure 4):

Chapter 1	Passions of Representative Politics
Chapter 2	The emergent democratic state
Chapter 3	The Populist Divide
Chapter 4	The realisation of the People’s Home
Chapter 5	Looking for the Other
Chapter 6	The politics of fear
Chapter 7	We are the Good Guys
Chapter 8	Belonging/s in Europe

Figure 4. Chapter Outline

The second chapter concerns the close semblance between nationalism and the emergent democratic state in the three countries. In the codification of the democratic state through means of nationalism, perceptions of the people are essential to demarcate the national demos (Witoszek & Trägårdh 2002; Näsström 2007). This chapter concerns how ideologies of nationalism are used to maintain solidarity to the national state; to banally reproduce state solidarity in everyday practices and ceremonial events (Billig 1995; Calhoun 2008; Blehr 2000). This chapter, then, suggests that we can explain the emergence of nationalist parties in contemporary politics as closely linked to a historically rooted perception of a solid national community. If we conjoin with Billig, the concept of nationalism covers the ideological means by which nation-states are reproduced. Limiting our understanding of nationalism to the “property of others” (Billig 1995: 17) obscures the fact that nationalist ideologies, most typically, are represented as something “natural” and thus not nationalist at all. The chapter also includes an empirical analysis of the development of the Social Democratic political project between 1928 and 1945 concerning perceptions of the people and peoplehood. Certainly, the fact that both Norway and Denmark were occupied by Nazi Germany, though Sweden was not, tentatively explains varieties in the perceptions of the people. In the

chapter I will also locate the position of the Social Democratic parties along the Pathos continuum (figure 2), comparing the three countries in this regard.

The third chapter deals theoretically with the relation between populism and democracy. It argues that pejorative uses of the concept of populism in both public discourse and among scholars dodge the close semblance between populism and representative politics; between nationalism and democracy. The category of the people, usually described as the trademark of populism, is essential for any political party that aspires to gain votes. Populism as an ideology (thin or not) may lead us to pin-point a particular (radical) Populist Party family with certain observable characteristics, but this intellectual venture does not really “talk to” the theoretical discussion on populism that devotes attention to a particular political activity that concern the defining and naming of the represented object. The confusion that arises has led many scholars (e.g. Betz & Johnson 2004; Ignazi 2003; Canovan 1981; Freedman 1998; Abts & Rummens 2002) to pose populism as antithetical democracy whereas others tend to argue that populism is a permanent feature of modern representative politics (Laclau 2005; Stavrakakis 2004; Näsström 2007; Canovan 2004). The ambition with this chapter is to present an analytical framework for the study of the populist divide between the people and the elite in representative politics from 1928-2010, emphasising perceptions of the people, peoplehood and the popular will.

The fourth chapter concerns the realisation of the people’s home and the development of welfare reforms in Norway, Denmark and Sweden after 1945 and up to 1972. This period is characterised by long time Social Democratic governments and I here identify perceptions of the people that incrementally transgress class barriers to involve the whole population. The chapter further emphasises the emergence of the nationalist progress parties in Denmark and in Norway in the national elections which were held in 1973. In Denmark, Morten Glistrup’s Progress Party reached considerable electoral support in Denmark while the Social Democracy loses many voters and in Norway Anders Lange’s party (later this party changed names to the Progress party) manages to cross the electoral threshold to the national parliament as the Social Democratic party lost more than 10 per cent of its’ voters. In Sweden no such party managed to affect the hitherto stable five party system in Sweden. Can we assume differing perceptions of the people from 1945 to 1989 to account for this difference? How are the two Progress parties in Denmark and in Norway positioned on the Pathos Continuum?

The fifth chapter concerns the period between 1990 and 2001, the party structure in the three countries opens up a void and thus provides a space for new political contesters, such as the right-wing nationalist party Ny Demokrati (NyD) in Sweden that gained seats in the national parliament in 1991 and the Danish People’s Party that was established in Denmark in 1997. Perceptions of the people are, during this period, affected by changing relations to the European Communities (EC). Denmark was already a member of the community, but in public referenda the people first voted down the Maastricht Treaty in public referenda and whereas Sweden chose to join the EC in 1995 Norway decided not to. In turn, all three countries experienced movements and parties hostile of increased immigration. Again there is reason to scrutinise how the parties employ the Pathos dimension in their political communication, to account for fluctuations along the Pathos Continuum. .

The sixth chapter focuses on the period from after 9/11 to our days. It is by now rather evident that the Social Democratic party suffers from an identity crisis and the nationalist parties gain further impact in all the countries. Apart from analysing party material, this chapter also includes media material to bring forth the changing nature of the integration debate in the three countries. This chapter also tests directly the validity of the claim that the

nationalist parties predominantly gain resonance for their politics by acting as the true heirs of Social Democracy, i.e. the proponents of the people.

The seventh chapter deals explicitly with the reactions of the established parties to the progress of the nationalist parties in the three Scandinavian countries. At this stage, I will turn to the public debate around these parties and their politics to highlight fluctuations on the Pathos continuum (figure 2). The eighth chapter, finally, situates the public debate in Scandinavia in a wider European context. Can we understand the normalisation of populism in European societies through means of exploring the passions of representative politics? Is contemporary European politics completely disenchanted, and if not, is the alternative a common sense pathology that justify xenophobia by democratic means?

EPILOGUE

In spring 2009, it was officially announced that the Swedish Crown Princess Victoria was engaged with the gym instructor Daniel Westling. Some were happy to celebrate that finally there was a new Royal family in the making. Yet others were upset with the fact that the Crown Princess was engaged with a man of the people and not a man with noble decent, as this risk to deploring the royal glance. The republicans were also enthusiastic as they heralded the end of the Swedish monarchy. All the three Scandinavian countries are constitutional monarchies; neither of the monarchs plays any politically significant role. The TV-interview with the couple was broadcasted via You Tube, and their engagement became a topic of conversation at various kitchen tables. Does only formal politics matter for how we should account for the so-called crisis of representation? Is it the case that the modern representative democracies have lost their passionate appeal? Probably not. Vernacular activities matter for the degree of trust in the representative institutions.

To discern popular perceptions of the people in the Scandinavian countries may reveal something about how we view ourselves in relation to others; to scrutinise the Pathos continuum between acceptable normalcy and pathological deviance may reveal something about the passions of representative politics. The speech by Per-Albin Hansson in 1928 is not a mere instrumental manifestation of a political programme; it is also a passionate appeal to the people. The royal wedding between the crown princess Victoria and the gym instructor Daniel Westling is not a mere engagement between two (rather) young people committed to marriage, but a manifestation of national pride and state continuity. The king is dead, long live the king.

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