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The Politics of Globalisation:
A Comparative Analysis of the New Radical Centre in France, Italy and Spain

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Introduction

The results of the latest European elections all share a common challenge to our interpretative comprehension of politics: can the categories of Left and Right – the "grand dichotomy of the twentieth century" (Lukes, 2003) – still be considered as the political compass that should guide the political action and its analysis? Most of the newly rising political movements – often labelled "populist parties" – would assert they cannot, and the fact that they are enjoying an increasing success in national elections (as they probably will do at European elections in 2019) by making an appeal based on issues that do not strictly pertain to the left/right cleavage would suggest they are right. The domain that is instead emphasised by such movements is the one that opposes two different (normative) conceptions of society, one supporting what Popper called "Open Society" (Popper, 1945) and the other opposing to it the model of a particularistic and community-based society. The left/right dyad has nonetheless proved to have a considerable resilience, as demonstrates the fact that the same movements that challenge it are often themselves identified on the base of their leftist or rightist orientation – thus distinguishing populist parties of the "right" from "leftist" populist parties. What this hints at is that rather than their absolute dissolution, we are witnessing a structural transformation of the two categories – that have been matching with ideological orientations on another dimensional space, different from the horizontal spatialization that we are used to imagine, dividing a leftist and a rightist pole.

In order to understand such evolutions, one cannot but refer to the phenomenon that lies behind the change in the structure of modern societies and consequently of the way politics is laid out: globalisation. As a matter of fact, a close look at the issues that construct the ideological backbone of the above mentioned movements points at what seems to be a world-view concerning globalisation – namely in its features belonging to the two dimensions that characterise it: an economic dimension (encompassing, generally speaking, issues of economic globalisation and of international macroeconomic integration, that in Europe translate into a stance on the eurocurrency and on the legitimacy of European Treaties such as the Fiscal Compact) and a cultural dimension (encompassing issues of immigration, multiculturalism and in the EU framework of European integration). The two opposite extremes that would result from this conceptualisation of politics can be embodied in the figures of the two opponents at the second round of the French presidential election of 2017: on one side Emmanuel Macron, favourable to both economic and cultural globalisation, on the other Marine Le Pen, a harsh critic of both.

However, if – already from the '80s (when it was Marine's father Jean-Marie to be the object of discussion) – the literature has paid a great deal of attention to the family of Le Pen-like "populist

parties" that appealed to the so-called "losers" of globalisation, less attention has been given to a specular response that has started to solidify in later years, with the Third Way experiment as a kick-start – with the intention to rally "winners" of globalisation. This response stands today before our eyes and has started to build a transnational solidarity evident right after the election of Emmanuel Macron, who has gained the support of – among others – two of his colleagues in Italy and Spain: Matteo Renzi and Albert Rivera. A solidarity which could potentially result in the formation of a pan-European movement, assembling on a common platform that – in terms of left/right semantics – proposes centrist (rightist-leaning) recipes and – as far as the attitude on globalisation is concerned – supports *integration* on both the economic and the cultural dimensions. If globalisation has succeeded in uniting both its supporters and its opponents in coherent and uniform political groups, then talking about a "politics of globalisation" seems justified.

The aim of this study is to establish a general profile of an up until now neglected party family: that composed by the French En Marche!, the Italian PD under Renzi's secretariat and the Spanish Ciudadanos. Thus, it will be structured in the following way: Chapter One will lay out the general picture of the electoral rise of the three movements, describing their different national paths and briefly outlining the profile both of the three young politicians who have succeeded in making a rapid breakthrough in the political environment of their countries and of the movements/parties they lead; Chapter Two will then analyse, with the help of the literature on the topic, the roots of the transformation that European politics has undergone – both in the demand and in the supply side – during the years when globalisation has had the most pressing effects on European societies, a transformation which is essential to grasp in order to put the movements analysed into the adequate context; finally, Chapter Three will get into the details of the political *habitat* where the three movements operate – trying to corroborate the theoretical framework presented in the second chapter – and verifying the common grounds, in terms of policy platforms, between Macron, Renzi and Rivera's movements. In such a way the dispute around the destiny of the left/right dichotomy will be at least less controversial and, were we to witness one day a transnational confrontation between political forces that claim to represent neither one pole nor the other of the dichotomy[1], we could easily discern what are the real ideological (and historical-ideological) roots of such forces.

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[1] For instance: were the proposal of having pan-European lists at the European elections put into practice.

CHAPTER ONE – Macron, Renzi, Rivera: The Revenge of Third Way Politics?

When walking towards the stage built in front of the Louvre's pyramid, the night of May 7th 2017, many detractors have ironically commented that the only things Emmanuel Macron lacked were a white horse and a triangular hat; had they been there, we would have assisted to the coronation of Macron Bonaparte.

If such critics are not without a partisan attachment[2], there might be in any case some elements that enable us to link the current French President of the Republic to the First Emperor of the French, Napoleon. These, however, do not pertain to the sphere of their personality or to the extent of their power, but rather concern the political background of France: the period that goes from the defeat of Napoleon to the election of Macron is the period during which the French political confrontation has been chiefly centred on the dyad Left-Right. Indeed, the categorisation was born during the parliamentary session of 1819-1820 (even if many scholars mark the French Revolution as its birth period), as a way to distinguish between liberals and royalists (Lukes, 2003), and has ever since evolved into different forms – covering various socio-economic aspects such as the opposition between progressives and conservatives and, especially from the post-war period, the disposition to accept economic redistribution.

Probably the most complete and exhaustive definition of the categories of Left and Right has been provided by Italian thinker Norberto Bobbio, who distinguished the two according to the attitude towards (social and natural) equality – so that the former "condemns social inequality in the name of natural equality, and the [latter] condemns social equality in the name of natural inequality" (Bobbio, 1997, pp. 68-69).

With the advent of a President who has proclaimed to be *ni de gauche ni de droite* when launching its movement *En Marche!* in 2016 (Le Monde, 2016), has the homeland of the century-old dichotomy paved the way to its extinction?

1.1 Beyond Left and Right?

To tell the truth, during his campaign Macron has adopted a slightly different stance: rather than being *neither* a leftist *nor* a rightist, he affirmed to be *both* a leftist *and* a rightist (Haddad, 2017). Evidently, a bald anti-ideological statement like the one he had made in 2016 in such an ideology-pervaded country[3] could not last long. Or, alternatively, the would-be President happened to read Bobbio's

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[2] Specifically, they come most of the times from members of the opposition, who criticize the amount of power detained by the French President under the Fifth Republic – allegedly transforming France into a *monarchie republicaine*, after the phrase of a Gaullist who supervised the drafting of the 1958 Constitution, Michel Debré.

[3] It is not uncommon to hear, in France, that "when someone asks whether the split between left and right still makes sense, she is certainly not a leftist" – coming from a quote from French radical philosopher Alain (Beau de Lomenie,

distinction between the *included* and the *inclusive* middle, the former "drawing Left and Right apart" and the latter "incorporating them in a higher synthesis" (Bobbio, 1997, p. 7), and understood his project had much more chances by adopting an inclusive platform rather than an exclusive one – as already done by his ally François Bayrou with his centrist movement MoDem, and, until 2007, with the UDF (*Union pour la Démocracie Française* – Union for French Democracy)[4].

1.1.1 The legacy of Tony Blair

Macron's project, that of bypassing an ideological opposition typical of last century, is actually not without precedents. One must only recall the glorious momentum that brought Tony Blair to power with his "New Labour", from 1997 to 2007, winning three consecutive elections and starting a wave of reformist politics that was renamed Third Way – in order to distinguish the pre-1989 dichotomy between Socialism and Capitalism from the unavoidable necessity, in a time of globalisation, of embracing a market-oriented approach, even and especially for Social-Democratic parties: "the left" – in the words of sociologist Anthony Giddens, frequently posited as the theoriser of the Third Way – "has to get comfortable with markets", which basically means that it must "develop a wide-ranging supply-side policy" (Giddens, 1998, pp. 34; 52), the opposite of the Keynesian focus on the demand-side historically adopted by parties of the left. This economic acceptance of market fundamentalism, however restrained by criteria of social justice, together with a positive stance on the cultural effects of globalisation that often results in a political bid for cosmopolitanism constituted what Giddens thought of as a new way of doing radical politics, going beyond categories that might have preserved an ideological value, but have lost any practical use (Giddens, 1994).

With Blair's departure from 10 Downing Street, weakened by the war in Irak, the crisis of the NHS and the "authoritarian drift that was transforming the country into 'cruel Britannia'" (Faucher-King & Le Galès, 2010, p. 1), and once the government experience of his main reformist colleagues – Bill Clinton, Gerhard Schröder and, to a lesser degree, his successor Gordon Brown – had extinguished, Third Way politics seemed to have had become a thing of the past in Europe, buried by pressures from within Social-Democratic parties and constituencies[5] and from the external political landscape, whose centrifugal competition was starting to bilaterally besiege the centre as the responsible of a catastrophic preservation of a *status quo* that ultimately led to the 2008 economic crisis.

1931, p. 64); also, another quip comes from Socialist President Mitterrand, who famously stated that "the centre is neither on the left nor… on the left" (*le centre c'est ni de gauche ni de gauche*").

[4] Whose highest score was the 18.6 percent obtained in the 2007 Presidential election that granted it the third place (Le Bras, 2017).

[5] The British Labour Party gradually shifted to the left, first under the un-successful leadership of Ed Milliband (2010-2015) and then adopting (for the first time) a socialist outlook with the twice-elected leader Jeremy Corbyn; the French *Parti Socialiste*, influenced by Michel Rocard's anti-Mitterrandian centrist school of thought since 1993, in 2012 brought Francois Hollande to power, who – although he certainly ruled in a centrist fashion – proclaimed to be "the enemy of finance" just before the election (Europe1, 2012).

At least until Macron's election. The triumph of the former Socialist Minister of the Economy apparently unveiled a crowd of Schröders and Clintons who were waiting for their Tony Blair to follow.

1.1.2 A new triumvirate

Two in particular manifested – via the preferred channel of the new generation of politicians to which they belong, Twitter – their excitement at Emmanuel Macron's victorious run-off in the overt effort of highlighting their personal similarities with the French leader: the first, the then Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi, describing Macron's victory as "an extraordinary page of hope for France and Europe" and launching the Italian version (via the use of a hashtag) of "*En Marche*", "*#incammino*"[6]; the second, leader of the Spanish centrist movement *Ciudadanos* Albert Rivera, presenting what seemed a list of the winner's features that closely resembled his own: "39 years-old, liberal, progressist, pro-european and willing to unite French people"[7].

The cheering at the newly-elected French President was only the tip of an iceberg that started well before and included a two (what was to become three)-sided mutual support, with Macron thanking Rivera for "sharing [his] project for a reformist Europe"[8] and borrowing, during his campaign, some proposals already put in place by Renzi's Government such as the "culture bonus" devoted to 18 years-olds (ANSA, 2017). Little wonder that after only some months of Macron's presidency, they would already be said to be about to launch a new, pan-European project together (ANSA, 2018).

1.1.3 "What Emmanuel Macron grasped"

Unsurprisingly, also the political father of the three *enfants prodiges* of 2010s Third Way Politics did not abstain to manifest all his satisfaction after Emmanuel Macron defeated Ms. Le Pen. "The politics of the progressive centre – maintains Tony Blair – is the only way populism can be defeated" and "what Emmanuel Macron grasped, is that the only serious response [to populism] is not to ignore the concerns which are genuine and understandable; but rather to explain the answers which will truly advance the interests of the people". "A lot rests on the Macron Presidency – concludes the former British Prime Minister – […] but the direction is good, the compass is sound and there are many, the world over, who are on the same journey." (Blair, 2017)

1.2 Emmanuel Macron: tale of an unprecedented election

Apart from the judgement upon Macron's platform, which is conditional on one's ideological orientation, there is one part of Blair's analysis which is objectively debatable. If he has presented the former French Minister's victory as relying upon a strong "basic appeal", the reality is much more

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[6] https://twitter.com/matteorenzi/status/861282581899341824?lang=en.
[7] https://twitter.com/albert_rivera/status/861298247389892608?lang=en.
[8] https://twitter.com/emmanuelmacron/status/820662478258532352?lang=en.

shaded. First, Macron's path towards the Presidency has been replete with fortunate circumstances: from the two mainstream parties' primaries which were hostages of *hardcore partisans* (Norrander, 1989) who transformed an instrument of force and unity, the selection of the presidential candidate by the party's base, into an element of destabilising polarisation[9] (Teinturier, 2017; Martigny, 2017) to the suicidal rivalries in both camps that opposed the PS and LR's outsiders to the two anti-systemic figures of Jean-Luc Mélenchon and Marine Le Pen; from the scandal that affected Fillon and his family just some weeks before the first round (and when he was given by the polls as almost-sure first placed) (Hewlett, 2017) to the French semi-presidential system that grants immense powers to forces that attract the consensus of a little more than 20 percent of the ballots in the first round and, finally, Macron's second-round opponent *Front National* (FN) leader Marine Le Pen, against whom he was able to rally a *Front Républicain* as Chirac did in 2002 against Marine's father[10] – Macron was able to exploit, indeed very skilfully, an unprecedented opportunity that opened him a highway on the centre of the ideological spectrum. Moreover, it should be pointed out that while 20 million French citizens voted for him at the run-off, 11 million voted for Le Pen, 12 million did not go to the ballot boxes and four million people voted blanc or null (Macke, 2017).

For all these reasons (and many others), the cycle of French elections started in November 2016 with the selection of the 2017 presidential candidate of the right and the centre (Teinturier, 2017), and concluded on 18th June 2017 with the second round of the legislative elections (Marcé & Chiche, 2017), has with all certainties been the most disruptive one in the history of the French Fifth Republic (Perrineau, 2017). In a sense, the sequence of uncommon circumstances that have taken place one after the other and that have led to a second round where not only the two candidates of the PS and LR were both excluded for the first time[11], but where both finalists refused the Left-Right cleavage (Perrineau, 2017), could not but result in the election of a man who had never held an elective office, who had behind him a movement, *La République En Marche* (LREM), that was only one year-old and with which he would obtain 308 seats out of 577 (53.38 percent) in the National Assembly – being able to form a parliamentary majority on its own (Kuhn, 2017).

1.2.1 The candidature

The presidential adventure of Emmanuel Macron started on November 16th 2016 when, after he resigned as a Minister of Hollande's Socialist Government one month before, he announced his

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[9] That led to the candidature of Benoit Hamon, exponent of the radical leftist wing of the French Socialist Party – PS, who based his campaign on the proposal of a universal basic income, and of François Fillon, who pushed *Les Républicains* – LR on the right insisting on anti-Islamic and identity issues and defeating the moderate Alain Juppé, much closer to Macron's positions.

[10] Although the two elections differ substantially, see Jaffré (2017).

[11] Only two times before had a Socialist candidate been excluded, in the cases of Defferre in 1969 and Jospin in 2002, while for *Les Républicains* it was an absolute novelty (Kuhn, 2017).

candidature at the head a newly-founded movement, *En Marche!*, whose name bore (not casually) his initials (Bonnefous & Pietralunga, 2016).

The vision of the former banker at Rothschild, who graduated at the top French *Grands Ecoles* of Sciences Po and the ENA (*Ecole Nationale d'Administration* – National School of Administration), was exposed only eight days later with the publishing of his book 'Revolution' (Macron, 2016). In his manifesto, he laid out what would be the key points of both his campaign and the first part of his Presidency: a providential outlook (his would soon be called a 'Jupiterian' presidency) that relies on the figure of Charles De Gaulle and the related mythology according to which the presidential election is *le rencontre d'un homme et d'un people* (the meeting of a man and a people), a strong political power to be assigned to the presidential functions and to be applied vertically, the rallying of the progressists in the name of the bypassing of divisive and old cleavages, together with some programmatic points – laid out in the Chapter "The Great Transformation", with an unveiled reference to Karl Polanyi – about the necessity to integrate the economy in the global markets, thus mixing flexibility and security[12] (Strudel, 2017).

1.2.2 The road to success

After about one month from his announcement, in December 2016, the French President Hollande, pressed by his rising unpopularity (in that month only 19 percent of people approved his presidency) and by the rising popularity of the Minister who had "betrayed him with method"[13] (in the same month Macron's popularity was above 50 percent) (Martigny, 2017), announced he would be the first French President not to run for a second mandate (Kuhn, 2017). This, summed up with the previous victory of LR's right-wing faction with Fillon, the success of Hamon's leftist stance in the PS and the other key renouncement of centrist François Bayrou to stand in the presidential election in order to support him, meant for Macron one simple and crucial thing: *le centre* was all his (Le Bras, 2017).

The fortunate circumstances that Macron encountered were, however, not over. Also another atypical situation for the French Fifth Republic seemed to push the odds of his success even higher: for the first time, the potential winners of the election were not – as it had always been the case – two, but no fewer than four, and they included two personalities who were seen as extremists by the public opinion (Mélenchon on the left and Le Pen on the right). As a consequence, many voters did not cast – on 23rd April – a vote "by conviction" but a so-called *vote utile* (Kuhn, 2017), that is to say they voted the candidate that according to them (and to the polls) had more chances to access the run-off and defeat either the left's main fear, Marine Le Pen, or the right's biggest enemy, Jean-Luc

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[12] For a more detailed discussion of his programmatic platform, see Chapter Three.
[13] As Hollande said when Macron left his Government (Revault d'Allonnes, 2016).

Mélenchon[14]. If this strategy's unavoidable victim was surely Hamon's PS, its winner was as evident: Emmanuel Macron, as demonstrates the fact that 53 percent of his first round electors voted him although "he [didn't] correspond to [their] ideas" but because "he [had] the most chances to pass through the second round" and, what is more, the fact that his capacity to be present at the run-off was determinant for 78 percent of his voters, compared to an average of 62 percent for the other candidates' (Strudel, 2017, pp. 211-212).

1.2.3 The glorious verdicts

Emmanuel Macron would indeed win the first round (contradicting the polls) with 24.01 percent of the ballots, expecting to face (and expecting to win, as suggested by his probably dis-proportionate celebrations after the victory of the 23rd April) Marine Le Pen – who arrived to a record for the FN, with 21.30 percent of the vote, surpassing by more than one point both Fillon and Mélenchon, respectively third and fourth-placed (Kuhn, 2017).

The history of the campaign during the two weeks that divided the elections is a history of how the candidates tried to cope with a fate that seemed inevitable, and that was tried to be reversed by both the indirect efforts of Mélenchon (who invited his supporters to vote neither candidate, as many did voting blanc) (Clavel, 2017) and the direct efforts of Le Pen, who tried to rally the anti-establishment front but whose chances sank after her poor performance (she "committed electoral suicide by television", as commented by Raymond Kuhn (2017, pp. 367-369)) at the pre-election debate against her opponent, too calm and knowledgeable to be tricked.

As expected, on May 8th Macron defeated Le Pen with 66.10 of the vote, becoming the youngest French President of the Republic and ready to start his "Revolution" – celebrated by the troop made of the Schröders and Clintons who had finally received their new Tony Blair.

All the more so after the two-round legislative elections of June 2017, that gave Macron's LREM an absolute majority of the seats with 43 percent of the suffrage – leaving LR as a quasi-unique opposition[15] with 22.2 percent of the vote and 112 seats (Rouban, 2017).

Combined with the fracture produced by the Presidential elections, however, the results of the legislatives highlighted the symptoms of the illness of French democracy: the abstention, 51.3 percent at the first round, topped a historical high of 57.3 at the run-offs; those who voted blanc, instead, were 7 percent of the voters at the second round (Rouban, 2017). A portrait in stark contrast with that described by Tony Blair, where France arrived at Macron's election because "at each electoral point

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[14] For a discussion of the *minimax regret theory*, according to which citizens choose the option that will minimise their maximum possible regret after the election, see Ferejohn & Fiorina (1974).

[15] That would however immediately crumble after a part of the parliamentary group, renamed the "constructives", announced its will to support Macron's Government (Domenach & Pérou, 2017).

in those years, the country has desired change, knows it is necessary, has tried all the alternatives and has finally come to the point where it will do it" (Blair, 2017).

In reality, Macron's apotheosis hid a much more fragmented scenario. A similar scenario to those witnessed by two of his estimators in the other main Mediterranean countries, Spain and Italy.

1.3 Albert Rivera: a freshman against veterans

One of the few pros of Twitter when it comes to the relationship between communication and politics probably concerns neither of the two sides communicating, politicians and voters, but only benefits a third party composed of passive spectators: analysts, commentators, journalists, political scientists. Indeed, there is no better (and easier) way to detach a political actor's orientation than to follow her comments on the social platform. It is the case also for Albert Rivera, a massive user of the social network who, on the front page of his personal profile, has provided a personal description which constitutes – in 133 characters – at the same time a CV, a personal stance and a political platform. "Catalunya is my land, Spain is my country and Europe is our future" he writes, alternating Catalan, Spanish and English in the same sentence.

The quote captures much of the history of *Ciudadanos* (C's), the movement headed by Rivera since July 2006 – that is to say the date of the first party congress, where the leader obtained the consensus of a majority (350) of party delegates that was never to be missing in the future congresses (Rodríguez Teruel & Barrio, 2016). The party stem from a manifesto named "For a New Political Party" (Company, 2005), presented in June 2005 by a group of Catalan intellectuals who refused the wave of nationalism/separatism that had appropriated Catalan politics and that was at that point already consensual among both the centre-right (namely by the coalition of *Convergència i Unió* - Convergence and union, headed by the famous nationalist leader Jordi Pujol) and the left, which came to power in the regional elections of 2003 with an alliance between the Socialists, the ex-communist Greens and the Republican left (Rodríguez Teruel & Barrio, 2016).

1.3.1 2006-2009: Birth and crisis in Catalonia

The initial steps of the party were indeed made only at the regional level of Catalonia, where they entered the *Generalitat* (the Catalan Parliament) in the elections of November 2006, with three MPs and around 90,000 votes – making C's the first newcomer to enter the Parliament since 1992 (Rodríguez Teruel & Barrio, 2016). Interestingly for the party's future in Spanish politics, already in its first political appointment C's borrowed its consensus equally from former voters of the Catalan Socialist Party (PSC – *Partit dels Socialistes de Catalunya*, the regional branch of the national PSOE, *Partido Socialista Obrero Español* – Spanish Socialist Workers' Party) and the *Partido Popular* (PP – Popular Party) (Pellarés & Muñoz, 2008), while its focus was mainly on identity, linguistic and cultural issues such as transparency and democracy (Ciudadanos, 2006).

The initial (unexpected) success was followed by a period of relative failure for the party, that lasted until 2009. During this period, Ciudadanos tried to expand outside the boundaries of the Catalan region – failing to attract much consensus in some 2007 local elections, in the 2008 Andalusian and General elections and in the 2009 European elections (Rodríguez Teruel & Barrio, 2016). The disappointment became evident at the June 2007 party congress, where Rivera secured a victory only by a narrow margin and many members consequently abandoned the party (Casal, 2007) and reached its highest point when, after the 2009 fiasco at the European elections, two crucial MPs resigned, splitting the parliamentary group (Mayor, 2009).

The period of crisis, that led many to consider the party a failed project – also due to its rivalry against another centrist party, UPyD (*Unión Progreso y Democracia* – Union, Progress and Democracy), that was founded in Madrid in 2007 and that had a rather similar profile to C's, namely in its criticism of Spanish separatist movements as well as of the still prevalent structure of Spanish two-party system (Rodríguez Teruel & Barrio, 2016) – was to result in the decisive turn that led Rivera's party to abolish any internal criticism and to affirm itself at the national level.

1.3.2 2010-2014: The national turn

It is 2010 that marks the beginning of Ciudadanos's affirmation. The party succeeded to exploit a period of political turmoil in Catalonia that ensued a sentence by the Spanish Constitutional Court declaring some articles of the new Catalan Statute void, specifically concerning national symbols, the use of the Catalan language, powers relating to Justice and guarantees on financial transfers (Pericay, 2010). The party thus rallied the anti-nationalist front, raising its votes first to 105,000 in the November 2010 Catalan election (Rico, 2012), which allowed the party to hold its three seats, and then to 275,000 votes (and nine seats) after the election held two years later in the region – where the party started to pose a serious threat to mainstream parties (Rico & Liñeira, 2014). From then on, Ciudadanos assembled one success after another.

Accomplice the deteriorating economic and political situation of the country, the then uncontested *de facto* two-party system that had structured political confrontation with an alternation in office of the Socialist PSOE and the right-of-centre PP started to tremble. Following the economic recession of 2008 that led GDP growth rate to fall from 1.1 percent in 2008 to -2.6 percent in 2012, with the unemployment rate increasing from 11.3 to 24.8 percent (Orriols & Cordero, 2016), Spain was obliged – as other Mediterranean countries – to adopt some austerity measures, first under the socialist government of Rodríguez Zapatero and then, after he called for general elections in November 2011, under Rajoy's PP which had in the meantime largely won (44.6 percent of the votes) and which would be later also involved in two financial bailouts (Orriols & Cordero, 2016). This, together with the corruption scandals that affected the perception of political responsiveness (Torcal, 2014) and that

invested particularly the *Partido Popular[16],* sparked some massive mobilisations, giving rise to two network associations, Real Democracy Now! (*Democracia Real Ya!*) and Youth Without Future (*Juventud Sin Futuro*), advocating against austerity measures and corruption, in favour of "real democracy" and giving birth to the 2011 *Indignados* movement (Vidal, 2018; Orriols & Cordero, 2016).

This situation of social unrest opened the space for the imposition of new parties (Hernández & Kriesi, 2016), a space that would indeed be occupied by Podemos (P's) and Ciudadanos.

The success of the two challengers was evident since the European elections of 2014, where the former obtained 1.2 million votes and five MEPs and the latter half a million votes and two MEPs. The real success of Ciudadanos, however, apart from the access to the European Parliament, was that it achieved, for the first time, a positive result at the national level.

Since 2014, Ciudadanos has ceased to be a regional party confined to Catalonia.

1.3.3 2015– : From regional Opposition to national Government?

It is the following year – 2015 – that oficially marks the end of the Spanish two party system (Orriols & Cordero, 2016). After the peak of 18.8 percent of the votes reached in the September 2015 Catalan elections, that made Ciudadanos the main opposition party in the *Generalitat*, the electoral campaign for the general elections of 20th December 2015 started with C's scoring for the first time better than Podemos in the polls (Llaneras, 2015). The results of that election were basically a list of records for the country: even though the PP and the PSOE were still the first two parties, they jointly achieved only 50.7 percent of the votes – a historical low; for the first time, a third political party (P's) attained more than 20 percent of the vote (Orriols & Cordero, 2016); what is more, Rajoy's PP only won 123 seats out of 350 (35.1 percent) – "the narrowest majority of any winning party since 1977" (Simón, 2016, p. 493); lastly, Ciudadanos – considered until a few months before a regional party – obtained 13.9 percent of the ballots and gained 40 seats (Rodríguez Teruel & Barrio, 2016).

The stasis that followed the election, with the country having to deal with an until then unknown multi-party system (Simón, 2016), resulted in a stalemate that led no party leader to find a majority that would allow him to have the vote of confidence of the Congress[17], thing which led the King to call for new elections on May 3rd.

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[16] Especially after the scandals that unveiled a system of bribery put in place by businessman Francisco Correa who allegedly gave some money to PP politicians in exchange for public contracts (the Gürtel affair) and the publication by *El País* of the *Bárcenas* papers (after the name of the PP treasurer, who set up an illegal party-financing scheme) (Orriols & Cordero, 2016).

[17] An agreement between Sánchez's PSOE and C's was in fact signed (Piña, 2016), but it did not grant the Socialist leader enough seats to win the investiture vote (Simón, 2016).

The return of Spanish citizens to the ballot boxes in such a short time span, on 26th June 2016, has penalised the two new parties more than the others. Indeed, probably for reasons of strategic voting (Lago, 2008) related to the expected difficulty of government formation, only 65 percent of the people who had voted for C's in 2016 repeated their choice, with 15 percent of those who did not opting for the incumbent – the PP – who had more chances to form a majority government, while the coalition between Podemos and the extreme-left IU (*Izquierda Unida* – United Left) aggregately lost 3 percent of the votes (Simón, 2016). The results indeed rewarded Rajoy's party, which obtained 33 percent of the ballots (4.3 percent more than in 2015) and succeeded to form a majority government thanks to the outside support of Ciudadanos and to the abstention of part of the PSOE, after a harsh internal battle within the Socialists (El País, 2016).

Notwithstanding the declining share of votes, Ciudadanos became a stakeholder of Spain's Government – after 10 years from its foundation.

Getting acquainted with success

Although the transition to becoming a national party was by now fully fledged, the boost for the party's success at the countrywide level has often come from its place of birth, Catalonia. It was the case for the 2015 elections, it is and will probably be the case in the future after the much discussed 2017 Catalan regional election.

As in the past (see paragraph 1.3.2), Rivera's party has succeeded in capitalising a period of crisis, probably the most serious one after some centuries, concerning the relationship between Spain and Catalonia – in the eve of a referendum on the independence of the region, taken on October 1st 2017, whose results were outstandingly in favour of secession (90 percent of the vote, with a turnout of 43 percent) (Stone, 2017). The turmoil that followed the referendum and the clash between the Spanish and the Catalan governments (headed respectively by Rajoy and Carles Puigdemont, leader of the secessionist pro-independence alliance *Junts per Catalunya*, JxC – United for Catalonia) led another regional election to be called for December 2017, opposing the secessionists to the unionists. The former field was, confirming the expectations, predominant, but still extremely fragmented[18], and won the absolute majority of the votes. On the opposite side, on the contrary, considering its unambiguous stance against independence since its inception, Ciudadanos conveyed the consensus of most of the anti-independentist Catalans, achieving an unprecedented result (25.4 percent) that allowed it to become the first parliamentary group in the *Generalitat* (The Guardian, 2017).

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[18] The pro-independence front included a coalition between JxC, itself an alliance between Puigdemont's Catalan European Democratic Party (PDeCAT) and independents, ERC (*Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya* – Republican Left of Catalonia) and CUP (*Candidatura d'Unitat Popular* – Popuar Unity Candidacy).

The two most recent achievements of C's – the access to the Spanish governmental office and the leadership in the Catalan Parliament – seem to be pushing the odds of the party's future affirmation even higher. Probably as a result of the image that the party has secured, an image that combines the features of responsibility – thanks to its choices to back a Government headed by Rajoy thus avoiding a third general election in less than two years and to have remained on the side of 'legality' in Catalonia[19] – and of emancipation – since it does not spare harsh critics to its government partner (Gálvez, 2018) – it would not be surprising to see Ciudadanos's parabola to continue to ascend.

As a matter of fact, according to Metroscopia[20], if Spanish citizens had gone to the ballot in January 2018, Ciudadanos would have now been by far the first party, with 27.1 percent of the votes (3.9 points more than the forecasts for the PP, which would be second with a meagre 23.2 percent) (Metroscopia, 2018) and Albert Rivera would have accomplished his ascent: from simple citizen to Prime Minister.

1.4 Matteo Renzi: birth and development of a political project

While Albert Rivera was still struggling with his party's crisis after the unsuccessful European election of 2009, there was another political figure – not too dissimilar from him as long as age, personality and political views are concerned – who was about to cause, just like him, an earthquake in the political environment of the country off the coasts of the other side of the Mediterranean Sea, Italy. This figure was the then 34-year-old (a record for the post) mayor of Florence Matteo Renzi, who had just won the municipal elections of June 2009 as the lead candidate of the Italian Democratic Party (PD – *Partito Democratico*), after he surprisingly overcame some prominent members of the Tuscan PD such as Lapo Pistelli in the party primaries, with a brilliant 40.5 percent that allowed him not to pass through a second-round that would have probably seen the alignment of his rivals against the rising outsider, who was still seen as a 'foreign body' (Vicentini, 2015). Even though the young politician, who joined the Italian People's Party (the successor of the Italian Christian Democracy) when he was 21 years old and who became at 29 the candidate of the centre-left coalition for the presidency of the province of Florence (Vicentini, 2015), brought with him a wave of refreshment that could only benefit a party born only two years before – on 14 October 2007 – from a merger between the PDS (*Partito Democratico della Sinistra* – Democratic Party of the Left)[21] and the "Daisy" (*Margherita* – created by former left-wing Christian Democrats) (Ventura, 2018), the

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[19] The independence of any region of Spain would be in breach of Article 2 of the Spanish Constitution, which is "built on the indissoluble unity of the Spanish Nation", and, what is more, the same referendum was declared first in breach of the Constitution and then void by the Constitutional Court (The Independent, 2017).

[20] A Spanish polling agency.

[21]The PDS is the post-Communist heir of the Italian Communist Party (PCI), who had dissolved in 1991 with the *svolta* (turn) *della Bolognina*, after the neighbourhood of Bologna where the PCI announced its decision to abandon its Communist traits and to flow into the PDS (Abse, 2001).

establishment of the party had more worries than excitement about his success, and had all reasons to do so (Hanretty & Profeti, 2015).

Already one year after his election, via an interview with the newspaper *la Repubblica*, Renzi started to use a term that would accompany his rise to power inside the PD as well as in the whole country: that of "scrapping" (*rottamazione*), intended as the need for the party of getting rid of its historical leaders, "with no distinctions between D'Alema, Veltroni, Bersani[22]", who were making the party "boring" in the eyes of party members and sympathisers (Renzi, 2010).

It was just a matter of time, and the party's members knew it (not to mention the whole public which was getting acquainted with his criticism towards his own party), before the day when the rising star would challenge the cadres and try to climb the PD's ladder towards the leadership came (Bobba & Seddone, 2016).

1.4.1 The first attempt: the successfully unsuccessful 2012 primaries

That day arrived indeed with the calling of the 2012 primaries for the election of the prime-ministerial candidate of the centre-left in the following year's general election, when the then PD's secretary Bersani asked the party Congress to allow an exception to the Statute[23] to be made and thus made Renzi's candidature possible (Seddone & Venturino, 2015).

Those primaries were however won by Bersani, who defeated the mayor of Florence at the run-off with 61 percent of the vote (Gelli, Mannarini, & Talò, 2013) after some criticism was raised about the rules that provided for a second round and required the preliminary subscription of the voters (Bobba & Seddone, 2016), thus inserting some obstacles to those who, like Renzi, drew on support also from outside the party.

Still, the result of 39 percent of the ballots achieved by Renzi against Bersani – who had the most support from other party leaders – was symptomatic of a desire of change that was shared by some party members and many sympathisers that would later be capitalised by the young leader (Vicentini, 2015).

It is also true that Bersani's success turned out to be a pyrrhic victory (Ventura, 2018). The 2013 elections, after the polls gave the PD as a sure winner for the entire campaign, ended – in the party's secretary and candidate premier's own words – with a "non-victory" for the PD (Bobba & Seddone, 2016), which, although it enjoyed 55 percent of the seats in the Chamber of Deputies thanks to the majority bonus of the electoral law, was unable to reach a majority in the Senate, where with 31.9

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[22] Respectively, at the time of the interview, former secretary general of the PDS and of its successor party, the DS (*Democratici di Sinistra* – Democrats of the Left); former secretary general of the PD from its inception to 2009; secretary general of the PD.

[23] Which prohibited the candidature of a challenger to the party's secretary at the primaries.

percent of the vote it got only 39 percent of the seats (Chiaramonte, 2014). Bersani's failure was highlighted even more by the humiliating refusal that he received – during, what is more, a live streaming – by the delegates of the M5S (*Movimento 5 Stelle* – Five Star Movement) as a response to his attempt to form a governing coalition with them. What better reason to "scrap" the old party elites further?

1.4.2 2013: the PD's *segreteria*

After having gone through another defeat in Parliament, that of the failure of the two candidates for the Presidency of the Republic put forward by him, Pierluigi Bersani felt obliged to resign in April 2013, opening the space for a trilateral competition for the party leadership that saw Matteo Renzi opposed to Gianni Cuperlo (close to Bersani's positions) and Pippo Civati (another outsider like Renzi, who had however less appeal and communicational power than him). An all-too-easy competition for the politician from Rignano: after four years since he became the youngest mayor of Florence, he finally scrapped the PD's leadership becoming its secretary with 67.6 percent of the vote. The time was then ripe for putting into practice what had always been his project: changing the Democratic Party's DNA, which, if already under the leadership of Walter Veltroni and of the "majoritarian vocation" he always stressed should be the defining feature of the party shifted from a class-based party to a prototype of catch-all party (Kirchheimer, 1966), with the advent of Matteo Renzi assumed a particularly evident personalist profile (see below) (Bobba & Seddone, 2016), adopting a "multi-speed membership" structure that combines the roles of the old party "militants" to that of "new light members or sympathisers" (Pasquino & Valbruzzi, 2017), and that went beyond the function typical of old Italian parties of the left, constituting instead a sort of caucus "which mobilises exclusively during elections to support the national leader" (Salvati, 2016, p. 9).

1.4.3 2013-2018: From PD to PdR – towards the "Party of the Nation"?

All in all, a substantial change to the party had already been achieved with his election as party secretary. What was evident since the beginning of Renzi's political career[24] has been indeed his appeal on voters outside the sphere of the PD's typical constituency, often even outside the field of the centre-left. It is not a case that the rules of the 2012 primaries were made to put some constraints on the vote of those who were not active supporters of the party.

As a matter of fact, it has been proved that already in the 2012 party primaries Renzi attracted a significantly higher share of people not placing themselves on the left side of the political spectrum (that is to say, in the first position out of the five going from 'Left' to 'Right') – specifically 22

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[24] Since when, for instance, in 2010 he started to organize political congresses at the former train station of *Leopolda* in Florence, where he gathered and recruited his supporters and which became his "personal political space" (Ventura, 2018).

percent of his primary voters did so when compared to 51 percent of those who didn't vote for him, while 26 percent of his supporters placed themselves on the centre (Vicentini, 2015). This was already the sign of what would have been, in the future years of his secretariat, his Achilles' heel: the opposition that would mature within his same party, notably from the leftist wing of the PD, against which he would spend a lot of effort and energy (Hanretty & Profeti, 2015). The history of Renzi's PD is indeed replete with defections, starting already with the early abandonments of some members of the leftist wing of the party in 2015, like Cofferati or Civati (Fabbrini & Lazar, 2016), and reaching a climax with the massive split of February 2017, when Bersani, D'Alema, Rossi and other prominent and historical members of the PD left the party to found a movement called MDP (*Articolo 1 – Movimento Democratico e Progressista*, Democratic and Progressist Movement) that would transform into LeU (*Liberi e Uguali* – Free and Equals) for the March 2018 elections, when they ran against the former party colleagues.

Elective (and electoral) affinities?
The internal dissent manifested since little after the new leader took the party's command when, while the PD entered a government of 'broad agreements' together with Scelta Civica (the party created by the former "technical" Prime Minister Mario Monti) and Berlusconi's Forza Italia (FI – which had been the centre-left's main rival since its inception) and which was headed by the PD's deputy secretary Enrico Letta, Renzi concluded with Berlusconi a pact called *Patto del Nazareno*, a not-so-secret agreement that concerned the completion of some structural reforms such as the electoral law, some constitutional amendments and an attempt to find a shared candidacy for President of the Republic[25] – the failure of which probably led to the exhaustion of the Pact, after Sergio Mattarella was proposed by the PD and elected without FI's support (Pasquino, 2016). The Pact, probably more detrimental than beneficial for Renzi considered the critical insistence of a large part of Italian media[26] and of many of his political opponents on the similarities between him and Berlusconi since then, was more than anything else the sign of Renzi's will to move on a post-ideological ground, which bases politics not on the opposition between some different and incompatible political cultures[27], but on the continuous decisional effort by a policy-seeking political force (Wolinetz, 2002) to carry out what it considers the most beneficial reforms for the country (Salvati, 2016).

The premiership
The tension that he felt to satisfy the needs of his "audience" (Manin, 1997) soon led Renzi to turn on his party colleague and President of the Council Enrico Letta, guilty of having proceeded with too

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[25] After Giorgio Napolitano had been obliged to serve for a second term because of the inability of the forces to reach an agreement on a new name in 2013.
[26] See, among others, Andrea Scanzi's book and then theatre play *'Renzusconi'*.
[27] On the disappearance of political cultures in Italy see Pasquino (2018).

slow a pace with the reforms, putting an end to his Government and thus becoming, on February 17th 2014, the youngest Italian Prime Minister (Ventura, 2018).

Since then Matteo Renzi has governed for 1024 days, his Government being the fourth for longevity in Italian history and interrupted only by his resignation after the crushing defeat at the 4th December 2016 Constitutional Referendum (Ceccarini & Bordignon, 2017). His path as a Prime Minister, the political line of his Government together with the reforms it has carried out will be analysed in Chapter Three, as in this section our interest is mainly on Renzi's path within the PD and on how the former has (unsuccessfully?) transformed the latter.

The genetic modification of the PD: an incomplete project

What is consensual among political commentators is that the main transformation undergone by the PD under Matteo Renzi has been that of becoming a *personalist* party[28] (Bobba & Seddone, 2016; Ventura, 2018). Small wonder that many have followed the definition given by Italian political scientist Ilvo Diamanti, who was the first to use the label of PdR (*Partito di Renzi* – Renzi's Party) to describe the Democratic Party since 2013 (Diamanti, 2016), a party that from being a synthesis between different political traditions of the left had become a "party of the leader", "centralised and personalised". Suffice it to mention some data to prove it: during his mandate as party secretary, his centrality in the public debate with respect to the other members was about 30 percent higher than that of his predecessors Bersani and Veltroni (Bobba & Seddone, 2016).

Rather than being the final product of Renzi's political mission, however, the "PdR" rather seemed to be the intermediary stage of what was (and most probably still is) his biggest project – that of building a so-called "Party of the Nation" (*Partito della Nazione*). The idea of a post-political force that goes beyond ideological labels and that appeals to the whole nation[29], relying on the previous experience of the *Patto del Nazareno* and with reference to Renzi's Government reliance on the support of the centrist (formerly right-of-centre) group Ala in the Senate, started to spread rapidly in the newspapers since 2014 (Mauro, 2014) and was initially and for a long period not denied by the protagonists (Pasquino & Valbruzzi, 2017). Had the project materialised, we would probably struggle to find any difference with Macron's En Marche! or Rivera's Ciudadanos.

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[28] According to Kostadinova and Levitt, personalist parties are defined by "the presence of a dominant leader and a party "organization" that is weakly institutionalized by design" and by "interactions between the leader and other politicians [that] are driven mainly by loyalty to that leader rather than, for example, organizational rules, ideological affinities, or programmatic commitments" (2014, p. 492).

[29] A variant of which was surely the Italian Christian Democracy in the "First Republic" (Pasquino, 2018).

If the desire to extend a party's base to the whole nation[30] seems rather utopistic, it seemed less so when its rumours started to spread, that is to say in the aftermath of the 2014 European elections – when the "PdR" obtained 40.8 percent of the vote, the second best performance of any party in the post-war period (Hanretty & Profeti, 2015). Maybe not the whole nation, but much of it seemed to back Renzi's project – at least initially.

In fact, already after the first measures passed by the Renzi Government – such as the labour and school reforms – something went wrong and the honeymoon between the Florentine politician and the Italian "nation" finished. Even though the 2014 election remained the only PdR's electoral appointment at countrywide level until the general elections of March 4th 2018, national polls[31], municipal and regional elections[32] and especially the Constitutional Referendum held in December 2016[33] were suggesting that the italian electorate had already changed his mind and that Renzi's project, at least in the intermediate form of the PdR, was about to lose much of its initial appeal.

As indeed happened on March 4th 2018, where the recordman from Rignano – after he was re-appointed as secretary general of the PD and thus as its candidate PM at the party primaries of 2017 – collected yet another record, this time not too worth of merit, bringing his PdR at 18.7 percent of the vote[34], the lowest score for the Italian Democratic Party (and its predecessors). The proof that Italian journalist Stefano Folli had well anticipated his fate in 2015: "in the end Renzi-ism is like a car that only has a fourth gear and inefficient brakes: it can only run"[35] (Folli, 2015).

1.5 An appraisal of the road ahead

Although the three *homines novi* of European politics have gone through different trajectories, at one extreme (that of Macron) leading to success and at the other (that of Renzi) conducing to a blind alley – with the intermediate case of Rivera, who also seems to be on the verge of arriving at the top floor of Spanish politics – and notwithstanding the fact that theirs is still a "fresh" experience that lacks a well-defined legacy, there are too many common grounds between them that make an attempt to understand the structural conditions of their affirmation and the possible future developments of such

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[30] But the same reasoning is valid for Rivera's party that makes a very similar reference to the whole citizenry, as for Macron's movement which – although without any specific reference to its political subject – theoretically implies the involvement of the entire society.

[31] Renzi's Government approval rate fell from the peak of 69 percent of June 2014 to the low of 39 one year later (Pasquino & Valbruzzi, 2017).

[32] The PD lost the region of Liguria to the centre-right in the regional elections of 2015 and that of Sicily in 2016, plus also the key cities of Rome and Turin passed to the M5S in the municipal elections of 2016.

[33] The referendum is worth of particular attention, as it was basically transformed into a personal plebiscite about Renzi, as is revealed by the fact that 59 percent of the respondents to a survey answered they interpreted the vote as an evaluation of Renzi's cabinet (Bordignon, Ceccarini, & Diamanti, 2017). In the end, the Constitutional Reform was rejected by almost 60 percent of the electorate (Ceccarini & Bordignon, 2017).

[34] http://elezioni.interno.gov.it/camera/scrutini/20180304/scrutiniCI.

[35] "*In fondo il renzismo è come un'auto che possiede soltanto la quarta marcia con freni poco efficienti: può solo correre*".

affirmation compulsory at least for those dealing with (non-exclusively) European political issues. Will Macron's success change the European political scenario, replacing the Left-Right distinction with the confrontation between the two fronts opposing cosmopolitans to nationalists[36] the new normal political space? Is Renzi's "fall from grace" an exception to the norm, or are his soulmates destined to fail soon, too? Can we interpret this similarity in the formation of partisan movements around Europe as a sign of the extinction of the national space as the main locus of political confrontation? Any kind of approach to these questions cannot but start from a study of the basic features shared by these movements, namely the constituency they appeal to and the programme they formulate in order to do it, as will be done in next chapters.

The three different roads seem indeed destined to cross soon, maybe already in the 2019 European elections. As a matter of fact, it was the same Macron to propose in September 2017 to allocate some of the 73 seats that will be left vacant in the European Parliament (EP) after the withdrawal of the UK from the EU to Europe-wide constituencies instead of national ones (Bartunek & Rose, 2018). Even if the proposal has been rejected by the EP (Hardy, 2018), the declared intentions of the French President are a sign of what could be a concrete project laid out to rally all the adepts of the same cause of him, Rivera and Renzi.

A project that was indeed at the centre of a meeting between the Spanish and Italian leaders, on 15th January 2018, in a hotel of the Italian capital, where they discussed – as reported by the same Rivera (Rivera, 2018) – the formation of a transnational list, with rumours of Renzi's will to be its *Spitzenkandidat* (Barigazzi, Herszenhorn, & de La Baume, 2018).

Any such prospect, however fictional may it be and regardless of whether it will conduce to any concrete achievement, cannot be underestimated or categorised as the simple product of the political inventiveness of three rational-interested politicians. On the contrary, it is the evidence of the transfiguration the political space has undergone in the last years – a change of paradigm that is causing an earthquake in the European political space. New issues have arisen along XX century cleavages that have a renewed relevance and that have transformed both the demand and the supply side of European politics: new constituencies have formed and, around these, party systems – including some very rigid ones like in the case of France, regarded as a quasi-perfect example of bipolar system (Sartori, 1976) until the elections of 2017 – have evolved. Chapter Two will be devoted to such topics.

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[36] Of course, this is a reductive way to represent the situation. For a more extensive examination of how the literature has dealt with these constituencies and their demands, see Chapter Two.

CHAPTER TWO – Revisiting Cleavage Theory: Globalisation and its Political Children

2.1 Left and Right: calling into question the "grand dichotomy"

The best portrait ever made about the crisis of the ideologies that have guided up until now every living voting-age human being on earth has probably got the signature of neither a political scientist nor a journalist but – rather surprisingly – of an Italian song-writer[37], Giorgio Gaber, who already in 1996 anticipated what would have become one of the subjects that has occupied scholars the most in the following decades: the alleged death of the categories of Left and Right. In one of his most famous songs, indeed named *Destra-Sinistra*, Gaber repeatedly asks himself "*ma cos'è la destra/ cos'è la sinistra*" ("but what is right/ what is left"), trying to answer by listing a sequence of everyday elements apparently unrelated to the political-ideological sphere and linking them to the two opposed concepts of Right and Left (e.g. having a bath/a shower, Swiss chocolate/Nutella, *culatello/mortadella*) – to then conclude: "*L'ideologia, l'ideologia/ Malgrado tutto credo ancora che ci sia/ È il continuare ad affermare/ Un pensiero e il suo perché/ Con la scusa di un contrasto che non c'è/ Se c'è chissà dov'è, se c'è chissà dov'è*"[38] (Gaber 1996).

Gaber's outline, even though in a satirical fashion (or exactly because of it), captures well the substantial problem at stake when dealing with the evolution of something that was once considered as permanent, even immanent, in human life – in this case the identification of voters and parties with the families of the Left and the Right as the only criterion of distinction (or by far the most important one) related to political issues; the problem is indeed one related to the sphere of *subjectivity*, that makes the attempt to grasp whether there is an underlying basis of *objectivity* in what is said ("my party is neither on the left nor on the right") and thought ("Left and Right are dead and gone") by politicians and citizens alike replete with risks and uncertainty. What is certain, instead, is that what made the Left/Right distinction the "grand dichotomy of the twentieth century" (Lukes, 2003), allowing Lipset to state in 1960 that "at any given period and place it is usually possible to locate parties on a left to right continuum" (Lipset, 1960, p. 223) no longer applies – and, as long as the dichotomy in itself is concerned, what remains to be seen is "*se c'è chissà dov'è*".

2.1.1 1970s-1990s: The first evolution in the distribution of political preferences

All things considered, the fact that in the post-war period the political space has been characterised only by a socio-economic conflict – articulated in the classic Left-Right divide – is probably a good proxy for describing the political discourse in those years, yet it is valid only as a theoretical

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[37] Even though it is probably more appropriate to classify him as an "intellectual".

[38] "Ideology, Ideology/ Notwithstanding all I believe it is still there/ It is continuing to affirm/ A thought and its whys/ With the excuse of a contrast that does not exist/ If it's there who knows where, if it's there who knows where".

simplification (a "spatial metaphor") when it comes to the underlying political confrontation, both in terms of voters' preferences and parties' mobilisation. Although the economic debate around 'who gets what' was preponderant in terms of issue salience, it is in fact possible to trace – already at that time – the presence of another dimension structuring the space, encompassing issues such as religious and ethnic divides and new "post-materialist" issues (see paragraph 2.2.2). In other terms, the mapping of the political space as *one-dimensional* is probably inappropriate (Kitschelt, 2004).

It is true, however, that the fact that in the '50s the only axis structuring political preferences was the one distinguishing a leftist redistributionist pole on one side to a rightist pro-market one on the other has had a permanent influence on European politics for a long time. First of all, from then on the ideological identification of parties by the public opinion and the self-placement of the public opinion itself has largely remained the same – and corresponds to the (easiest) spatial representation going from the left to the right. Secondly, left and right "semantics" have proved to have an "immense absorptive power" (Knutsen, 1995, p. 87), that is to say that they have encompassed different issues and not exclusively matters of economic redistribution. Their correlation both with the rising post-materialist issues in the '70s and with a new line of divide between an authoritarian and a libertarian conception of society[39] was indeed very high; in Herbert Kitschelt's framework (Figure 2.1), this translates into a rotation of the axis of political preferences from a plainly horizontal one opposing a leftist and a rightist ideology to a diagonal line whose extremes are a leftist-libertarian and a rightist-authoritarian pole – because of the "natural affinity" that linked those dimensions (Kitschelt, 2004, p. 6).
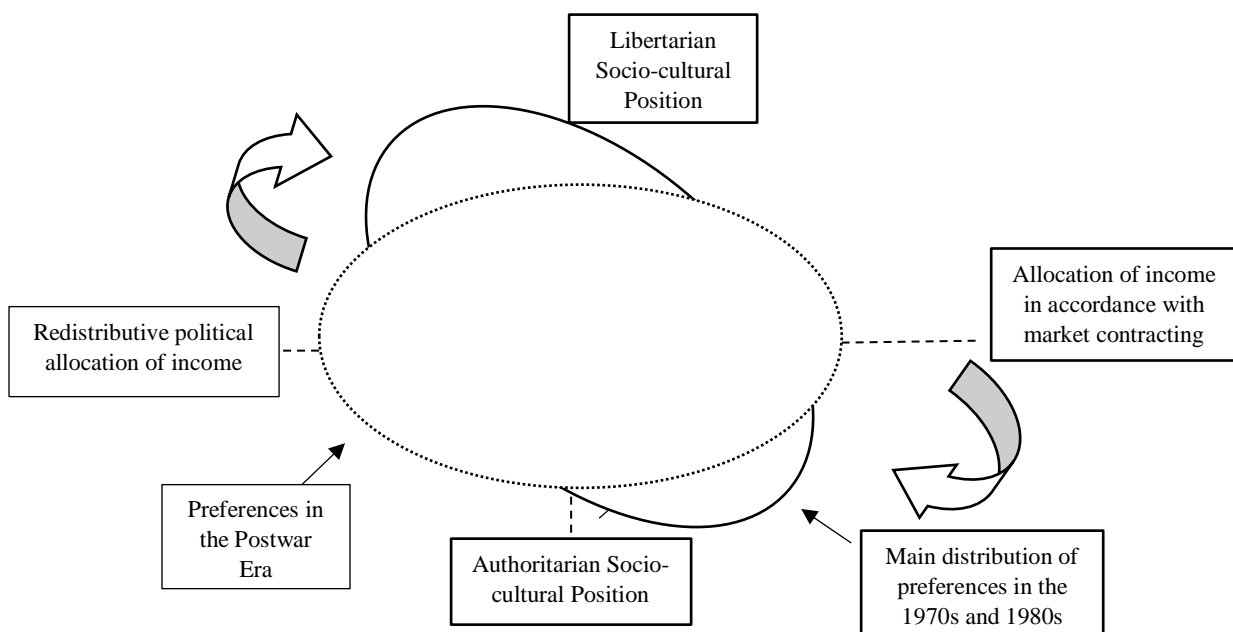

Figure 2.1 – *Distribution of political preferences from the postwar decades to the 1970s and 1990s (Kitschelt, 2004, p. 7)*

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[39] For a more detailed discussion of the issue, see paragraphs 2.2 and 2.3.

The meanings of left and right are thus much more flexible than thought, and have evolved throughout their history – from the stage of pre-industrial conflict to the definition of industrial, materialist value orientations to, finally, their association with post-materialist, religious and cultural elements of modern society – giving support to what Knutsen calls 'pluralisation of the meaning of left and right' theory (Knutsen, 1995, pp. 86-87). A theory that is however put into question by some global processes that might radically change politics and the way in which we think about it.

2.2 A challenge to XX century party politics

Any kind of political transformation, resulting from a shift in any of the defining features of politics – in the demand side (which is in a continuous evolution both in terms of social classes' (de-) composition and in their electoral preferences, causing processes of *de-alignment* and *re-alignment*), in the supply side (following a repositioning of political parties), or in the rules of the game (especially the electoral laws that can determine different results with the same pre-conditions) – cannot but be put in the context of the complex, structural environment where political life is laid out. However, if up until some time ago this analysis was done chiefly at the level of the nation-state (as it remains the only forum of electoral accountability of decision makers, leaving aside some isolated exceptions such as the European Parliament), it is with some degree of comfort that one can disregard this strategy as inadequate nowadays. If national political processes are still the only ones that actively involve European citizens, either as wearing the shoes of the *agents*' (politicians') *principals* or simply in the act of following current affairs and having a say in them as public opinion, and if the nation-state is currently unchallenged as the main attractor of people's loyalties, faith and identification – it is for sure at *global* phenomena that one has to look in order to grasp the roots of the *malaise* expressed in most of European democracies. The nation-state, both in its form of sovereign entity possessing the power (jurisdiction) to administer the life structure of people over a given territory and in its form of boundary to the collective identification of an 'imagined community'[40] (Anderson, 1983), is under attack – both 'from above' and 'from below' (Kriesi, et al., 2008).

2.2.1 Globalisation: a bilateral siege to the nation-state

"From above", the nation-state is challenged because the fluid nature of economic exchanges has led to the 'internationalisation' of trade, finance and production (Went, 2004) – meaning that it is unable to control capital movements, both for the same "invisible" nature of modern capital and for binding

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[40] The nation is an "*imagined* political community" – in the words of Benedict Anderson (1983, p. 49) – because "the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion".

supra-national agreements that imply a voluntary loss of sovereignty for the State[41]. National macroeconomic policies and the autonomy of national central banks are then considerably restricted, and policies typically laid out in the XX century, such as currency devaluations and public spending through a rise in a State's deficit, are unfeasible both for the reactions threatened by international financial markets and for the punitive measures taken by organisations like the WTO or the IMF. All things considered, the definition of the XXI century State as a "*market-state*" given by Philipp Bobbitt (2002) sounds not too unjustified.

The situation of conflict between State sovereignty and the complexity of trans-national links giving birth to a by now autonomous order[42], reinvigorated by what is commonly referred to as the phenomenon of economic globalisation, was well depicted by Dani Rodrik (2002), who famously described "the political trilemma of the world economy" – remarking that "the nation-state system, democratic politics, and full economic integration are mutually incompatible" (p. 1).

On the other hand, the flip side of the globalisation coin is its cultural component, that is instead challenging the nation-state "from below". With its defining features, such as media and migration, the modern era has irreversibly affected people's *imagination* – which from the mere act of construction of a fictional imaginary has become, according to Arjun Appadurai, a *social fact* (Appadurai, 1996), inherently in contrast with the territorial nature of the State. Thus, according to the Indian anthropologist:

> *"Neighborhoods are ideally stages for their own self-reproduction, a process that is fundamentally opposed to the imaginary of the nation-state, where neighborhoods are designed to be instances and exemplars of a generalizable mode of belonging to a wider territorial imaginary.*
> *[…] Yet the isomorphism of people, territory, and legitimate sovereignty that constitutes the normative charter of the modern nation state is itself under threat from the forms of circulation of people characteristic of the contemporary world." (Appadurai, 1996, p. 191)*

2.2.2 The Open Society and its Enemies

The contrast that emerges within the same nature of the nation-state and between different kinds of *neighbourhoods* – at local, national and supranational level – has caused a situation of turbulence

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[41] It is already in the post-war period that such loss of sovereignty starts to materialise, with the 1947 GATT that instituted the "general most-favoured nation treatment" (GATT 1947, Article I) and provided that the "contracting parties recognize the desirability of increasing freedom of trade by the development […] of closer integration between the economies […]" (Article XXIV). In the context of European integration, probably the most stringent (and contested) evidence of such loss of decision-making power is the "Fiscal Compact", that mandatorily requires member states – among other provisions – to have a deficit not exceeding 3% of the GDP (Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union, 2012).

[42] Toni Negri and Michael Hardt have in this respect analysed what they call "Empire", a limit-less, "new global form of sovereignty", which is a "decentered and deterritorializing apparatus of rule that progressively incorporates the entire global realm within its open, expanding frontiers" (Negri & Hardt, 2000, p. 3).

(Rosenau, 1990), also due to the fact that " we yet don't assist to a globalisation of political identities" (Held, 2005, p. 163), with the exception of two categories: the "elites of the global order" and their contestants. In short, if the phenomenon of de-territorialisation (Deleuze & Guattari, 1972) of macroeconomic decision-making and of cultural community-identification has benefited a sub-group of people (made of "entrepreneurs and qualified employees in sectors open to international competition, as well as all cosmopolitan citizens" (Kriesi, et al., 2008, p. 8)) who can make the most of this situation – many who rely on the protection of the State from foreign economic competition and cultural influences (mostly "entrepreneurs and qualified employees in traditionally protected sectors, all unqualified employees, and citizens who strongly identify themselves with their national community" (*ibid.*)) have seen the weakening of State entities as a threat. The mobilisation of these two groups, identifiable as "winners" and "losers" of globalisation, constitutes a *political potential* which political parties can articulate – and they have indeed done so (Kriesi, et al., 2008).

The signs of a new social fracture

At the basis of the turmoil that has shattered European politics there is a less recent, structural metamorphosis of the society. As Ronald Inglehart put it (1977), a 'silent revolution' has occurred with the rise among the public in post-industrial societies of "post-materialist needs": in short, a simultaneous evolution has taken place in people's values (intended as the increasing emphasis on needs related to self-esteem and self-realisation) and skills (as there are, with a more effective educational system, more people able to cope with political issues) that has made the XX century's class-based approach to politics ineffective. This "revolution" is part and parcel of one of the most noticeable and undeniable consequences of the modern era, namely the unprecedented rise in the middle class, with a wider access to university education and financial stability for a larger number of families – while an opposite phenomenon of marginalisation has affected the blue-collar working class, with a decline in the importance of heavy industries in the overall economic performance of a country and the feeling of (economic and cultural) insecurity this constituency feels with the onset of mass migration (Betz, 2013).

These changes have produced two opposing ways to formulate policies at the national level, what the American political scientist calls "elite-challenging" and "elite-directed" activities (Inglehart, 1977, pp. 3-4). If the first political outcome of this revolution in terms of the constitution of new parties came already in the late 1960s with the rise of the so-called 'New Left', the main exponents of which were Green parties (Talshir, 2002), an equivalent but opposite reaction came from the (radical) right which, from Jean-Marie Le Pen's Front National in the early '80s on, also started to politicise new issues and built their agenda on the needs of protection and defence from an extraneous system of supra-national bonds felt especially by the working class. A political move that we could describe, in Piero Ignazi's words, as a "silent counter-revolution" (Ignazi, 2003).

A "European civil war"[43]?

The gap between an "elite" and "the public" in Europe seems indeed to have intensified in the last years, especially for what concerns the attitude towards European integration. As reported by a study of Chatham House (2017), diverging views between the former group[44] and the latter are particularly pronounced in issues concerning the amount of individual benefits received from one's country being member of the EU (where 39 percent of the elite strongly agrees with the statement that they have benefited compared to only 9 percent of the public), immigration and identity (57 percent of the respondents from the first group claimed that immigration has been good for their country, while only 25 percent of the "public" has responded likewise and, furthermore, 32 percent of the elite thinks that all further immigration from Muslim states should be halted, compared to 56 percent of the public) and values and outlook (50% of the elite disagreed with the statement that 'hard work doesn't generally bring success – it's more a matter of luck and connections', while only 25% of the public disagreed).

The driving and decisive factor behind this fracture, beyond the income disparities that have always structured society in terms of classes and that have even intensified in recent years, is with little doubt the distribution of education – that with the expansion of the access to higher education has created an increasing gap between the attitudinal predispositions of those obtaining an university degree compared to those with a lower level of education (Piketty, 2018).

2.2.3 *Dealignment*, party strategies and the case of Social-Democracy

Both Inglehart and Ignazi's "revolutions" have dramatically changed the partisan alignment of society, especially with the Radical Right that has made a successful appeal on what used to be typical constituencies of Socialist and then Social-Democratic parties[45] – which had in the meantime, from the experience of Tony Blair's New Labour in the '90s, progressively shifted to a target mainly composed of "a new politically and socially dominant middle-class who were university-educated, skilled, financially secure and able to adapt and prosper in the new social climate" (Goodwin & Ford, 2014, p. 113). It is probably the ambiguity caused by the incomplete transformation of these latter parties – that have failed to abandon entirely the constituency they have historically relied on, as most of old people and former militants continue to constitute a significant share of their votes – that has

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[43] Macron, E. (2018, April 17). Discours du Président de la République au Parlement européen.

[44] Defined as the group of "people in positions of influence from politics, the media, business and civil society at local, regional, national and European levels" (Chatham House, 2017, p. 2).

[45] A milestone of the passage from the former to the latter is to be considered the *Bad Godesberg* programme, ratified by the German SPD (*Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands* – Social Democratic Party of Germany) in 1959 and that abandoned the goal of replacing capitalism with the adoption of a commitment to reform it, together with the withdrawal of any reference to a specific workers' constituency (Padgett, 2007).

left a vacuum, a sort of "electoral market failure"[46], filled (although to different degrees) by Macron, Rivera and Renzi in their respective countries. An ambiguity which has clear philosophical and historical roots.

Diverging strategies: A New (leftist?) Right and the Old Left's electoral dilemma

The bifurcation between "winners" and "losers" in the social stratification of European democracies is not something new and unknown to political strategists. If already starting from the '80s the insurgent European radical right parties[47] started to make an appeal to the "forgotten" class of lower-level employees and blue-collar workers (the *couches populaires*, as the French say, who were once the classic constituency of social-democratic parties) – by fusing a resentment against the "establishment" and a nationalist outlook with some xenophobic traits (Goodwin & Ford, 2014) – leftist parties found themselves facing an electoral dilemma, discussed by Adam Przeworski (1985): as the working class has never been majoritarian in any country[48], social-democrats have had to choose between a homogeneous appeal to their historical constituency (but with an arithmetically-sure perpetual defeat) or to broaden the boundaries of party identification beyond one class and extend it to "the mass", "the citizens", "the nation" (thus alienating the working class, or part of it); as the prospect of electoral success became real by adding sectors of the middle- and high-bourgeoisie to their electorate, however, the choice of opting for the abandonment of a class-based approach appeared inevitable[49]. After more than 30 years from Przeworski's work, the time is ripe for conclusions on the fate of social classes' political loyalties; especially after the experience of the Third Way, social-democratic parties have made a decisive step towards the abandonment of a unique reference to the working class, thus proving Hans-Georg Betz's analysis right: it is radical right-wing parties which are today's new working-class parties (Betz, 2013). The Polish-American scholar had however already understood, with yet another accurate analysis, that – whatever their choice – Social-Democratic parties would have found it hard to adapt to the new political environment:

> "*Social democrats appear condemned to minority status when they are a class party, and they seem equally relegated when they seek to be the party of the masses, of the entire nation. As a pure party of workers they cannot win the*

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[46] Defined by Lago, Montero and Torcal as the situation that occurs "when political demands shared by a significant number of individuals eventually [are] left unsatisfied" (Lago, Montero, & Torcal, 2007, p. 229).

[47] Represented, at that period, mainly by the Freedom Party in Austria, the National Front in France, the Flemish Blok in Belgium and the Progress Parties in Denmark and Norway (Betz, 2013).

[48] The only time this happened was in Belgium in 1912, when for the first and last time the proportion of workers reached 50.1 percent - to then decline to 19.1 in 1971, with similar figures in all Europe (Przeworski, 1985).

[49] Even though, as Przeworski remarked already in 1985, Social-Democrats were destined to do what rational people do when facing dilemmas: "they bemoan and regret, change their strategies, and once again bemoan and regret" (Przeworski, 1985, p. 29).

mandate for socialism, but as a party of the entire nation they have not won it either[50]." (Przeworski, 1985, p. 27)

The reversal in the social base of leftist parties, that from being "worker parties" have become "high-education parties", is even more evident from Piketty's comparative study (Figure 2.2) of left-wing parties' constituencies in France, Britain and the US and seems to confirm Inglehart's scheme of "elite-driven" and "elite-challenging" agendas – with the "populist" right assembling the potential "counter-elites" and New Labour-like Social Democratic parties starting to move towards the "elites".
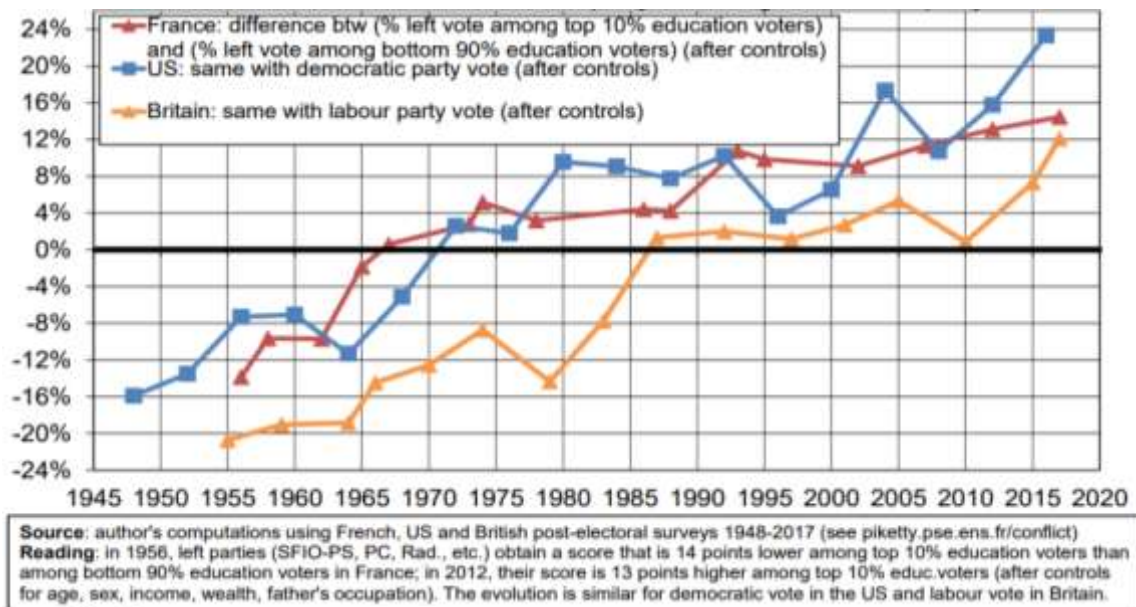
Figure 2.2 – *Voting for left-wing & democratic parties in France, Britain, US 1948-2017: from the worker party to the high-education party* (Piketty, 2018)

However, if the credibility of this "New Right" was and still is very high, as it was born exactly in order to exploit the anger and resentment of the working class, the credibility of social-democratic parties' appeal to both blue-collar workers (as they have never officially renounced to gain their votes) and to urban elites is, to say the least, not as unequivocal. The "electoral market failure" that has left some strata of European societies (the "winners", or "elites") without a voice that appeal exclusively and unequivocally to them – with a programmatic platform that they could unconditionally embrace – has thus been nurtured up to the point where some "political entrepreneurs" (and here the examples of Macron, Rivera and Renzi fit perfectly) found it convenient to exploit it. Apparently, Inglehart and Ignazi's revolutions, apart from being "silent", were also partial.

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[50] The resemblance of Przeworski's prophecy to the case of Matteo Renzi's PD, analysed in paragraph 1.4, is indeed quite striking.

As the hypothesis of political response to societal pressures seems confirmed, we shall then expect to witness a mutation in the national political space. The questions that remain to be answered are, however, not few: is this new confrontation between opposing views regarding globalisation comparable to the "critical junctures" described by Lipset and Rokkan (1967) and hence giving rise to a new cleavage? Will this *integration-demarcation* divide be *embedded* (Kriesi, et al., 2008) in the already existing two-dimensional political space or will it give rise to a new, third political dimension? How will parties re-position themselves along the renewed space? Are old, mainstream parties – which have always operated in the traditional framework of XX century class-based politics, with a quasi-one-dimensional confrontation focused on the economic axis – destined to disappear or will they adapt and survive to the new context? Will the categories of Left and Right still serve their basic function of political compass?

2.3 The transformation of the European political space: a transnational cleavage

The point of departure from here, on a theoretical account, is to consider – with the help of the literature on the subject – whether or not this new social fracture underlying Western European countries has been followed by a process of institutionalisation such that it is possible to characterise it fully as a cleavage[51], on a par (and overlapping) with the four listed by Lipset and Rokkan in 1967: the centre-periphery and state-church cleavages, born as a consequence of the national revolution, and the rural-urban and capital-labour ones, caused by the industrial revolution (Lipset & Rokkan, 1967).

This time, however, this potential new cleavage would have three crucial differences from its XX century counterparts: first, if Lipset and Rokkan's framework was one where social conflicts originated inside national boundaries, this time we would be talking about a 'transnational cleavage' (Hooghe & Marks, 2018); what is more, allegiance to one side or the other of the cleavage would not be determined by one's social group but rather by her value-based orientation (Kriesi, 2010); finally, as long as the relation between cleavage structure and party systems are concerned, new challenging political parties are formed alongside the new cleavage, with a pre-existing and consolidated party-system – while, in the second half of XX century, mass parties appeared when cleavages were already institutionalised – and this has the crucial implication that nowadays "political parties are actors, not subjects, in the formation of social divisions" (Hooghe & Marks, 2018, p. 113).

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[51] It is important to bear in mind what are the necessary and sufficient conditions in order to identify a cleavage and distinguish it from a more general social division; "the theoretical connotation of the concept of cleavage – explains Stefano Bartolini – refers to the combination of interest orientations rooted in social structure, cultural/ideological orientations rooted in normative systems, and behavioral patterns expressed in organizational membership and action" (Bartolini, 2004, p. 3).

2.3.1 Describing the cleavage: same substance, different forms

There are few doubts – and the literature is unanimous in this – that what we are witnessing is a renewed type of cleavage[52], born on the ashes of the period that has seen the tentacles of globalisation knock at nation-states' doors. The substance, in other words, of the cleavage is self-evident. What is less consensual instead is what the cleavage is really about: does it concern people's sentiment towards globalisation, de-nationalisation, both? Does European integration have an independent role in this? Is it chiefly a matter of cultural or economic considerations? Here the interpretations are divergent; some, like Herbert Kitschelt (1994), refer to a libertarian-authoritarian cleavage, or to a libertarian/universalistic vs traditionalist/communitarian one (Bornschier, 2010) – thus highlighting the tendency to support different structures of power, one horizontal, inclusive and open to universalistic values, and the other vertical, exclusive and with a particularistic outlook. Others, more simply, describe a cleavage opposing cosmopolitanism to communitarianism (Teney, et al., 2014), universalism to particularism (Beramendi, et al., 2015) or globalism to nativism (Piketty, 2018); Hooghe *et al.* (2002), instead, discuss the opposition between a GAL (Green/Alternative/Libertarian) and a TAN (Tradition/Authority/National) pole. Lastly, Kriesi *et al.* (2006, 2008), adopt the more general and all-embracing distinction between *integration* and *demarcation* – distinguishing the "winners" from the "losers" of globalisation. There are two reasons why this last method is the most appropriate to give to the "substance" of the cleavage an adequate "form": first, with a broad reference to the attitude towards globalisation, neither the cultural nor the economic aspect of it are undermined (as instead is the case when referring solely to the libertarian-authoritarian or cosmopolitan-nationalist cleavages, only capturing "cultural" or "ideological-attitudinal" elements); second, and as a consequence, by following the other classifications one ends up with a framework of new party formation that only explains the fortunes of those exploiting the resentment against the new global order – emphasising issues such as opposition to European integration and immigration, or in favour of new approaches towards, for instance, environmental issues – thus Green parties on the ("New") Left and "populist" parties on the ("New") Right (as it was the case until some decades ago). What we are also interested in, on the other hand, is the rise of other new, challenging (in their own way), forces whose aim is instead to "defend" globalisation – but this time "neither on the Left nor on the

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[52] Even though we do not find one of the essential elements listed by Bartolini in the definitional analysis of a cleavage: its roots in the social structure. However, as Zsolt Enyedi maintains (2008) and as H. Kriesi agrees (2010, pp. 677-678), this requirement has been narrowed down and substituted, in recent times, by the values individuals adhere to: "values and attitudes should be regarded not simply as integral elements of cleavages but also as their potential base" (Enyedi, 2008, p. 293).

Right": a sort of New Radical Centre. Thing which is only possible when adopting Kriesi *et al.*'s wide reference to "winners" and "losers" of (economic and cultural) globalisation[53].

It is useful at this point to analyse how the European political space has been affected by this 'critical juncture', giving rise – from around the last decade of the XX century – to a new cleavage, namely considering the dimensions it is composed of, the issues that gravitate around each dimension, the (re-)positioning of political parties in the space and the consequent party systems that arise.

2.3.2 The dimensions of political confrontation

Economy and Culture: two evergreens

Even though some, like Heather Stoll (2010), remark a shift in the number of dimensions across years – the space being composed, according to her, of three dimensions (a socio-economic dimension, one including post-materialism, ethnic and religious issues and a last related to issues of foreign policy and internationalism) in the 1950s, of two dimensions (socio-economic and cultural) in the '60-'80s, one dimension (socio-economic plus some post-materialistic issues) in the '90s and again two in the early 2000s – most findings point instead to a *continuity* in the dimensional structure of European politics, from the post-war period on characterised by two dimensions – the classic socio-economic dimension and a more dynamic cultural one (Grande, 2010; Kitschelt, 2004; Bornschier, 2010); findings which are consistent with the previous framework laid out by Cees P. Middendorp in the context of Dutch politics, where there are two "fundamental dimensions of ideological controversy", the socio-economic left-right axis and the libertarianism-authoritarianism opposition – that together compose what are for him the two ideological orientations: a *progressive* mindset, which is economically leftist and culturally liberal and a *conservative* one, economically right and culturally traditional (Middendorp, 1978).

The evolution of political issues

If the number of conflict dimensions has remained constant, what has changed is instead their meaning (as demonstrates Middendorp's reference to the "stability" of the philosophical dimension of socialism, from the year he wrote his paper on considered as a dead ideology) – both in the issues the two dimensions are composed of and in their degree of 'integration' (i.e. in the degree of positive correlation of the poles of the two respective dimensions). First of all, even the more stable economic dimension has slightly changed its composition, since year after year 'welfare' issues and the attitude towards economic liberalism have come to take a predominant role, distancing issues regarding

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[53] The same Kriesi remarks that the literature (including him?) has made the mistake to focus univocally on the "New Left" and "New Right" as the only possible forums of transformation resulting from the cleavage: "[...] it is, in my sense, very important that we do not link this new possible cleavage exclusively to the challenging movements/parties of the New Left and the New Right" (Kriesi, 2010, p. 683).

freedom of enterprise (Stoll, 2010). What has changed dramatically is the 'cultural axis': first, with the intensification of mass migration, immigration issues have almost replaced religious conflicts (Grande, 2010); moreover, if once the debate on the 'demarcation' side of the spectrum was quasi-monopolised by issues revolving around the role of the army and of security, a recurrently more frequent reference is now made on issues concerning European integration (Kriesi, et al., 2006; Hutter, Grande, & Kriesi, 2016). The result is that, in most of the cases, the two extremes of the socio-economic (horizontal) axis have remained the same – at one pole, on the left, the (expansion of the) 'welfare' category, and at the other, on the right, 'economic liberalism' (i.e. opposition to market regulation) – while on the cultural (vertical) axis, the opposition is usually between "cultural liberalism"[54] on the integration side and (restriction of) "immigration" on the demarcation side (Kriesi, et al., 2006; Bornschier, 2010). This evolution is well captured by the case of the German political space between 1976 and 2002 (Figure 2.3), as analysed by Kriesi *et al.*[55]:
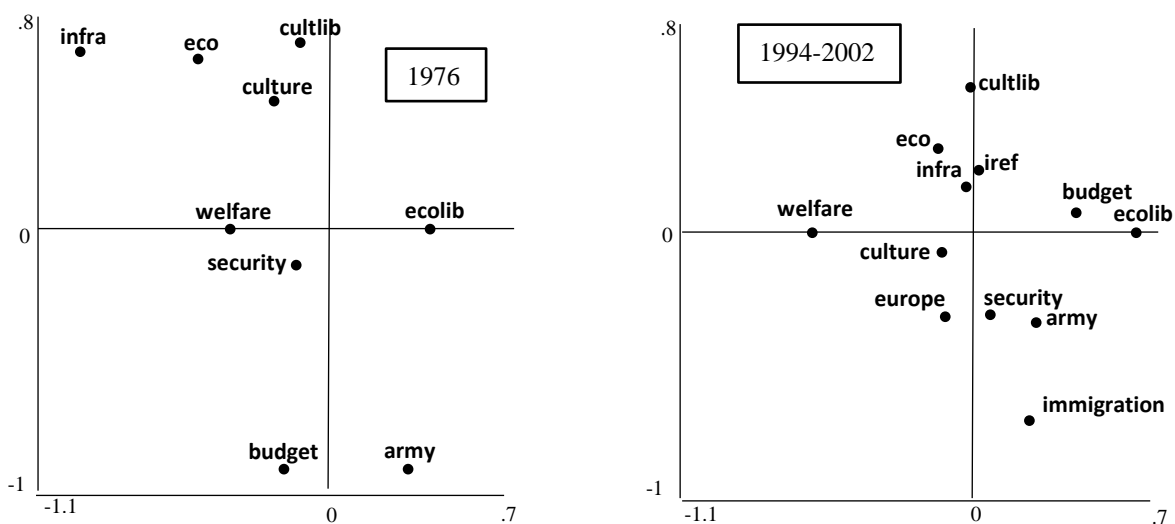
Figure 2.3 – *Evolution of the German political space from 1976 to 1994-2002* (Kriesi, et al., 2006, p. 939)

Notwithstanding some elements that differentiate the national paths in Europe, a pattern of similarity can be found in the countries' political spaces – clear evidence, for Edgar Grande, "of the power of globalization to penetrate West European societies and to shape their social conflicts and political identities" (2010, p. 325).

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[54] Defined by Bornschier as the "support for the goals of the New Social Movements: Peace, solidarity with the third world, gender equality, human rights. Support for cultural diversity and international cooperation. Opposition to racism, support for the right to abortion and euthanasia, for a liberal drug policy etc." (Bornschier, 2010, p. 426).
[55] Where: "*infra*" = *infrastructure*; "*eco*" = *environment*; "*cultlib*" = *cultural liberalism*; "*ecolib*" = *economic liberalism*; "*iref*" = *institutional reform*. For a more accurate description of the labels see Kriesi *et al.* 2006, pp. 17-18.

Changing priorities among the European public

Another "Copernican Revolution" in the structure of the political space in Western Europe is the relevance assigned by both the demand and the supply side to the two dimensions. In the post-war years there were practically no challengers to issues of economic redistribution: the first and most important consideration that moved citizens in their vote choice was the economic platform proposed by parties, namely what theory of (social) justice they ascribed to. With the improving in the economic condition of European citizens, however, and also with the constraints on macroeconomic policy that has caused a *convergence* of mainstream parties of the left and right (Kriesi, et al., 2006), salience has shifted towards cultural issues – at times even unrivalled in the public debate (but this time it is probably the supply side to have taken the lead in the process). Again, a cross-national similitude (with the exceptions of France and Germany, though the picture might have changed since 2006) has been found by Kriesi *et al.* – as shown by Figure 2.4.
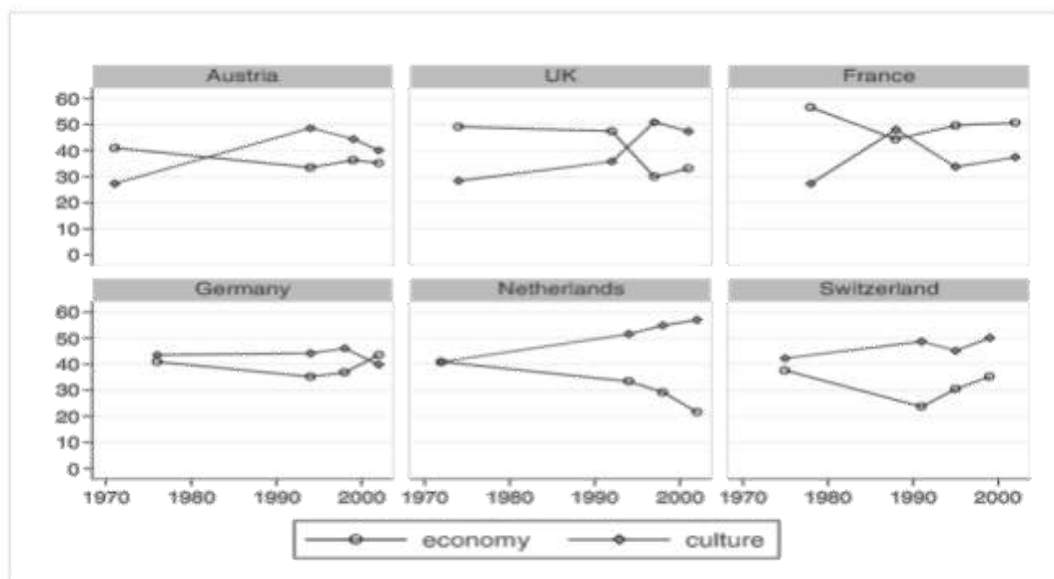
Figure 2.4 – *Saliency of economic and cultural issues* (Kriesi, et al., 2006, p. 936)

What is more, Kriesi, together with his colleagues, has subsequently demonstrated that the politicisation of European integration, by now a decisive political issue structuring the competition at the national level, has been led exactly by cultural issues – thus confirming what they call the "cultural shift hypothesis" (Hutter, Grande, & Kriesi, 2016).

2.3.3 1980s-2000s: The second rotation in the axis of preference distribution

Lastly, if once there was a strong correlation between, on the one hand, the "leftist" and "libertarian" poles and, on the other, between the "rightist" and "authoritarian" ones (Hooghe *et al.*'s GAL/TAN thesis) – since, in the words of Cees Middendorp, "it is the traditionalism and authoritarianism of the lower classes […] which prevents them from a stronger left-wing position; conversely, it is the libertarian-ism and anti-authoritarianism of the upper classes which moderates their right-wing stand"

(Middendorp, 1978, p. 311) – from the late '80s on (not by chance when social-class identification becomes less tangible) it is not the case anymore, and the dimensions have become increasingly independent from each other: in other words, those of Herbert Kitschelt (2004, p. 6), the political space has witnessed the *dénouement* of the "rotation of the main axis of preference distribution" (Figure 2.5) that started already in the '70s, as discussed in paragraph 2.1.1: a further proof that the space is two-dimensional. The main party families are then to be positioned in the following way: a Left-Libertarian pole (LL – what has been labelled "New Left" above) – favourable to redistribution of income and strongly in favour of socio-cultural libertarianism – antithetical to that of the socio-cultural authoritarian New Right (NR) (which however does not take *per se* a position on the economic axis), while at the centre of the vertical axis we find Social-Democrats (SD) leaning towards the leftist pole of income redistribution and Liberals (LIB) and Christian-Democrats (CD) on the side of market-allocation. The three mainstream party families, as we see, are not too far from each other neither on the "cultural" nor on the "economic" dimension.
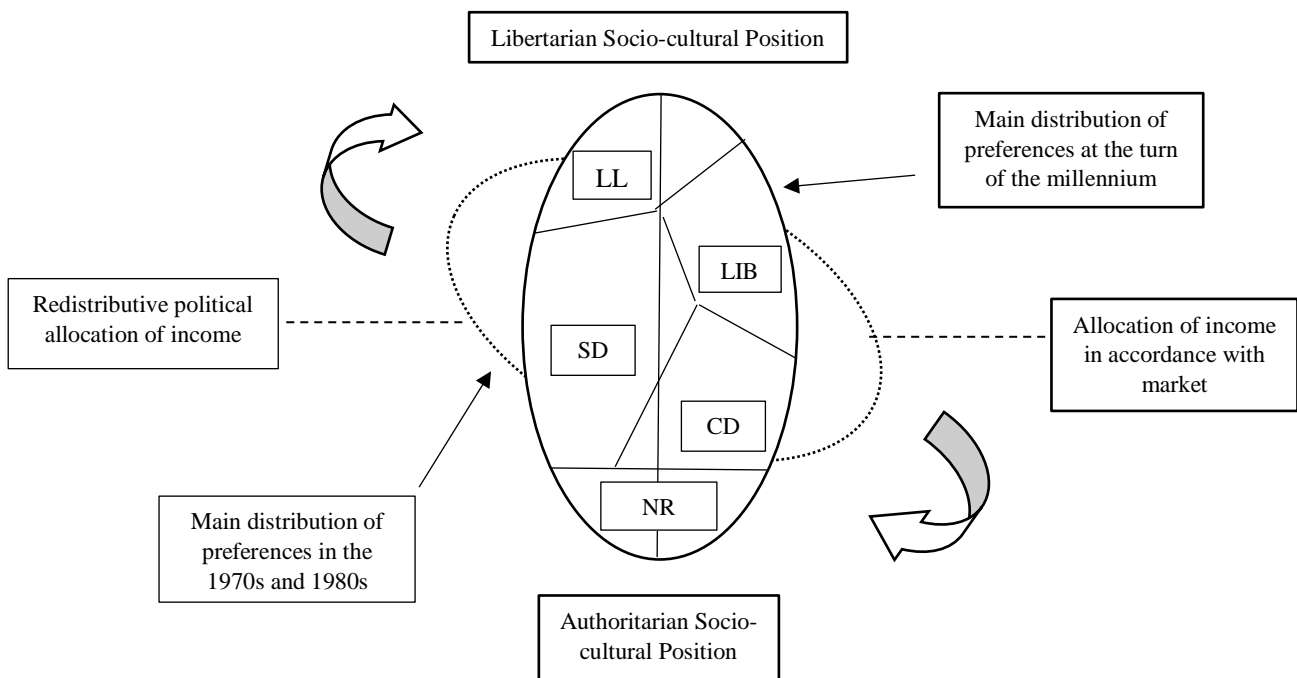
Figure 2.5 – *Distribution of political preferences from the 1980s to the turn of the millennium* (Kitschelt, 2004, p. 7)

As also evident from Kitschelt's analysis, in framing the context of party-system change one has to take into consideration the strategic behaviour of two types of parties: the mainstream parties, up until some decades ago the quasi-unique actors on the political stage, and the new challenging parties – distinguishing between the different (and specular) responses to the transnational cleavage of radical leftist and rightist parties and, on the other hand, of the centrist bloc mobilised against these "extremist" positions.

2.4 Globalisation and the rise of new (non-)party systems

2.4.1 Mainstream parties: fishes out of water?

As far as mainstream parties are concerned, two types of considerations directly concern us: their position (or indifference) towards the new cleavage and whether this leads them to a situation of *convergence*, where left and right mainstream parties tend to take always more resembling platforms. Up until now, the remark of Kriesi *et al.* made in 2006 seems to be still valid – the position of mainstream parties has been rather indifferent to the integration-demarcation cleavage (in accordance with Figure 2.5), with however some variations to the theme: both tend to formulate what appears to be a "winners' programme", with an acceptance and support of both economic and cultural integration, with centre-of-left parties defending the role of welfare states and centre-of-right and Christian Democratic parties arguing for a reduction in State intervention (Kriesi, et al., 2006). The ambiguity of these parties towards the new issues arisen in the last years, with an anchoring to their "historical battles" and an attitude towards globalisation that rather than being a positive proposal of a beneficial system seems to be a negative acceptance of an unchangeable *status quo*, probably explains the staggering defeats they are being exposed to all around Europe. About the convergence hypothesis, instead, evidence is at best inconclusive; while it has been predicted (Mishra, 1999) that the economic policy differences between the left and the right will diminish, some contradict the thesis that there has been a "neo-liberal convergence" among mainstream parties, finding instead their shift to happen "in tandem" (Haupt, 2010). Notwithstanding this, the impression that it is indifferent "whether the left or the right wins the election, [since] the constraints of the internationalized economy will oblige either party to follow the same monetary and fiscal policies" (Berger, 2000, p. 51) is surely justified on the part of the electorate's eyes, that are instead attracted by parties' proposals that instead of being "responsible" are "responsive" to voters' demands (Mair, 2009). What also seems to be a right impression is that the political space of competition has shifted to the right pole, as the policy constraints put by the international economy especially affect policies of redistribution proposed by parties of the left (Grande, 2010).

As Thomas Piketty discusses in his latest work analysing patterns of inequalities and their effects in the political conflict of France, UK and the US, the opposition between mainstream parties of the left and the right has become at this point the struggle of a "Brahmin left", addressing the constituency of the intellectual elite, against a "Merchant right", reuniting the business elite – thus giving rise to a "multiple-elite party system" (Piketty, 2018). What the French economist's analysis fails to grasp, however, is that the appeal of mainstream parties of the left and the right to both kinds of "elites" is not unchallenged anymore.

2.4.2 A (radical) challenge to mainstream parties

Radicals of the "Left", Radicals of the "Right"

The real winners of the storm that has affected European societies and the relative political confrontation seem then to be New Radical Right (NRR) parties[56] (Minkenberg, 1998), that exploit the cultural lines of the cleavage, as we have seen almost monopolising voters' demands today – contrary to the New Left represented by Green parties in the '90s and today's *altermondialistes* movements such as Mélenchon's *La France Insoumise* and Corbyn's Labour, labelled as "New Radical Left" (NRL) by Cas Mudde and Luke March (2005), that focuses on its opposition to the (neo-)liberalisation of the international economy. Indeed, while radical parties of the left embrace the integration side on the cultural axis and the demarcation side in the economic dimension[57], challengers of the right have historically had more flexibility: in the 1990s they have adopted what Kitschelt has called the 'winning formula' (Kitschelt & McGann, 1995), opposed to cultural liberalism on the one hand and supporting free markets on the other, while it seems that today most of them are leading towards the demarcation-demarcation pole.

The substantives "left" and "right" must here not be taken as absolving their classical function, that described by Bobbio (1997) and pointing to an individual's attitude towards egalitarianism. Their use is in fact just conventional, and it follows the characterisation that these movements have historically taken – specifically in a period where, as it has been discussed, there was a strong interrelation between the leftist/libertarian and rightist/authoritarian poles. It must be stated, however, that this no longer applies and, when the categories of Left and Right are used not in a conventional but in a conceptual acceptation, they shall be devoted uniquely to describe parties/movements' position on the socio-economic axis: a leftist can indeed be both on the integration and on the demarcation side of the economic and (even if more seldom) cultural axis, and the same applies to a rightist. Also and even more importantly, the "New Right" often takes a redistributionist stance on the economic dimension, in favour of its lower-class constituency: what is commonly thought of as a "leftist" position.

The picture of both mainstream and radical challengers' positions on the transnational cleavage is well captured by Grande (2010) in Table 2.1 below, which constitutes a good point of departure for

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[56] The recurrent attribute of "populist right" is here avoided and the adjective "radical" is added to remark the common field that puts the three groups of challengers together, exploiting the same cleavage and focusing on the same issues. After all, each of the "New Radical" movements is in a sense "populist".

[57] It must however be stressed that the concept of 'economic demarcation' for radical parties of the left is very different from the one expressed by their counterparts on the right; if the latter mostly express a contestation to the loss of decision-making power felt by nation-sates, the former do not necessarily contest the "form" of supra-national agency – but rather "the content" of the policies expressed at the supra-national level, especially by the European Commission, accused of being a non-democratic organ that is biased towards neo-liberal positions.

the discussion about the formalisation of party families' reaction to the new cleavage – even though there are some points that probably need to be rectified.[58]

Table 2.1 – *Typology of ideological profiles of political parties (Grande, 2010, p. 326)*

Cultural dimension	*Socio-economic dimension*	
	Demarcation (pro-state)	*Integration (pro-market)*
Integration (strong libertarianism)	Social democratic and left-green profiles	Radical liberalism
Demarcation (strong authoritarianism)	Extreme right and fascist positions	'Winning formula' of right-wing populist parties in the 1990s

A new type of radicalism: the New Radical Centre

Edgar Grande has the merit of capturing another important feature that has resulted from the transformation of the space and also makes an important prediction: first, he characterises the first quadrant as constituted by what he calls 'radical liberalism', and the adjective "radical" is here probably the fittest; even though in a different vein from the other "radical" parties – called so for their proposed intention to challenge societal organisation (especially in its liberal-democratic feature) at its roots (*radices*) – also this form of "centrism" is radical, as it puts into question, just as "radicals" on the left and the right, the predominant way of doing politics up until now, substituting the politics of compromise and alternation (between the not-so-distant centre-left and centre-right) with the politics of the "all or nothing", that opposes incompatible world-visions – in a perpetual "us" vs. "them". "Radical", thus, in a methodological sense. But also "new", as it is mandatory to distinguish it from the "old" Radical Centre, that of Blair's Third Way, still too premature to build a platform on globalisation that could resemble a "belief system". Hence, from here, New Radical Centre (NRC) – a grown up Third Way that is ready to move its first steps in the field of transnational politics. Moreover, Grande also remarked that – at the time of his writing – the NRC's quadrant was "occupied weakly, if at all" (p. 326), thus foreseeing what was and in many cases still is an "electoral market failure".

Historically speaking, the mobilisation of the family of movements referring to this platform (even though it is premature to talk about a mobilisation in a strict sense) has been in a sense a Newtonian re-action to the challenge posed by the "New Left" and the "Radical Right" from the '60s onwards: it is equal but opposite. The issues of discussion are indeed the same and regard, as seen above, both

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[58] For instance, Grande positions social-democratic and green parties in the "second" quadrant of the space, while it is probably other parties to play that role nowadays; what is more, he portraits the "third" quadrant as composed by "extreme right and fascist positions", which is not entirely untrue, but it is not the best strategy to assign to contemporary movements exploiting contemporary lines of conflict a XX century label. (Neo-fascist and nostalgic movements of the right do indeed exist, but they are also minoritarian in the framework of that "quadrant").

the cultural and economic components of globalisation. However, the position of the NRL and NRR is one of 'protection', i.e. they consider such global phenomena as harmful *per se*, and hence according to them they should be opposed by seeking an alternative order – either (especially for the NRR) or not (as proclaimed by the "internationalist" part of the NRL) inside national borders; in the former case the focus is specifically against economic elements of the modern era such as international finance, multinationals, and in general the neo-liberalisation of the international economy whose origin is to be found in the Thatcher-Reagan years of the '80s, while in the latter it is "cultural" phenomena related to globalisation (immigration, European integration, multiculturalism and so forth) that are the greatest evil.

The stance of the NRC, on the other hand, is – politically – an "opposition to the opposition" of the alter-globalists and nationalists, through the – philosophical – framing of the same issues they abhor as instead *universally* beneficial elements[59]: international markets allow the Ricardian law of comparative advantage to materialise and finance, instead of being an enemy, is a potential means of creating wealth (to be eventually redistributed); welcoming refugees is a "moral duty" and what is more allows an always more ageing Europe to alleviate its demographic crisis, even though some forms of indirect restriction of immigration are to be taken in order to avoid internal disorders; European integration is a process that must be fostered and which should eventually lead to a European "super-state"[60]. In order to entirely benefit from globalisation, it is however not sufficient just to "take globalisation seriously" (Giddens, 1998, p. 53), but it is necessary to launch a thorough institutionalisation of the order opposed by the NRR and NRL – an institutionalisation that cannot but happen at the supra-national level, and this is a substantial departure from the philosophy of the Third Way.

2.4.3 The advent of a new political space?

The configuration of the European (trans-national) political space, at least that related to "new radical" parties' response to the transnational cleavage, would then resemble the one proposed in Figure 2.6[61], with a tripolar structure composed of the New Radical Centre, currently on its way of formalisation, at the upper-right vertex of a triangle that leads to the other poles: the *altermondialiste* New Radical Left, still awaiting a more structured organisation and leadership[62], on the upper-left

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[59] It is exactly the win-win framework proposed by the NRC that distinguishes it from its counterparts, who claim that globalisation actually and potentially benefits only an elite of privileged people.

[60] See Macron's repeated reference to the concept of a "sovereign Europe" (Macron, 2017).

[61] A revision of the one sketched by Kriesi *et al.* (2010, p.15), where they included mainstream parties' (Social-Democrats, Christian-Democrats/Conservatives and Liberals) response to the cleavage, where the integration-integration pole is occupied by the Liberals and where the "New Radical Right" is on the integration side of the economic dimension.

[62] As Mudde and March maintain (2005, pp. 41-43), both the intra-parliamentary and extra-parliamentary mutations that have affected the radical left in Europe, the former through the expression of "social-populist" parties and the

corner and the *souverainiste* New Radical Right, the first to coherently mobilise – as demonstrates its electoral breakthrough in Europe (and abroad) – on the lower-left corner, after a change in its strategy that has resulted in the abandonment of the 'winning formula' adopted in the '90s.
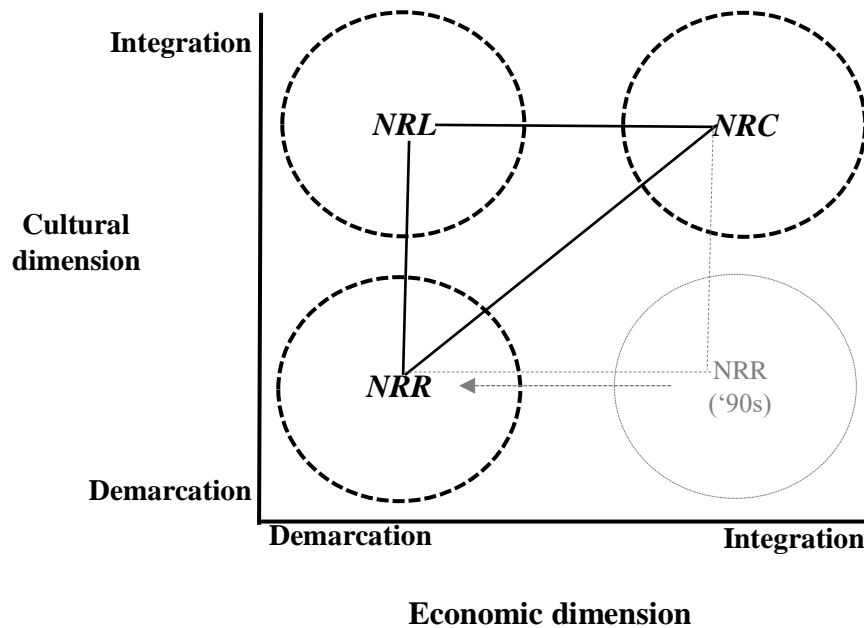
Figure 2.6 – *The transnational political space*

The resilience (or inelasticity) of mainstream parties

Needless to say, mainstream parties would not be just cut out of the political game all of a sudden. However, as a cleavage theory perspective would anticipate, in a sense they would be playing another game, one that they are used to play and with whose rules of the game they are acquainted. This game would indeed take place on the classic XX century's "field", a national and quasi-one-dimensional space where the horizontal axis is still the "left/right" dimension and would have an almost absolute relevance – as these parties' differences on the cultural dimension tend to be not too differentiated. Evidence goes indeed in this direction: Rohrschneider and Whitefield find – with the help of expert surveys – that parties "do not change their [European] integration stance to any great degree" (2016, p. 145), confirming another study by Bakker *et al.* (2015), that found that from 1999 to 2014 90.1 percent of parties changed their stance on European integration by less than one point on a seven-point scale; Dalton and McAllister (2015), instead, have found a robust continuity across time in the left-right positioning of parties, while Green *et al.* (2002) had already found that voters rely on conceptions of party identity that are stable over time. Overall, it is probably true that political parties

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latter with umbrella movements that mobilise on anti-globalisation issues, show that there is a clear future potential for these movements that is unrealised so far. In other terms, according to the two scholars, this sector is witnessing the same electoral market failure that has been exploited by Renzi, Macron and Rivera on the centre.

are too "sticky" (Hooghe & Marks, 2018) to respond in an effective way to new cleavages, and that is probably part of the reason why the organisms born with the new cleavage have the form of movements rather than of parties. Also, as long as the new transnational cleavage will have a higher salience with respect to issues of economic redistribution, these movements will probably dominate the political confrontation – and this will make Peter Mair's caption on political parties all the more adequate: they will be "ruling the void" (Mair, 2006).

On the juxtaposition of old and new cleavages, and on the potential for a new conflict to "overcome" the old one, Schattschneider made already in his "The Semisovereign People" an analysis which has proved to be right on the mark:

> *"Political cleavages are extremely likely to be incompatible with each other […] The new conflict can become dominant only if the old one is subordinated, or obscured, or forgotten, or loses its capacity to excite the contestants, or becomes irrelevant. Since it is impossible to keep the old and cultivate the new at the same time, people must choose among conflicts. In other words, conflicts compete with each other."*
> *(Schattschneider, 1960, pp. 62-63)*

The point of departure for future research

Framing the political space in such a way, of course, does not escape incurring in substantial problems; problems which are intrinsic in Kriesi et al.'s conceptualisation and that concern the relation between what have here been called the "national" and the "trans-national" political spaces. First of all, and particularly because the political confrontation still occurs in national arenas, one cannot simply overlook the left-right distinction that continues to define clusters of actors both at the nation and at the supranational level. Such schematisation, only in terms of parties and movements' reactions to the transnational cleavage, would only be appropriate when comparatively analysing actor constellations in Europe along issue categories that exclusively pertain to the sphere of European integration – as indeed done by Kriesi *et al.* in 2016 (Hutter, Grande, & Kriesi, 2016), where they constructed a space whose two axes pointed at actors' position concerning whether or not it is necessary to go beyond 'negative integration' (replacing the left-right dimension) and their stance on the conflict between sovereignty and supranationalism (on the lines of the transnational cleavage analysed above). When it comes to domestic politics, however, one incurs into a problematic trade-off: either to (wrongly) disregard the transnational cleavage concerning economic issues and thus preserve the left-right dimension, or to (naively) overlook what is still a rooted criterion of identification and of opposed conceptions of social justice – one "leftist" and the other "rightist". Most authors (including Kriesi *et al.*) have chosen the first option – framing the horizontal axis still as the line that goes from a "welfare" pole to an "economic liberalism" one and inserting their "integration-demarcation" cleavage in the cultural axis of the *y* (see Figure 2.3), to then *separately* analyse the party families' reaction to the transnational cleavage, both from an economic and a

cultural point of view and including both the mainstream parties and the "radical" movements. This theoretical confusion[63] has here been circumvented (but surely not solved) by separating a national and a transnational political space, confining the actors whose overall stress is prevalently on issue categories belonging to domestic issues of economic redistribution (mainstream parties) to the national political space (that is however complemented by a cultural axis that is overlapping with the transnational *y* axis), and those which refuse the left-right distinction and spend most on their effort on issues related to and caused by globalisation on a separate diagram. One hypothesis of solution to the controversy would be to consider a three-dimensional political space, with the two axes opposing cultural and economic integration to demarcation complemented by a residual left-right axis that would host the "sticky" parties and voters that still won't do without the ideology that has accompanied them throughout their lives – but it has mostly been refused on the contention that "additional dimensions would reduce the stress only marginally and would therefore be pointless" (Hutter, Grande, & Kriesi, 2016, p. 216). What remains doubtless is that there is still a theoretical grey area in the discussion to be filled by further research on these topics.

2.5 Globalisation: a game with no rules (yet)

Summing up, what seems to emerge from this picture is that – for structural reasons and for reasons of path-dependency – mainstream parties and new radical challengers, even though opposing each other in the same field of (national) elections, are playing different games. The first, too resistant to change and with a bureaucracy which was structured too many years ago that makes adaptation even more difficult, take the 'transnational' political space – the one based on the new cleavage opposing demarcation to integration in both the cultural and the economic dimensions – as a given, and their strategies in such space are not too dissimilar from each other: assuming that macro-economic constraints on national decision-making are justified and adopting, to different degrees, an open stance with regard to cultural liberalism. For these party-families, the uttermost relevance is still assigned to the 'national' political space, one that – even if it crosscuts the transnational dimension, namely in its cultural axis – is still composed of a left/right economic axis, the main criterion of differentiation between their positions: most of the moves of these actors are made exactly on this dimension. The movements belonging to the second type of political forces, instead, move their pawns on the other, transnational space – that incorporates new issues arising from the transformation of social life as resulted by the intensification of globalisation: individuals' "imagined community" is not a national family anymore but a global one – and this has a disruptive potential which has been

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[63] That on the other hand comes, it must be reminded, from an empirical study that includes a rigorous data analysis of both the demand side and the supply side's positioning along the scrupulously selected issue categories (twelve in total). For more details, see Dolezal, 2008.

exploited by these "new radical" movements. Both the cultural and the economic axes (which are evidently the only dimensional components of modern life) concern in this space the stance towards globalisation, a stance of *integration* or of *demarcation*. As for many strata of society globalisation still constitutes a real *shock*, whether positive or negative, the salience will then be assigned by a large part of the European public to this transnational space, and the odds of success will be overwhelmingly in favour of the movements that mirror people's demands in this field. Also, the fact that the political confrontation and the forum of accountability of decision-makers (contrary to the forum of overall political agency) is still based at the national level constitutes a challenge to radical movements once they enter office – that could lead either to their de-radicalisation or to a potential institutional reform, that in order to be effective should however be coordinated at the supranational level. It is indeed in the same essence of global phenomena that they can hardly be managed at the level of the nation-state – whereas it would be the most natural thing that people could hold those who take decisions concerning what they estimate as the most relevant aspects of their lives accountable, and that thus political competition could take place *mainly* in supranational forums. This is possibly a reason why in the long run the "New Radical Centre" will find it easier to overcome its transnational counterparts – as the normal-isation of an order that is already well-entrenched inside societies is a proposal that incurs into problems of collective action that are surely less relevant with respect to those that arise with the proposed dismantling of that order.

CHAPTER THREE – Three Countries, One Path: The "New Radical Centre"

When one is faced with a general theory and multiple case studies there is an ultimate end that must guide their analysis, that of trying to obtain the highest possible degree of *generality* without sacrificing a good deal of the *particularity* that is behind the single experiences. This consideration must be taken into account also in the framework of our study; in this case, too, we have a general theory – that of the evolution of European national spaces of political competition as a direct effect of globalisation – and some (three) specific cases – the rise of political movements adopting a similar stance in France, Italy and Spain. The aim of this analysis, however, is not to establish a causal relationship between the former and the latter; rather, the intention is to assess the interrelations of partly independent processes[64] and put them on a balance. The ultimate end is then not to construct a generally valid theory of party formation, that will lead to the establishment of what has been called the New Radical Centre across Europe, but to put into a clearer context the already established movements that have the said characteristics. This concluding chapter will thus proceed in the following way: after having applied the general, theoretical macro-framework laid out in Chapter Two to the particular, empirical micro-framework of Chapter One – namely by checking if the three national cases of "radical centrist" movements respect the overall picture in terms of constituency and party system they are part of – an attempt to make an X-Ray radiography of En Marche!, Renzi's PD and Ciudadanos will be made, through the study of their programmatic (or governmental) platforms divided into some common thematic areas – in order to understand, once verified it is to "winners" of globalisation that these movements appeal, how they structure their political bid. The commonalities between the three movements will thus be evident, just as the points of departure that characterise the single experiences – in this way the *particular* will not be sacrificed in order to obtain the *general*.

3.1 A Mediterranean Open Society

The first part of Chapter Two has been devoted to describing how globalisation and post-materialism have changed the composition and the preferences of the European public – that has, as a consequence, witnessed the emergence of a new fracture (the most evident among the many that characterise modern societies), opposing an "elite" to "the public", or "winners" to "losers" of globalisation[65]. The first party family to have exploited this divide, as also discussed in the preceding

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[64] *Independent* because the trajectories of the movements of Macron, Renzi and Rivera belong each to a different *habitat*, with different conditions and modes of (political) life; *partly* because, as already argued, in a time of globalisation there are a few or no phenomena that happen in a vacuum, as can indeed be said of these three movements which are in a sense a product of globalisation

[65] See also David Goodhart's article on the Financial Times (Goodhart, 2017), that discusses the differences between a class of highly-mobile, intellectual people – that the journalist calls the "Anywheres" – to a more rooted, tribe-bound

chapter, has been the "New Radical Right", that started to rally the "losers" back in the '80s. The specular response – one that mobilises the group of "winners" – is to be found, after the short "anticipation" of the Third Way and though with a slight delay, in what has been called in Chapter Two the "New Radical Centre", represented by the movements of Emmanuel Macron, Matteo Renzi and Albert Rivera[66].

3.1.1 Macron: *"Président des riches"*?

One of the main accusations the French President has been exposed to in the first part of his term – notably by the opposition on the left – is that of being the "President of the rich"[67]. However, a close look at the socio-demographic profile of his electorate makes clear that wealth is not the only nor the main criteria assembling Macron's voters – but it must be added to the probably more important variable of education, and that while obtaining a substantial support of the French "elite" he succeeded in being successful also among the middle class.

Indeed, as shown by Sylvie Strudel (2017), it is worth of notice that 24.4 percent of his voters have a secondary or post-secondary education (Bac +4 and *Grands Ecoles*), while the sum of his electors with no certification or with a primary, middle or higher school diploma does not exceed 22.3 percent; what is more, 14.7 percent of his electorate is an executive manager (*cadre supérieur*), compared to 10.3 percent of the total sample; last but not least, 28.8 percent of those who have voted for him have an income between 3500-5999 €, while this is the case for only 22.1 percent of those who have not. Notwithstanding this, Strudel demonstrates that Macron has a good level of support (16.7 percent against an overall average of 14.6) among the middle class and not too low a support among employees (13.8 against 16.9 percent) and workers (7.3 instead of 10.1 percent).

For what concerns the ideological profile, instead, the average supporter of Macron is spread around the whole political spectrum – with a peak at the centre (32.8 percent of the respondents) and a distribution slightly skewed to the right (21.5 percent declared to be "rather on the left" compared to 14 percent who is "rather on the right").

3.1.2 A specific kind of Spanish "Citizens"

The portrait of the average supporter of Albert Rivera has indeed a lot in common with that of his French counterpart, and it mixes too elements from the economic situation of Spanish citizens and concerning their education and job level and a heterogeneous ideological orientation.

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group – the "Somewheres"; the journalist and Eton-graduate also interestingly describes how and why he decided to leave the group he belonged to, that of the "Anywhere", abandoning its "capital", the "liberal London", to join the latter group – since he "never felt comfortable being a privileged leftist".

[66] Another strategy that came already in the '60s as a result of these societal changes and that appealed exclusively to (a part of) the other side of the cleavage, that of "winners", is the one of Green parties. Theirs, however, was not a platform devoted to that group *per se*, but as a consequence of the (post-materialist) interest orientation its members tended to have.

[67] https://materiel.lafranceinsoumise.fr/app/uploads/2017/10/Tract_MacronRiche_VF.pdf.

Just as Macron, 11.3 percent of Rivera's voters are executives compared to 5.4 percent of total voters, while 33 percent have a fixed contract – opposed to an average of 24.5 percent; on the educational level, 32.4 percent of Ciudadanos' electorate has a secondary degree, opposed to the average of 21 percent, while a peak of 38.2 percent of its voters have a university degree – a figure more than 8 points higher with respect to the overall electorate; lastly, 10 percent of Rivera's sympathisers have an income which is in the range 1801-2400€ (one of the highest intervals), opposed to around 5 percent related to the average voter (Galindo, 2015).

The picture is similar also when it comes to the political identification of the electors, with a (statistically significant) positive correlation – with the category of "extreme left" as reference – for all the three categories of Left-Centre-Right, even though in this case the distribution is skewed to the left – meaning that the electorate leans slightly more to the right – with correlation coefficients respectively of 2.40, 3.77 and 3.23 for the three positions (Rodríguez Teruel & Barrio, 2016).

3.1.3 PD: the party of the Italian élite

Renzi's strategy of party mutation is evident from the data about the social profile of the PD's electorate in 2018 as much as from the stark contrast that arises from the comparison with the party voters' orientations in 2013.

However, a good proxy for understanding the portrait of the average Renzi's supporter already comes from an analysis of the self-placement on the Left-Right axis of his 2017 primary voters, as compared to the other party candidates' electors. Indeed, this method leads us to a picture that starts to resemble the two sketched above: contrary to the other two challengers', Andrea Orlando and Michele Emiliano, Renzi's electorate appears to be the most "centrist", with 19 percent of the respondents who claimed to be on the centre, opposed to 6 and 15 percent, respectively, for his opponents (it is also not surprising that the group the most centrist between the first-time-voters at the PD's primaries and those who had already voted at least once is the former, with 27 percent claiming to be on the centre, compared to an average of 9 percent); what is also worth of notice is the percentage of respondents claiming to have cast their vote for Renzi "for his personal characteristics", 33 percent compared to an average of 30 percent, and "because [they wanted] somebody who could win the elections", 21 percent versus the average of 17 (in the other two responses, "because he represents my ideals" and "because he represents the PD's ideals, his percentages were lower than the averages, with respectively 33 and 13 percent of the respondents, with the averages of 37 and 16) (C&LS - Candidate & Leader Selection, 2017).

All in all, it is by analysing the vote for the PD in the 2018 elections that we can appreciate to what extent it has evolved from being a mass party to being a "party of the élite" (De Sio, 2018). Indeed, the vote for the Democratic Party is the only one to show a clear relation to social class, with the

support for the party going from a meagre 13.1 percent for the working class to the peak of 31.2 for the upper-middle class; moreover, we also find a statistically significant and positive correlation with the level of education and negative correlation with the voter being unemployed (*ibid.*).

3.2 France, Italy and Spain: three cases of cleavage structure change
3.2.1 *Adieu* to French bipolar system?

There is probably no better way to corroborate the theoretical framework laid out in Chapter Two than to use the example of the French presidential election described in Chapter One: all the hypotheses of political change seem indeed to converge in the picture given by the results come from the ballots on 7th May 2017 – the transformation of the political space caused by a transnational cleavage, the success of the (radical) movements that appealed to one side or the other of the cleavage, the unsuccess of mainstream parties that tried but failed in transforming their structure and political bid, a tendentially tripolar space for what concerns *integration-demarcation* issues – the three "radical" poles would here be complemented by a fourth pole formed by Fillon's *Les Républicains*, the most successful mainstream party probably because it filled the hole in the economically liberal-integrationist and culturally nativist pole of the 'transnational space'[68], as indeed hypothesised alo by Robert Elgie (2018), forming what could be baptised a liberal-*souverainiste* pole (Lib-S). Relying on Thomas Piketty's study (Piketty, 2018) schematised in Table 3.1 – precious because it relies on the transnational cleavage on both the cultural and the economic dimension and because it also portrays the demand-side value orientation on both the left/right and the transnational cleavage – we indeed see that the French political space is very far from the bipolar structure it has typically been composed of. The scheme confirms that Macron occupies the New Radical Centre's pole (NRC – "internationalist-inegalitarian" in the table) and also that En Marche! has an electorate made by the upper strata of society (as clear from the last two lines of the first half of the table, where it is shown that Macron's party is the first choice among university graduates with 41% of them voting for it and the second choice among the richest, with 20% of their support).

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[68] See Figure 2.6.

Table 3.1 – *Two-dimensional political conflict in France 2017: an electorate divided into four quarters* (Piketty, 2018)

Presidential election 2017 (1st round)	All voters	Mélenchon /Hamon ("left")	Macron ("center")	Fillon ("right")	Le Pen /Dupont-Aignan ("extreme right")
	100%	**28%**	**24%**	**22%**	**26%**
"There are too many immigrants in France" (%agree)	56%	32%	39%	62%	91%
"In order to achieve social justice we need to take from the rich and give to the poor" (%agree)	51%	67%	46%	27%	61%
University graduates (%)	33%	39%	41%	36%	16%
Income > 4000€/m (%)	15%	9%	20%	26%	8%
Internationalist-Egalitarian (pro-migrant, pro-poor)	**21%**	**58%**	28%	9%	5%
Internationalist-Inegalitarian (pro-migrant, pro-rich)	**23%**	26%	**38%**	30%	6%
Nativist-Inegalitarian (anti-migrant, pro-rich)	**26%**	12%	16%	**37%**	35%
Nativist-Egalitarian (anti-migrant, pro-poor)	**30%**	19%	16%	14%	**51%**

Source: author's computations using French post-electoral survey 2017 (see piketty.pse.ens.fr/conflict). **Reading**: in 2017, 28% of first-round voters voted for Mélenchon/Hamon, and 32% of them believe that there are too many migrants in France (vs 56% among all voters); 21% of first-round voters are "internationalist-egalitarian" (they believe that there are not too many migrants and that we should redistribute from tich to poort), and 58% of them voted for "left" candidates. **Note**: the votes for Arthaud/Poutou (2%) and Asselineau/Cheminade/Lassale (2%) were added to the votes for Mélenchon-Hamon and Fillon (respectively).

Another phenomenon well captured by the French case is the relevance of cultural issues among the public – but this time it is neither at socio-demographic features of the voters nor at their ideological positioning that we have to look, but at the geography of the vote. As Sylvie Strudel remarks (Strudel, 2017), the cartography of the vote for Emmanuel Macron[69] "evokes less the geography of the confrontations left/right […] than the topography of the "yes" to the European referendums (1995-2005) and gives an account of the crumbling of traditional codes" (p. 216) – a territorial connotation that is indeed the "negative of the FN's (*Front National*) vote" (Ifop Focus, 2017). Judging from the French electoral results of 2017, and especially from the second round opposing Macron to Le Pen, one might be tempted to say that the ideologies of Left and Right are really dead (at least in France) – but that would undermine the fact that there is still one half of the electorate (as Table 3.1 shows) that at the first round has cast a vote according to her leftist or rightist positioning, thus at least softening the assumptions on the power of the transnational cleavage made in Chapter Two.

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[69] The candidature of Macron seems to have vertically parted the country into two zones, the western of which has supported the most the candidate from Amiens. The most important zones of support for the leader of En Marche! are indeed: Brittany, Pays-de-la-Loire, Nouvelle Aquitanie, Corrèze, most of the Midi-Pyrénées, part of the Massif Central, some former socialist zones like the Lot, the south of the Aveyron, Puy-de-Dôme, the Haute-Vienne plus most of the big cities (including Paris and its surroundings) that are usually also university centres (Ifop Focus, 2017).

The Spanish and the Italian cases, on the contrary, present both substantial exceptions and important similarities with respect to the picture of the hypothetical tripolar space resulting from the cleavage.

3.2.2 The Spanish exceptions

The most striking peculiarity of the Spanish space is the absence of a successful party positioning on the New Radical Right pole, thing that differentiates Spain (together only with Portugal) from the rest of Europe. The reasons for this discontinuity, according to Sonia Alonso and Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser (2015), are to be found in three conditions of Spanish politics: first, its cleavage structure – namely the persistence of the cleavage opposing centre to periphery and thus making a nativist appeal to the primacy of a nation particularly troublesome for the identity struggles fought inside the country; second, the strategy of the mainstream right Rajoy's PP that – even though it presents the pro-European traits and the pro-integration stance concerning economic globalisation typical of a liberal-conservative party – has succeeded in attracting the support of far-right voters; third, a disproportional electoral system that makes the rise of new parties particularly difficult. It should be also stressed that Spain, just as Portugal, has witnessed a far-right authoritarian regime up until the '70s, thing which constitutes an obstacle to the affirmation of parties supporting an authoritarian ordering of society.

Spain is instead a good case study for the analysis of the other two positions on the cleavage, a "leftist" and a "centrist" one. The reason for the success of these two "poles" in Spain lies probably in the other exception characterising Spain: contrary to what is happening throughout Europe, cultural issues seem to be less relevant to Spanish citizens with respect to economic matters, especially for the consequences of the 2008 economic crisis which hit the country particularly hard, but above all it is other issues related to transparency, corruption and the general dissatisfaction with the current political system that explain the vote transfers to new parties (Vidal, 2018; Orriols & Cordero, 2016). If Podemos, that would represent the New Radical Left, has capitalised the attention of Spanish voters critical of the system and placing themselves on the left, Ciudadanos (the Spanish New Radical Centre) has instead attracted those critical and on the centre or on the right – by taking a position against nationalism and capitalising on "unsatisfied demands for political renewal, transparency and democratic regeneration" (Rodríguez Teruel & Barrio, 2016, p. 2); according to Vidal (2018), quite surprisingly for what has been said in Chapter Two and notwithstanding the rise of new parties, this means that the Spanish political system is unidimensional – constituted uniquely by a left/right cleavage. This is a strong assumption that however should probably be relaxed by applying the framework proposed in Paragraph 2.4, although reversed: the issue categories and the relative political spaces must still be divided between a domestic and a transnational sphere, but in this case higher relevance is given to the national political competition – since the issues related to political

and democratic renewal are perceived as the most urgent ones among the Spanish public. Podemos and Ciudadanos, respectively the Left and the Centre in the domestic left/right divide, would still constitute our NRL and NRC poles in the transnational configuration.

3.2.3 Italy: the most radical European country?

Italy, too, presents some structural points of departure from the general framework of Chapter Two – in particular after the general election of March 4th 2018; indeed, if France can be said to be the instance of the successful bid of a radical centrist platform, Italy – in light of the coalition (or "contract", in their words) made after the elections (L'Espresso, 2018) – is the first European case where the "winners"[70] of the election – the Five Star Movement (M5S) and the League – have a more or less clear demarcation-ist stance on both the economic and the cultural dimensions. Salvini's *Lega* (differently from Bossi's *Lega Nord*) can indeed be said to be an Italian *Front National*, calling for a halt to immigration and proposing to prioritise Italians in the economic redistribution, to disregard European Treaties when it comes to national interests and to stop the "dictatorship" of the bureaucrats of the European Commission: the ideal-type of an NRR movement. Surely less clear-cut is the situation of the Five Star Movement, that for strategic reasons has always opted not to have a clear stance on neither the domestic left/right cleavage nor the *integration-demarcation* cleavage concerning globalisation; the M5S has instead profited from the same discontent of the public opinion with politics and politicians felt in Spain, as demonstrates one of the slogans that has always united the movement's supporters: "*Onestà! Onestà!*". The choice of forming a government with the (Northern) League, rather than being the clarification of their stance on the transnational cleavage[71], must be put in the context of the difficulties in the negotiations to form a government – the only alternative to the centre-right coalition being Renzi's PD, main enemy during the whole last legislature and which had itself refused (through a TV interview of the former secretary general Renzi) the offer to form a government, difficulty arisen from the functioning of the electoral law which stimulated the formation of pre-electoral coalitions that had however little chance to win on their own and which were thus very likely to break after the vote[72].

Of the other four poles composing the *integration-demarcation* cleavage, there are other two that have been occupied in the 2018 Italian election. If we can draw a parallel between Le Pen's FN and Salvini's LN, we could do the same at least for other two instances that concern French and Italian

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[70] This is how the M5S and *Lega* have called themselves, and also how Renzi's PD has presented them in order to argue that his party's duty was the opposition. However, with a proportional law like the one with which Italy went to the ballots, it is technically incorrect to talk about "winners".

[71] That would also be strategically *naïve*, as that pole is already occupied (and monopolised) by the well-entrenched LN, while it is on the other hand the NRL's pole to be temporarily empty in Italy.

[72] It is the case with the centre-right coalition, constantly on the verge of breaking up after the election (as it happened in the end).

parties at the latest elections. Berlusconi's *Forza Italia*, as an example, can be compared to Fillon's LR as long as its liberal and integrationist stance on the economic dimension are concerned but on the cultural side, even though with some controversial declaration made during the campaign concerning a tough stance on immigration[73], the clear pro-European profile FI has assumed marks a distance from the French colleague. Lastly, it has already been stated that Renzi has tried to take the leftist PD on positions resembling the platform proposed by Macron with his movement *En Marche!*. This is indeed confirmed by a study of CISE (*Centro Italiano Studi Elettorali* – Italian Centre for Electoral Studies) (2018), that shows that the PD's electorate in 2018 is the most favourable to European integration (with only 11 percent of its voters who would like to get out from the EU and 10 percent of them who wish to abandon the Euro currency) and especially the most supportive of both economic and cultural globalisation, with 58 percent of the respondents who voted for PD wanting to foster economic globalisation (the highest figure among all the parties), only 32 percent of them opposing the approval of *ius soli* and 58 percent (the lowest score) wanting to reduce the number of migrants. As De Sio remarks (*ibid.*) this is a profile that closely reminds that of the Italian Radical Party – and given our assumptions this should not surprise us.

3.2.4 A spatial representation of the three case studies

We could thus put together the three national pictures concerning the positions of parties and movements on the transnational cleavage, by complementing Figure 2.6 with the examples from France, Italy and Spain at the latest elections. The resulting framework schematised in Figure 3.1 seems to confirm the theoretical assumptions made in Chapter Two, with only three party families – those reuniting new radical movements on the right (NRR), the left (NRL) and the centre (NRC) – presenting a coherent and common platform concerning the transnational cleavage and its issues of integration and demarcation – contrary to the incoherent approaches of the three social-democratic parties (SD) and of the liberal-conservative ones (Lib-Con), that share a common ground only on the economic dimension (for the latter) or on the cultural one (in the case of the former). François Fillon, on the contrary, appears to have adopted a stance on the lines of the New Right's "winning formula" of the '90s, supporting international economic integration with strong accents of *souverainisme* for what concerns immigration and the powers of the European Union[74] which, even though constituting for him a project that should be enhanced, should not substitute the role of nation-states – thus forming a liberal-*souverainiste* pole (Lib-S). The only movement without a clear positioning on such issues is then the Italian Five Star Movement, that while presenting an electoral base very similar to those of Podemos and Mélenchon for what concerns both their social characteristics and their demands

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[73] Berlusconi argued for instance that 600,000 immigrants had to be sent away (laRepubblica.it, 2018).
[74] Plus, not unimportantly, his friendly attitude towards Putin's Russia.

(probably the reason why an NRL pole is lacking in Italy), does not display a coherently and clear open stance on cultural issues[75] (while the anti-integrationist stance on economic issues is surely more clear-cut).
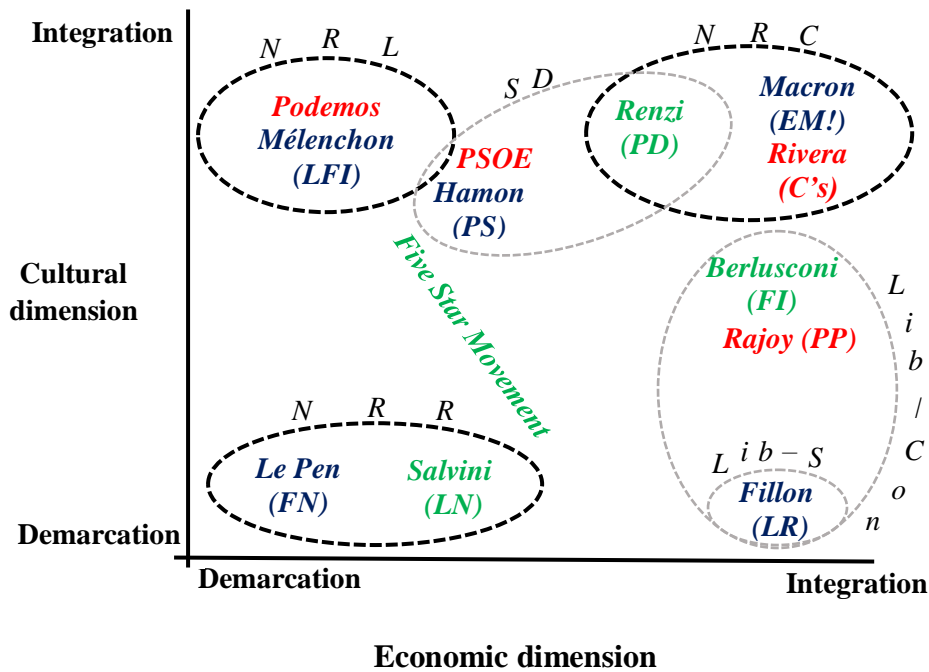

<div align="center">

Figure 3.1 – *The transnational political space in France, Italy and Spain*

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Thus far, however, the only pole that has proven an international coherence in each of the three countries of reference and that has built and reinforced a mutual solidarity is the NRC pole, putting together Macron, Renzi and Rivera with their respective parties/movements, whose electoral paths have been analysed in Chapter One. The next step is then to analyse their programmatic platforms (or the reforms carried out while in office, in the cases of Renzi and Macron), so to understand if – apart from personal affinities – we can also talk about one common world-view that reunites the three actors and that could be in the future associated with a pan-European movement.

3.3 The New Radical Centre: a comparative analysis of En Marche!, Renzi's PD and Ciudadanos

The analysis of the personal affinities between the three political actors at study made in Chapter One is not sufficient to establish a communion of ideals such that we can comfortably describe them as composing one party family, the New Radical Centre; what is necessarily required is a study and

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[75] As a proof, it suffices to mention the M5S's candidate PM Di Maio's phrase on the ONGs involved in the rescuing of migrants, defined by him "taxis of the Mediterranean" (Huffington Post, 2018); also, the electoral program of the M5S called for a halt to the "business of immigration" (TPI news, 2018). These positions must however be put on a balance with the environmentalist attitude of the Movement that is in stark contrast with a pro-demarcation cultural stance.

comparison of their political platforms, that will be made in the remaining part of this chapter. Indeed, the extent of their common grounds is quite striking.

3.3.1 Labour market reform: a flexible and simplified (common) Labour Code

There is one theme that has the overall priority in the ideology of these three movements, as indeed shown by both their programmes and their governmental action – the reform of the labour market, with one key word that has guided the articulation of the three policy proposals (or actual reforms in the Italian and the French cases): *flexicurity*.

It is not a case that the reforms of the Renzi and Macron governments to which the most attention has been given (both positively by the same actors and generally with a vein of protest by the public opinion) are those concerning labour and enterprises, in the former case with the so-called *Jobs Act* and in the latter with the *Reforme du code du travail* (or *Reforme Macron*); also, it is very indicative that the first points of the official program of Ciudadanos (Ciudadanos, 2018) are indeed devoted to proposed labour reforms. The political platform that puts the three together seems hugely indebted to Blairite socio-economic recipes, with Macron's and Renzi's reforms closely resembling Blair's focus on welfare to work (or workfare) schemes – shifting the forum of defence of workers' interests from labour unions to a more entrepreneur-prone system adopting employer-employee bargaining as the reference point and thus giving the former the needed *flexibility* to make more profits and the latter a sense of *security*, derived also by the indemnities provided in case of (conditional) unemployment.

Renzi's Jobs Act against Labour Unions

One of the most contested points of the labour reform passed in the Parliament through a vote of confidence asked by the Renzi Government, is the abolition of Article 18 of the Statute of the workers – which provided that employers of enterprises with at least 15 workers could dismiss them only with a "justified reason", while the *Jobs Act* has simplified the procedure of layoff by excluding the reintegration of the worker, establishing certain deadlines to lay him off and at the same time introducing a compensation for the dismissal (Dotti, 2014). *Simplification* is indeed another watchword of the reform, whose main aim was to reorder the forms of labour contracts by abandoning typologies that were scarcely utilised and introducing one only form of open-ended contract and by abandoning the requirement to declare the reason of the hiring in the case of fixed-term contracts, whose maximum of prorogations has been fixed at five in a period of 36 months (indeed, since its inception, it is fixed-term contracts to have sky-rocketed) (Barbieri, 2018). The principle of the reform is here exactly that of *flexicurity* – that is to say the mixture of passive and active policies, the former aiming at sustaining workers' income and the latter by creating ways to assist the workers in their careers, also instituting some public agencies or some programmes like the "school-work alternance" (Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali).

The first and foremost "losers" of the reform are surely labour unions, whose need is something that in the conception of Renzi and his European colleagues must be overcome. Indeed, with the *Jobs Act* (and as we will see with Macron's reform and Rivera's proposals too) the labour relations are now dual relations between employers on one side and workers on the other, with no need of third parties – or, in the case it proves necessary – the only third party that can be envisioned is the same Government that should have the last word in putting an order to the labour market. It is not a surprise, then, that when talking about Italian entrepreneur and FCA's CEO Sergio Marchionne, who has also been a friend and supporter of Renzi during his government, Renzi once said that "he has made more for this country than many trade unionists" (Buzzi, 2016).

Flexicurité at work: Macron's Reform
Flexicurity and *simplification* are the inspiring principles of Macron's reform, too – that, just like the instance of Renzi's cabinet vote of confidence on the *Jobs Act*, bypassed the legislative power of the Parliament, which could not discuss nor amend the reform, by directly passing the law through five *ordonnances* ("orders"). The content of the reform is indeed very similar to Renzi's one and provides the following: as with the abolition of Article 18 in Italy, the *Reforme Macron* provides a limited time (one year) for appealing to a labour court in case of dismissal; a reduction in the fines given to employers in cases of "formal defects" in the dismissal; the creation of a fund for the indemnities given to employees who are "abusively" fired, fixed at one month's salary in case of one year of experience and rising up to twenty months for those having an experience of 28 years; the rise of legal indemnities after a layoff; priority to branch agreements over enterprise agreements and the introduction of referendums that can be taken inside enterprises on a measure to be taken after a request is made by the employer (Mazuir, 2017). A promise made during his campaign was also to extend an unemployment insurance to all workers (Dahyot, Sénécat, & Breteau, 2018).

Also in the case of Macron, the main conception is one where the realm of labour must be made more simple and efficient, and especially where there is no space for labour unions – at the advantage of the direct negotiation between capital and labour (and eventually the government). Indeed, with the (contested) adoption of the reform, employers have an almost total freedom to fire – and the workers would be protected not by appealing to a third party but with some measures (such as indemnities or assistance in finding a new job) that are provided by law (Absalon, 2017).

Simplifying Spain's Labour Code
The key points of the proposals put forward by Ciudadanos do not differ too much. As we read in the party platform put forward for the 2016 general election, their purpose is to create – as Renzi has done in Italy – a new type of open-ended contract to regulate employment (point 1), a framework of negotiation that as proposed by the other two counterparts is one of collective bargaining between

capital and labour that would make their relation "agreed and flexible" (point 3), a new State-led agency to regulate labour policies and support workers (thus substituting, again, labour unions) (point 10), apart from providing aid to unemployed who look for a job for more than two years (point 11) and making workers adapt to new technologies (point 12), plus the usual focus on simplification of norms and of the bureaucratic apparatus (points 13-15).

A convergence between national labour markets

Even though strictly speaking labour policies concern national fields of application, it would be wrong to disregard the fact that idealising one common European framework of labour and enterprise regulation goes hand in hand with – and constitutes an embrace of – economic globalisation and European integration, especially considering that with the free movement of capital and workers and with one common currency, the only piece that would be needed to complete the puzzle is indeed a European-wide labour code – and the homologation of national codes would be the first step in that direction. Indeed, many references are made by the three actors to the conformity of their proposals with European standards – as demonstrates Ciudadanos' multiple mentions to conforming the Spanish labour market to the European one (points 24, 31, 34 of the program – plus the explicit intention to create a "common and transparent labour market that favours quality employment and the mobility of entrepreneurs and workers" in point 334) and also Macron's struggle against the so-called *travailleurs détachés* (posted workers), those that are employed by an enterprise of one country but are sent to work in another member state, profiting from the same working conditions and welfare of that country – a struggle that intends to introduce same conditions of work around all Europe. The aim of establishing homogeneous conditions for the labour market across Europe is indeed the same that has inspired the reform of the once public French transport service, the SNCF, which has been transformed into an "anonymous company" and which has opened the French rail transport to European competition – in line with the provisions contained in European treaties (Tavel, 2018).

3.3.2 European integration: different proposals, same aim (the United States of Europe)

European integration is indeed another fundamental backbone of the ideological structure of the three movements. Their orientation towards the European Union and its institutions can be summarised by two proposed objectives: reforming and reinforcing the Union while complying with its rules.

Macron, the new Schuman?

The one that is pushing the most for a reform of the EU (especially considering the importance and powers coming from its role, differently from what was and is the position of his colleagues) is surely Emmanuel Macron, that has put European issues at the forefront of both his campaign and the first part of his presidency. Already declaring in his book-manifesto "*Révolution*" that Europe is "the most pertinent level of action" (Macron, 2016, p. 223), the French President has spent a lot of efforts

especially in themes that he deems essential: first of all, fighting against the practice of *travailleurs détachés* and partly succeeding, since the European Ministers of Labour have already decided to revise the 1996 directive at the end of 2018 (Dahyot, Sénécat, & Breteau, 2018); second, and probably most importantly for the reach of this proposal, Macron often insists in the need for the Union to create an independent budget for the eurozone that should be worth "several points of the eurozone's GDP" (Rettman, 2017) – a reform that would imply a substantial gain in the supranational nature of the EU. In short, the European vision of the French President can be summarised in his intention (or dream) to build what he calls a "sovereign Europe" (Macron, 2017).

Renzi's Europe: a dream versus reality

Reforming Europe, but always in the direction of strengthening it has also been the purpose of Matteo Renzi in the period he headed the Government. This time, however, the focus has been put especially on the field of the system of redistribution of immigrants and of creating a Europe-wide collective system of insurance against banking crises – in light of the immigration and banking shocks that have hit Italy above all other countries in the period where Renzi was Prime Minister. First, Renzi has more than once attacked the current system of relocation of migrants, funded on the Protocol of Dublin that provides that refugees must stay in the place of their first arrival (thus putting a burden on Mediterranean countries) (Sesto, 2018), arguing in favour of a more equal system of migrants' distribution and even explicitly accusing Eastern countries like Hungary and Slovakia not to contribute enough in the efforts of hospitality (Coceancig, 2016). As long as the banking system is concerned, his proposal is instead the creation of common European debt bonds (Eurobonds) supervised by a European agency (Renzi, n.d.) – thus going, as Macron, in the direction of more powers assigned to the EU, up to the point of coming to the necessary step, according to the former Italian PM, of creating a United States of Europe, as clear from the meeting with his then colleagues Merkel and Hollande hosted by him in the island of Ventotene – where Altiero Spinelli, together with Ernesto Rossi and Eugenio Colorni, wrote his Ventotene Manifesto.

Rivera's vision of a Europe of solidarity

Pushing European integration further is an intention shared also by Ciudadanos. While confirming their intention to respect European Treaties, namely in the provisions of "granting the unity of the national market by eliminating the obstacles to the freedom of movement and establishment of people" (point 31 of Ciudadanos' platform) and of respecting not to exceed the deficit (point 34), also the Spanish movement has put forward some ambitious projects for reforming the Union – announcing its intention to "support a major deepening of the community integration at all levels", namely by "seeking to revise European treaties to reach an authentic European constitution" (point 328). What is more, the movement headed by Rivera is supportive of reforms in multiple institutional

aspects: concerning foreign policy, it calls for "a common foreign and security policy that be not guided by the particular interests of each country" (point 329) and for a Europe "speaking with one voice" (point 332); about freedom of movement it proposes a Schengen zone that be "more ambitious" (point 333); as long as immigration is concerned, it defends a "just and supportive solution to the refugee tragedy" through a "common asylum and migration policy" (point 336) and a "common border security control" with a "strengthened Frontex European Agency" (point 337).

3.3.3 Reforming domestic institutions to achieve an international convergence

Reforming European institutions, even if a priority in absolute terms, is a project that must be however carried out hand in hand with a reform (in some cases a near revolution) of domestic institutions: a transformation which is at the top of the agenda of Rivera and which was Renzi's main goal, too – one so important that it has been the main obstacle against which his premiership crashed. Also in this area there are some common key words: notably governability (as long as the electoral law and the division of competencies between the executive and the parliament are concerned) and centralisation (in the field of territorial administration).

Renzi's glass ceiling: the Constitutional Reform

The reform that carries the name of Renzi and of the then Minister for the Constitutional Reforms, Maria Elena Boschi, and that has been the object of a referendum on December 4th 2017, is the best example of Renzism (and in general of "radical centrism", as it has been called here) in action and applied to institutional reforms – i.e. trying to introduce the key concepts of *simplification* and *decisionism* also in the realm of public affairs. The Renzi-Boschi reform was indeed a reform that included an amendment to various Titles of the Constitutions and that envisioned a structural change in the parliamentarian, juridical, territorial-administrational nature of the country. First and foremost, the reform provided the overcoming of the "perfect" bicameralism of Italy, through the suppression of the vote of confidence given by the Senate of the Republic, that would have been left only to the Chamber, and the reduction in the number of its components that instead of being directly elected would have been the indirect representation of territorial institutions; only a given number of laws, then, would have been discussed by both chambers; what is more, a limited period of time would have been introduced to allow the Parliament to discuss and approve decree-laws deemed essential by the Government to accomplish its political direction; a change in the mechanism of election of judges of the Constitutional Court was envisioned, giving more power to the Chamber of Deputies; a new quorum would have been introduced by the reform for referendums; finally, a change in the administrational nature of the Italian territory and a rearrangement of the competences of the various entities was laid out: every mention to provincial territories would have been abolished and the jurisdiction exclusivity of the State with respect to regions was amplified in many issue areas, also

instituting a "supremacy clause" for the State (Camera dei Deputati - Servizio Studi, 2016). Together with the electoral law passed the preceding months – that would have introduced[76] a two-round system that assigned a bonus to the party-list that would have overcome the threshold of 40% in the first round or that would have won the run-off – the institutional reforms designed by Matteo Renzi were inspired by the will to give up a bit of *representativeness* to go in the direction of *governability*, surely inspired by the institutional structure of France's semi-presidential system.

Ciudadanos against devolution

Constitutional Reform is a key term in the platform of Albert Rivera, too. If the administration of the national territory was a residual part of Renzi's reform, however, it assumes a role of priority in the proposed constitutional amendments of Ciudadanos, as the centre/periphery cleavage is, as we have learned, always critical in Spain. Indeed, in point 49 of C's platform we read the proposal of consolidating the autonomous state, through the establishment of seventeen Autonomous Communities and two Autonomous Cities; as the Renzi-Boschi bill does, Ciudadanos proposes a list of exclusive competencies of the State to be differentiated from the shared ones and especially it suggests the supremacy of the State's legislation and the prohibition to delegate to regions the competencies that are by constitution assigned to the State (point 50) in addition to the abolition of provinces ("bodies of dubious utility") that is mentioned also here (point 259), as in the Italian case; finally, Ciudadanos seems clearly to have been inspired by Renzi' reforms in that it proposes, too, to abolish the Senate and transform it into a body of territorial representation (point 261) and to establish a double-unblocked-list electoral system through the uninominal national and proportional territorial election (point 277).

A Macron-like Fifth Republic

As a matter of fact, Macron has not felt at all the need to reform the structure of French institutions, satisfied by the amount of powers given to Head of State in the Fifth Republic – coherently with his vertical ("Jupiterian") conception of politics. However, some proposed changes are those envisioned in the sphere of the morality of political life, especially in the aftermath of the scandal that had afflicted his opponent Fillon during the campaign, and in the composition of the two chambers. As long as the former field is concerned, his measures, applied only partly until now, provide the prohibition for politicians to employ family members, the suppression of their special regime of retirement and the struggle against conflicts of interest in the Parliament; the point in common with Renzi in this aspect is instead the intention of Macron to reduce of one third the number of deputies

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[76] Since it has been amended by a judgment of the Constitutional Court after the Constitutional Reform did not pass the test of the referendum.

and senators, reform which however requires the consent of the Senate to be attained (Dahyot, Sénécat, & Breteau, 2018).

Were Renzi and Rivera's projects put into practice, we would clearly witness a convergence of the institutional systems of the three countries, that would indeed come to resemble the French State apparatus (surely the one that concentrates power the most in Europe) and that gives us a hint to the ideas of international integration that are put forward by the three actors.

3.3.4 Fiscal system: getting rid of old tax burdens to increase investments

Another kind of domestic reform that is shared by the "triumvirate" is that of the fiscal system of their countries, with a common effort of the three devoted to the lightening the tax burden and rationalising the fiscal system. Again, if this belongs to the domain of national policies, it is very often at broader goals that these actors aspire – especially the one concerning the *attractivity* of their respective countries to foreign and domestic investors.

"Les premiers de cordée": Macron's philosophy explained

One of the most characterising measures taken by Macron's Presidency is with no doubt the transformation of the ISF (*Impôt de Solidarité sur la Fortune* – Solidarity Tax on Wealth), typical of the French historical tendency of *colbertisme*, into a tax on real-estate (IFI – *Impôt sur la Fortune Immobiliaire*) – in order to convince French investors not to flee abroad with their wealth and to invest their savings in the French economy, apart from the explicit aim of attracting also foreign investments (Guinochet, 2017). From the point of view of his public image, this is one of his reforms that has cost him the accusation of being "President of the rich", other than the persuasion of many about his rightist stance. Apart from this achievement, Macron has also planned to lower social contributions for all workers (thing which he has already partly done) and to exonerate 80 percent of households from the council tax, that will completely disappear in 2020 according to his program (Dahyot, Sénécat, & Breteau, 2018).

We could summarise Macron's conception of the ideal economic and fiscal policies by relying on one of his preferred quotes: the "*premier de cordée*", which is literally the person pulling the rope and assuring himself that those that follow him do not fall behind (LeFigaro.fr, 2018). In concrete terms, the French President's belief is that in order for an economy to prosper, it must do what it can to create the right conditions for those who are able and willing to invest money and create wealth (i.e. rich people) to do their job and thus pull those who cannot (i.e. poor people) – in terms of left/right semantics, surely not a leftist philosophy.

Renzi and the Italian obsession: lowering taxes

Lowering taxes is a battle that has been shared also by Matteo Renzi. First of all, Renzi has carried out the same project of Macron (chronologically, it is actually the opposite to be the case) in the field

of the council tax – making of the abolition of IMU (*Imposta Municipale Unica* – the Municipal Property Tax) and the exoneration for many families of the payment of the TASI (*Tassa sui Servizi Indivisibili* – Municipal Tax for Indivisible Services) a personal success of which many Italians should be grateful (La Repubblica.it, 2016). Another goal of his premiership has been that of lowering the cost of labour – namely by lowering the IRES (*Imposta sul Reddito delle Società* – Tax on Corporate Income) and IRI (*Imposta sul Reddito Imprenditoriale* – Tax on Business Profits), taking both to 24 percent (Il Sole 24 Ore, 2016).

What is Renzi's most self-proclaimed success – however – is the bonus worth 80 euros given to employees perceiving an income of maximum 24,600 € – which is nothing but a credit aimed at reducing middle-income workers' IRPEF (*Imposta sul Reddito delle Persone Fisiche* – the Italian tax on personal income), thus translating into a further reduction of the taxes (D'Andrea, n.d.).

For a more just Spanish tax wedge
"We will not create new taxes of any type" is how Ciudadanos' fiscal part of the program starts (point 35), and this gives us a precious hint to the alignment of the Spanish movement to the platform proposed by Renzi and Macron. Indeed, its objectives are the same: "rationalising the fiscal system" (*ibid.*), defending the middle class (point 36), and lowering its taxes – i.e. taking the IRPF (*Impuesto sobre la Renta de Personas Físicas* – Spain's Income Tax) down of two points. Also to be reformed are the corporate taxes – but this time those of the big enterprises are to be augmented, since according to the movement they have "unjustified benefits" (point 38) – and the succession tax – which must be abolished for the middle and working class (point 40).

3.3.5 Foreign policy: a post-ideological and interest-based approach
Reaching a higher degree of international integration while taking into account a profit-maximising strategy on both economic and foreign affairs issues is another goal that puts the three political actors on the same ground, that of a foreign policy based on a post-ideological approach.

Defending France's grandeur
This approach is evident from the first year of Macron's presidency, that has seen the French President – although fighting for some principles that form his vision of international relations, namely those of multilateralism, the respect of human rights, the defence of environmentally friendly policies, the fostering of free-trade – avoiding taking some stances that could damage the French (and European) *grandeur* only for an *a priori* ideological position. A self-evident proof is the personal friendship that Emmanuel Macron has built with Donald Trump[77], who embodies the opposing world view: one that privileges bilateralism to multilateralism, that disregards environmentalism (see Trump's opting out

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[77] To whom he even reserved the privilege of being the only invited to the military parade for French National Day on 14th July.

from the Paris agreements), that promotes an isolationist and protectionist view. As another example, Macron's position on immigration has ever since the campaign been a realist position that tries to strike a balance between the duty of "humanity" with the objective of imposing coercive measures (Bertossi & Tardis, 2018) – for instance by imposing to asylum seekers a reduced maximum of delay within which to present their request (Dahyot, Sénécat, & Breteau, 2018).

Renzi in search of a place for Italy

Renzi's foreign policy, too, can be said to have been marked by a conservative post-ideological orientation that puts *interests* before *ideals* (Brighi & Giugni, 2016). The prominent cases are here the defence of the economic interests coming from strategic sectors – namely with the case of ENI's presence in Egypt, a presence that has always been defended even in the aftermath of the tragic homicide of an Italian researcher, Giulio Regeni, and of the opaque role that the Egyptian secret services are suspected to have played; moreover, also the special relationship that Italy has always had with Russia has never been questioned by Renzi's cabinet – not even with the strong anti-Russian orientation of the main European leaders; lastly, Renzi has also distanced himself from the traditional pro-Palestinian stance of the PD, leading Italy "not to decide" whether to recognise Palestine as a State or not (*ibid.*, p. 23). In the end, Renzi's post-ideological attitude in the realm of international relations can even be characterised as an ideological move itself (*ibid.*).

Ciudadanos and its Spanish-centred cosmopolitan stance

Ciudadanos' proposals in the domain of foreign policy are again coherent with those of the French and Italian counterparts. Also the Spanish radical centrist movement indeed highlights, in the first point of the program devoted to such issues (point 312), the concept of *interests* – not only the Spanish ones but also the European and global ones, articulating a cosmopolitan stance not too far from that proposed by Macron; priority is however to be assigned to "actions with countries historically bounded to Spain and to those with a special geostrategic interest", in what appears also here a post-ideological and in some way conservative approach to international relations. Moreover, a specific focus is posed on cooperation and aid policies (point 316), specifically through the establishment of a system of quick response to humanitarian crises that is "open to every actor", while taking into account "equality of gender, the fight against corruption and the protection of the environment" (point 317).

3.3.6 Economic globalisation and social needs: a win-win framework

Integration "et en même temps" protection: finding a synthesis

As far as international trade is concerned, we couldn't expect from the former Rothschild banker Emmanuel Macron a position different from an embrace of free trade, as indeed proved by his exaltation, together with his Canadian counterpart Trudeau, of the EU-Canada free trade agreement

(CETA) – a treaty that according to Macron "corresponds to [their] values" (Le Quotidien, 2018). Also the response of the French President to the "commercial war" threatened by the same Trump – "the EU will react with no hesitation if it is attacked" – is a demonstration of Macron's adherence to the defence of the principles of the WTO (Le Point, 2018).

However, this position is in apparent contradiction with the priority given by him to the defence of the interests of European citizens that are sometimes threatened by the same liberal markets – as in the case of posted workers in Europe – and that must sometimes be defended correcting the principles of *laissez faire* to go in the direction of the demand for protection expressed by a part of society[78]. The fact of having shown the will to deviate from the absolute adherence to principles of free markets has cost to Macron the accusation by the (ultra-liberal) newspaper *Contrepoints* of having invented a "protectionist free trade" (Verhaeghe, 2017).

The balance that Macron tries to strike between achieving an enhanced global integration and satisfying the needs of those who are the most threatened by it – although resembling a hypocritical way to "run with the hare and hunt with the hounds" – is actually rooted in a precise philosophical conception of modern society and its fractures and could be well sloganized by an expression that the French President of the Republic uses very often[79]: "*en même temps*", which in French means both "at the same time" and "notwithstanding this" (Mongaillard, 2018). Indeed, it highlights that according to those who share the same ideology of Macron, finding a win-win solution to globalisation is possible and it will be carried out by adopting measures both in the direction of an opening of societies and in that of their protection[80] (– thus drawing a line between a thesis and its antithesis in order to reach a Hegelian synthesis (this philosophical conception does not surprise in light of Macron's Master's dissertation on Hegel[81]).

Rivera's project of reforming globalisation
Ciudadanos, too, is supportive of international free trade and open barriers – also in the form of a proposed signature of the TTIP, the free trade agreement between the EU and the US[82] – and of the adherence to the principles of the WTO (point 339); however, C's makes its support for the TTIP conditional on "the protection of social and working rights, the defence of consumers and the

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[78] For instance, Macron did not hesitate during the presidential campaign to go and talk to the angry Whirlpool workers in Amiens, who were threatened by a possible delocalisation of the factory – explaining to them that "closing the borders is a false promise" and that "firms that behave badly will always exist", but the solution is in addressing the issue by reaching common European standards (thus with more and not less globalisation) (Lucas & de l'Espinay, 2017).

[79] So often that even himself laughed about it, while reaffirming the value the expression has in his thought (https://twitter.com/EmmanuelMacron/status/854011785942323200?tfw_creator=le_Parisien&tfw_site=le_Parisien&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw&ref_url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.leparisien.fr%2Fsociete%2Ftics-de-langage-en-meme-temps-le-peche-mignon-de-macron-21-04-2018-7676160.php).

[80] Exactly the view expressed in Popper's "The Open Society and Its Enemies" (1945).

[81] https://www.sciencespo.fr/en/news/news/emmanuel-macron-class2001/2999.

[82] The platform dates back to 2016, when Donald Trump had not been elected yet.

protection of the environment" (*ibid.*), thus expressing the same will expressed by Macron of conjugating transnational integration with social protection.

As a matter of fact, the same Rivera stressed in the closing ceremony of the IV Assembly of his party the need to "give some solutions to those who struggle with globalisation", recognising the "absence of projects for [regulating] globalisation" and proposing to "lead such projects" (Mateo, 2017).

Renzi and globalisation: defending "Italy's friend"

As a proof of Renzi's support of international free trade and macroeconomic integration, suffice it to mention the "total and unconditional support" that his government gave to the adoption of the TTIP (Giovinazzo, 2014) and the often repeated caption that "globalisation is a friend of Italy"[83]. Also when globalisation has seemed to be in reality a "false friend" for many Italian workers, however, as in the case of Marchionne's FCA who has reduced the number of workers in the branch of Cassino[84] and has announced that the production of a type of car would have been delocalised in Poland[85], Renzi did not show much sign of a will to shift his position – finding a general invitation for FCA's CEO and friend to "respect the commitments towards labour", while claiming to be "faithful" that "they will be maintained", (ANSA.it, 2017) sufficient.

This position is in stark contrast with that of Macron and Rivera in that it does not back up the positive, integrationist stance on economic globalisation with a desire to reform some of its mechanisms that translate into socially unjust conditions – thus not departing (almost) at all from a Third Way-like philosophy. Who seems to have captured this potential for an ideological evolution, in line with the radical centrism expressed by Macron and Rivera, is the Minister for the Economic Development of Renzi's and then Gentiloni's cabinet Carlo Calenda – who, when confronted with the Brazilian multinational Embraco's will to layoff around 500 Italian workers (without even granting them a layoff indemnity) to exploit the more favourable working conditions of Slovakia, did not use Renzi's moderation but expressed a total support for the workers and especially an unveiled anger against Embraco's management ("riff-raff", in Calenda's words) (Rociola, 2018). A recent subscriber of the PD, right after the electoral defeat of March 4th, Calenda has often explicitly criticised – on the lines of Macron, who confronted himself in a very similar way with the prospect of delocalisation of a Whirlpool's factory (the same group behind Embraco) – the social effects of Globalisation and it is not a case that he has undergone the same faith of Macron (who was presented as the inventor of a "protectionist free trade"), having being called a "protectionist" by *Wall Street Italia* (Caparello, 2017). Will Calenda be the ultimate step that will make the PD the Italian *En Marche*?

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[83] https://video.ilmessaggero.it/primopiano/renzi_globalizzazione_e_amica_dell_italia-149321.html.

[84] https://www.investireoggi.it/motori/fiat-chrysler-cassino-adesso-ufficiale-casa-530-interinali/.

[85] http://www.today.it/economia/fiat-panda-polonia.html.

Europe on the move?

These points of convergence are the pillars of the common structure of En Marche!, Renzi's PD and Ciudadanos – and could concretely constitute a political platform to be proposed at European elections (even if not directly in 2019); notwithstanding this, it must be stated that there are also many other points of contact [86] as well as some points of departure among the three ideological mindsets – some constituting different ideological shades and others more simply originating from the different national environments where these movements operate. Put on a balance, however, the common grounds just analysed between the three movements are with little doubt preponderant with respect to the contrasts, that seem instead to be of little relevance. Were the prospect of having pan-European lists at European elections realised, it would arouse little surprise to see Macron, Renzi and Rivera joining forces to create a common movement (*Europe En Marche*[87]?), whose political platform could be summarised by their main political objective: integrating their countries into the global economy, reconciling the global economy with social needs.

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[86] Suffice it to mention the relevance of education in each of their platform – as confirmed by the two reforms laid out by Renzi ("*la Buona Scuola*" – "the Good School", which has controversially changed the Italian school system) and Macron (who has already planned to reform both high schools, especially in the number of pupils composing each class, and university, namely reforming the methodology of access to it), plus the substantial number of points of C's platform devoted to school reforms (from general objectives of "efficacity" and "equal opportunities" (point 130) to more concrete steps to uniform study plans (point 132) and giving more powers to university's rectors (point 160).

[87] http://www.europe-en-marche.fr/.

Conclusion

Globalisation has radically changed European politics. Already in the '70s it is possible to observe a first transformation in the "political space": with the rise of post-materialist needs in more affluent and more educated societies (Inglehart, 1977), a new ideological opposition came to stand side by side the left/right cleavage – a divide opposing a "libertarian" and an "authoritarian" vision (Kitschelt, 1994); this new cleavage, however, was still "integrated" in and in a way dependent by the former cleavage – thus giving rise to a "diagonal" spatialization, where a leftist-libertarian extreme lied in opposition to a rightist-authoritarian one (Middendorp, 1978), or, in other terms, the space was divided between a GAL (Green/Alternative/Libertarian) and a TAN (Tradition/Authority/National) pole (Hooghe, Marks, & Wilson, 2002).

With the intensification of globalisation – both in its economic and cultural components – the libertarian/authoritarian cleavage has assumed an independent character from the previous left/right divide, and what was a diagonal line has evolved in two distinct axes – one characterised by the economic-redistributionist opposition between a leftist and a rightist conception and the other concerning the attitude towards globalisation. The libertarian/authoritarian cleavage has then assumed a distinct and stronger form – that of an opposition between two different world views on globalisation, what Kriesi *et al.* have called *integration-demarcation* cleavage (Kriesi, et al., 2006) – that can be described as a "transnational cleavage" (Hooghe & Marks, 2018). The issues revolving around this cleavage can be divided in accordance with their economic or cultural essence – in the former case we will have a stance on economic globalisation and international macroeconomic convergence while in the latter we find issues concerning immigration, multiculturalism and European integration. As already explained by Schattschneider (1960), old and new conflicts are in a sense in competition between them – and in the case of the left/right and integration/demarcation cleavages it is with little doubt the latter to have the higher relevance in terms of the current social attention, as demonstrated by the success of parties that focus on it during electoral campaigns, be them aligned on the integration or demarcation side of the cleavage.

The transformation just described – a transformation in the "supply side" of politics – went hand in hand with a transformation in the "demand side", that had in the meantime witnessed an emergence of a fracture between "winners" and "losers" of globalisation (Kriesi, et al., 2008). The first political mobilisation of one of these two groups came in the '80s, with radical parties of the right which rallied "losers" on nationalist, anti-EU and anti-immigration themes; if the radical right adopted, during the '90s, what Kitschelt calls the "winning formula" (Kitschelt, 1994) – that is to say combining a pro-integration stance on economic matters to a pro-demarcation position on cultural issues – it has

nowadays shifted the economic positioning by embracing a demarcation-ist stance there, too, giving rise to what we call here "new radical right" (NRR). To this party family we have ascribed, in the instance of the three case studies of France, Italy and Spain presented here, Le Pen's *Front National* and Salvini's *Lega.* The other poles that can be traced are those of the "new radical left" (NRL) (March & Mudde, 2005), uniting Mélenchon's *La France Insoumise* and Spanish *Podemos* – which is characterised by a demarcation-ist stance on the economic dimension and an integration-ist stance on cultural issues – and of the new radical centre (NRC), which is in favour of integration on both dimensions and that, contrary to the other two stances, has a representative in each of the three countries and could constitute a potential for a future mobilisation at the European level; this last pole puts together Macron's *En Marche*!, Renzi's PD and Rivera's *Ciudadanos.*

All the three movements of the NRC respect the theoretical expectations concerning their belonging to the integration-integration stance. First, they appear to have built a stance appealing to the upper strata of the respective countries – attracting an electorate fundamentally composed by higher-education, upper-middle income people: in general, an upper-middle class electorate. Secondly, their platforms present a relevant number of common points and converging ideas. The main areas of intersection of their policy projects concern the following areas: labour market reforms, concerning which the three actors propose a program based on a *simplification* of the countries' labour codes and an employer-employee relation regulated by policies coherent with the concept of *flexicurity*[88]; European integration, that must be accelerated in a supranational form – albeit with different proposals put on the table by the three actors, the most ambitious of which probably by Macron; institutional reforms, to be achieved in order to centralise power in a territorial-administrational sense and in the sense of governmental powers – apart from the simplification aim present here, too; fiscal systems, with a common purpose expressed to lower taxes – both to attract foreign investments and to foster domestic productive investments; foreign affairs, where all three actors have put ideological standpoints such as multilateralism and environmentalism on a par with an interest-based perspective; economic globalisation, in which field the actors – although to different degrees, the lowest of which expressed by Matteo Renzi – have presented a win-win framework: acknowledging the damages caused by globalisation to some strata of societies, what they propose is not to invert the path of globalisation but rather to reform and revise some of its mechanisms (i.e. the practice of posted workers in the EU) in order to alleviate the social needs of the "losers" of globalisation while meeting the demands of the "winners".

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[88] This point is particularly in line with the assumption of a pro-integration stance on economic globalisation – as a common European labour market would be a further step to achieve and reinforce European integration.

It is still unknown whether the three actors will be able to elaborate such a common policy program at the next European elections; what remains sure is that theirs is a political bid that will be further developed at the European level – as shown by their rapid electoral breakthrough in the three countries analysed in Chapter One. What is also possible to foresee, is that – along the rise in the 'transnational' content of policy proposals – a transnational structuration of party families will follow: "*Europe En Marche*" and the new radical centrists would in that case be opposed to the already formed EFDD (Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy) group in the European Parliament, under the form of a new movement rallying the European radical right and to the family of the European radical left, currently on its way of transnational formalisation with the pan-European DiEM25 (Democracy in Europe Movement 2025), led by former Greek Minister of the Finance Varoufakis and already rallying the support of Jeremy Corbyn (Chandler, 2018), of some Italian leftist politicians (like the mayor of Naples Luigi de Magistris) and wishing to re-unite the European (radical) left.

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Italian Summary

L'ascesa di nuovi movimenti politici in Europa è nell'ultimo periodo uno dei maggiori oggetti di discussione tra accademici, analisti, giornalisti, i quali sono alla costante ricerca delle radici di un sommovimento epocale che ha rivoluzionato il modo di fare e di comprendere la politica: quali sono le motivazioni della crisi apparentemente irreversibile che sta colpendo "e affondando" buona parte dei partiti cosiddetti "mainstream" (quelli social-democratici a sinistra e quelli liberal-democratici a destra), che sembrano non riuscire più ad arrestare il loro declino[89]? Quali sono, per contro, le ragioni che spingono i nuovi movimenti che proclamano di rifiutare la distinzione destra-sinistra, vista da loro come inadatta e superata, al successo? Possono i virtuosi risultati di questi ultimi significare l'estinzione di quella stessa dicotomia che ha funzionato da "bussola" politica per l'intero secolo scorso (e non solo)? Per abbozzare una risposta a questi quesiti analizzare le sorti elettorali dei partiti e movimenti europei è senza dubbio una condizione necessaria, sebbene non sufficiente; per essere minimamente esaustiva, l'analisi deve spingersi più a fondo e prendere in considerazione non solo i temi e le *issues* che accompagnano il cammino dei suddetti movimenti e che rivestono un ruolo preponderante in termini di salienza nel pubblico, ma anche il contesto da cui questi scaturiscono. In effetti, basta un rapido passaggio in rassegna degli argomenti trattati nel discorso pubblico, e di conseguenza durante le campagne elettorali, per comprendere quale sia l'origine dello sconvolgimento politico in Europa: immigrazione e multiculturalismo, integrazione Europea e moneta unica, limitazione del potere sovrano degli Stati, strapotere dei mercati finanziari e delle multinazionali, le conseguenze del libero mercato e così di seguito – non possono che ascriversi tutti, intuitivamente, al vero motore propulsore di ogni cambiamento sociale, culturale, economico e quindi politico dell'era moderna, la globalizzazione. In un certo senso, se la dialettica politica verte, anche solo indirettamente, sulla predisposizione ideologica nei confronti della globalizzazione e dei suoi effetti sulla società europea, allora una "politica della globalizzazione" sembra essere all'orizzonte, se non già affermata nello scenario politico europeo.

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[89] Si vedano i risultati ottenuti dal centro-sinistra e dal centro-destra alle ultime elezioni in Europa: in primis nel caso delle presidenziali francesi del 2017, dove per la prima volta sia il Partito Socialista (con un misero 6%) che i Repubblicani non sono riusciti ad accedere al secondo turno; in Germania, dove seppur conservando la coalizione di governo, la SPD e la CDU hanno perso insieme quasi 100 seggi nel *Bundestag* nel settembre 2017; in Italia, dove il 4 marzo 2018 il PD ha raggiunto il minimo storico con il 18% dei voti e dove FI è stata per la prima volta superata dalla Lega; in Spagna, dove il lungo predominio del PP e del PSOE è stato recentemente messo in discussione; in Grecia, in cui il tracollo del social-democratico PASOK ha addirittura dato nome al fenomeno della crescente irrilevanza dei partiti social-democratici europei – afflitti dalla cosiddetta "pasokizzazione".

In particolare, forte è stato l'accento posto dai commentatori politici sulla presa di posizione di aggressiva opposizione nei confronti della globalizzazione[90] di una famiglia partitica che, nata negli anni '70-'80 in alcuni paesi europei come la Francia (con il *Front National*), l'Austria (con l'FPÖ), il Belgio (con il *Vlaams Blok* – Blocco Fiammingo) e con il *Fremskridtspartiet* (Partito del Progresso) Danese e Norvegese (Betz, 2013), si è progressivamente sviluppata sino ad occupare oggi una posizione di rilievo nella maggior parte dei paesi europei: ci riferiamo, evidentemente, a quelli che nel linguaggio comune vengono chiamati partiti "populisti" di destra, ma che qui viene definita come la famiglia della "nuova destra radicale" (Minkenberg, 1998) per motivi discussi in seguito.

C'è tuttavia una strategia opposta nei confronti dei temi appartenenti alla sfera del mondo globalizzato che è in fase di strutturazione e che non disdegna di avere un successo in molti casi anche prevaricante all'interno dei singoli sistemi politici nazionali. Gli attuali maggiori esponenti di questa nuova famiglia, che si rifà non troppo velatamente all'esperimento della Terza Via portato avanti negli anni '90 e 2000 da Tony Blair, Gerhard Schröder e Bill Clinton, sono individuabili in tre personaggi politici dei principali paesi dell'Europa mediterranea: il francese Macron, l'italiano Renzi e lo spagnolo Rivera – che con i loro movimenti/partiti hanno messo in atto una scalata del panorama politico in alcuni casi (quello del Presidente francese in primis) fulminante. Difatti, a Emmanuel Macron è bastato un anno dalla fondazione del suo personale movimento *En Marche!*, il 16 novembre 2016, per vincere il primo turno delle presidenziali (con il 24% dei suffragi) e battere Marine Le Pen al ballottaggio con il 66%, nonché per guadagnare 308 seggi all'Assemblea (poco più del 53%) alle legislative del giugno 2017 con il gruppo "*La République En Marche*"; Albert Rivera, che fino al 2014 guidava un movimento, *Ciudadanos*, confinato allo scenario politico catalano, dove era nato e fino ad allora operava in quanto partito anti-secessionista, è riuscito a mettere in atto un *exploit* che ha portato il partito ad avere un'affermazione sia regionale che nazionale – arrivando ad essere il primo gruppo nella *Generalitat* alle elezioni catalane del dicembre 2017 con il 25.4% e ad essere dato da sondaggi risalenti a gennaio 2018 (Metroscopia, 2018) come il primo partito in Spagna, con una stima del 27%, una crescita di più di 13 punti rispetto al 14% delle elezioni generali del 2016; Matteo Renzi, invece, è tra i tre colui che per primo ha conosciuto il successo, guidando il PD al 40.8% alle elezioni europee del 2014, ma allo stesso tempo il primo che ha sperimentato un declino elettorale che ha portato il "suo" PD, personalizzato a tal punto da indurre Ilvo Diamanti (2016) a parlare di PdR ("Partito di Renzi"), al 18,7% del 4 marzo 2018. In effetti, c'è da dire che se Macron e Rivera hanno potuto contare su dei movimenti interamente a loro disposizione, personali e non solo personalizzati (Bobba & Seddone, 2016), Renzi ha cercato di attuare il progetto di un partito post-

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[90] Che, in ambito europeo, si traduce in temi pertinenti alla sfera dell'Unione Europea e delle sue competenze/implicazioni.

ideologico (un "Partito della Nazione", come è stato chiamato per un periodo) all'interno di un partito social-democratico pre-esistente[91], la cui burocrazia e il cui elettorato storico hanno costituito spesso un ostacolo a cui, ad esempio, i due colleghi in Francia e Spagna non hanno dovuto opporsi. Non è un caso che, se questi ultimi hanno fatto della loro posizione "né di destra né di sinistra" un baluardo, Renzi, pur avendo oggettivamente spostato il PD su posizioni centriste, non possa aver eseguito la stessa mossa strategica.

Al netto delle differenze di percorso e di struttura dei tre partiti-movimento, ciò che resta è che, specialmente a seguito dell'elezione di Emmanuel Macron, si è venuta a creare una solidarietà reciproca tra i tre attori a tal punto che è stata ipotizzata dagli stessi interessati la formazione di un movimento pan-europeo (denominato, almeno provvisoriamente, "*Europe En Marche*") nell'eventualità di una futura apertura a liste trans-nazionali alle elezioni europee.

La costituzione di questo blocco di "centro", nei termini dicotomici destra-sinistra, può essere considerata come una reazione (storica e ideologica) "newtoniana", cioè uguale e opposta, alla sfida in termini protezionistici posta dalla "nuova destra radicale" nei confronti della globalizzazione. Motivo per cui si parla in questo studio della famiglia del "nuovo centro radicale": "nuovo", in quanto si dissocia per forma e (in parte) contenuto dal centro radicale di Blair e colleghi; "centro", perché in termini di posizionamento sull'asse che ha per estremi una sinistra ed una destra essa si posiziona nel mezzo, proponendo ricette tradizionalmente sia (più) di destra che di sinistra; "radicale", nel senso più politologico del termine, non puntando questa famiglia a cambiare le "radici" dell'ordine istituzionale liberal-democratico, come invece viene proposto dalla destra radicale, ma portando avanti un'idea di politica che si distacca alle fondamenta da quella che è stata la politica dell'alternanza tra partiti di (centro-) sinistra e di (centro-) destra, con l'obiettivo di "rivoluzionare" la politica: dai suoi temi (da aggiornare) al suo funzionamento (da innovare), dall'apparato istituzionale (da snellire) all'ordine costituzionale (da semplificare). Innanzitutto, distaccandosi da temi appartenenti alle categorie di destra e sinistra e focalizzandosi su una nuova divisione che pone questo insieme di movimenti agli antipodi con la destra radicale: quella tra un'idea di società "aperta" (per dirla *à la* Popper) e cosmopolita ed una concezione particolaristica e nazionalista – non a caso i due campi in cui si sono divisi gli sfidanti del secondo turno delle presidenziali francesi, Macron e Le Pen. Divisione che si è andata ad affiancare (e non a sostituire) a quella tra un'ideologia di sinistra o di destra, nei modi di seguito riportati.

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[91] Differenziandosi poco, dal punto di vista di strategia politica, dall'esperienza della Terza Via blairiana.

Nell'analizzare il processo politico della globalizzazione è necessario prendere in considerazione tre livelli d'analisi: quello istituzionale, quello sociale da un punto di vista dell'elettorato (la "domanda" politica) e quello del riposizionamento di partiti e movimenti (l'"offerta" politica).

Da un punto di vista istituzionale, il maggior impatto della globalizzazione è quello di aver sottratto una somma sostanziale della sovranità degli Stati, che si trovano privati della (quasi) completa libertà che avevano un tempo di dirigere le loro politiche economiche, esposti come sono ai flussi transnazionali di capitali finanziari e non, a regole vincolanti da loro sottoscritte in ambito macroeconomico[92] e al sempre più rilevante potere contrattuale delle grandi multinazionali. Questa sfida, "dall'alto", allo stato-nazione è includibile nell'insieme generale della "globalizzazione economica", e si riassume in quello che Dani Rodrik (2002) ha categorizzato come "il trilemma politico dell'economia mondiale": lo stato-nazione, la democrazia e una completa integrazione economica, afferma Rodrik, sono mutualmente incompatibili.

"Dal basso", le sfide poste dalla globalizzazione sono molteplici. Innanzitutto esse sono da rintracciare nel fenomeno del post-materialismo, ci troviamo negli anni '70, che come spiegato da Inglehart (1977) si compone, da un lato, di un aumento generale della disponibilità economica e dell'assenza di guerre vissute, che si traducono in una trasformazione dei valori a livello societario e, dall'altro, di un aumento altrettanto generale del livello di istruzione e dell'espansione della comunicazione di massa, che si traducono in un aumento delle abilità di comprensione ed elaborazione dei fenomeni politici: ciò comporta un cambiamento nei bisogni e nelle domande di una parte dei cittadini, che da "materiali" (in generale tutti i bisogni primari, nello specifico un potere d'acquisto minimo) divengono "post-materiali" (cause ambientaliste, relative all'integrazione europea, di stile di vita, di "auto-affermazione"); ci si può generalmente riferire a questo insieme di persone come i "vincitori" della globalizzazione. Ecco spiegata dunque la "rivoluzione silenziosa" che ha portato alla nascita dei partiti Verdi e Radicali. Ecco spiegata anche, d'altro canto, la "contro-rivoluzione silenziosa" (Ignazi, 2003) che ha opposto a chi esprimeva i suddetti "bisogni" coloro i quali esprimevano bisogni opposti: bisogni di "auto-difesa" e di protezione, che non potevano che essere rivolti contro quell'insieme di fenomeni che hanno, come già descritto, indebolito l'unica fonte possibile di protezione, lo Stato, per questa fascia societaria, i "perdenti" della globalizzazione.

Ci troviamo in un'epoca, dagli anni '70 agli anni '90, in cui i due orientamenti socio-culturali nei confronti della globalizzazione sono elaborati in un'attitudine "libertaria", in linea con i bisogni post-materiali dei "vincitori", ed una "autoritaria", espressione dei bisogni dei "perdenti": il nuovo *cleavage* è in questo periodo, come spiegato da Kitschelt (1994), correlato con la pre-esistente

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[92] Si pensi, come esempi, al ruolo dell'OMC come arbitro mondiale del libero commercio o alle regole contenuti dei trattati europei, alcune delle quali costituzionalmente vincolanti (preclaro il caso del "Patto di Stabilità").

divisione destra-sinistra, cosicché l'orientamento libertario è adottato da partiti di sinistra e quello autoritario da partiti di destra. In termini di "spazio politico", ciò che risulta è una diagonale, che collega un polo "libertario di sinistra" nel II quadrante all'estremo opposto, "autoritario di destra", nel IV quadrante; la diagonale è il sintomo dell'ancora forte integrazione tra la dimensione economica (nella quale distinguiamo un orientamento a favore della redistribuzione economica, tipicamente di sinistra, da una preferenza per l'allocazione delle risorse in base al libero funzionamento dei mercati, ideologia di destra) e quella culturale-attitudinale.

Ciononondimeno, è dagli anni '90 che si ha probabilmente l'intensificazione maggiore della globalizzazione. In ambito economico, con la ratifica del GATT nel 1994 che porterà all'istituzione dell'Organizzazione Mondiale del Commercio, al termine del ciclo negoziale denominato *Uruguay Round*; in ambito culturale, con l'aumento costante e crescente del movimento di persone e idee, veicolato primariamente da media e migrazioni; in ambito europeo, con la firma del trattato di Maastricht, che pone le basi per la struttura istituzionale dell'Unione Europea come la conosciamo oggi, in primis istituendo la futura moneta unica e, di conseguenza, la perdita del potere decisionale degli stati sulla loro politica monetaria. È in questo modo che le due classi elencate precedentemente, quelle dei "vincitori" e dei "vinti", si polarizzano ulteriormente, e le loro predisposizioni nei confronti della globalizzazione, sia nell'ambito economico che nell'ambito culturale, incominciano a prendere il sopravvento su quello che è il loro orientamento sull'asse sinistra-destra. Dopotutto, è proprio in questo periodo che, con i "paletti" macroeconomici e non fissati in ambito sovranazionale (il cosiddetto "vincolo esterno"), le politiche portate avanti dai partiti social-democratici rassomigliano sempre di più, in quanto a liberismo, a quelle del centro-destra. Gli "imprenditori politici" di ogni credo, a partire da quella famiglia che abbiamo denominato della "nuova destra radicale", ne approfittano dunque per politicizzare ulteriormente gli elementi del conflitto sociale che sono la massima espressione del mondo globalizzato, ponendo particolare enfasi sui temi culturali come l'immigrazione e l'integrazione religiosa principalmente dei musulmani, che intanto crescevano di numero costituendo un possibile "capro espiatorio" da utilizzare nel linguaggio propagandistico.

Una volta "istituzionalizzato" anche il conflitto culturale, che arriva ad occupare un ruolo rilevante tra le priorità degli elettori, quella che costitutiva nello spazio politico fino agli anni '90 una diagonale che integrava categorie economico-culturali, si suddivide in orientamenti distinti a seconda che si consideri la dimensione economica o culturale: nel primo caso la distinzione rimane tra i due opposti orientamenti, di sinistra o di destra, riguardo la teoria di giustizia da seguire nella redistribuzione economica; nel secondo caso gli oggetti di discussione diventano invece l'immigrazione, il multiculturalismo, l'integrazione europea, in generale: l'orientamento nei confronti del "liberalismo culturale", ovvero l'apertura di una società a culture differenti dalla propria.

In termini di teoria dei *cleavage*, quello che prima era stato un conflitto istituzionalizzato da un punto di vista attitudinale ("libertari" contro "autoritari"), interdipendentemente con il proprio orientamento a destra o a sinistra, diventa da un lato "indipendente", cioè costituisce una teoria normativa (di apertura o di chiusura) sulla globalizzazione in sé; dall'altro lato, invece, si bipartisce sull'orientamento nei riguardi della globalizzazione economica e della globalizzazione culturale. Usando la terminologia di Kriesi *et al.* (2006), il nuovo *cleavage*[93] oppone un atteggiamento di "demarcazione" ad uno di "integrazione", e lo spazio politico che racchiude il posizionamento delle famiglie partitiche nei confronti del *cleavage* seguirebbe la seguente quadripartizione: un polo pro-integrazione economica e culturale, che va incontro alla sua formalizzazione transnazionale nella famiglia di movimenti a cui questo studio fa riferimento con il nome di "nuovo centro radicale" (Macron-Renzi-Rivera); un polo pro-integrazione culturale ma pro-demarcazione economica[94], che possiamo denominare "nuova sinistra radicale", seguendo March e Mudde (2005), che riunisce movimenti come *Podemos* e *La France Insoumise* e che si ispira alla piattaforma (iniziale) di *Syriza* in Grecia; un polo pro-integrazione economica ma pro-demarcazione culturale, che rappresenta la piattaforma della destra radicale negli anni '90 e che oggi ha sparuti aderenti, come ad esempio i Repubblicani di François Fillon alle elezione francesi del 2017; infine, un polo pro-demarcazione economica e culturale, incarnato dalla "nuova destra radicale" di Le Pen e Salvini.

Il suddetto conflitto "coesiste" con quello pre-esistente destra-sinistra, che rimane una divisione della massima pertinenza in ambito nazionale, cioè quando bisogna suddividere famiglie partitiche in base alla loro logica di suddivisione delle risorse economiche e materiali entro i confini statali; tuttavia, per l'insieme di fenomeni sopraelencati che hanno contribuito ad indebolire l'autonomia decisionale degli stati-nazione, e specialmente per la scarsa rilevanza che questo conflitto ormai riveste nei confronti dei temi pertinenti alla sfera transnazionale, la dicotomia destra-sinistra è sempre più posta in secondo piano, sia dall'"offerta" politica che dalla "domanda". Questo è certamente uno dei motivi per cui i partiti tradizionali, troppo "inelastici" dal punto di vista burocratico-organizzativo per adattarsi a conflitti sorti od istituzionalizzati quando la loro battaglia politica ha già una storia lunga alle spalle, soffrono di una crisi che gli offre pochi spiragli: le loro prese di posizione riguardano in effetti ancora il campo ideologico "nazionale"[95], mentre sono i nuovi movimenti ad andare incontro alle nuove esigenze sociali, in primis per quel che riguarda l'atteggiamento nei confronti di una globalizzazione che, oltre ad essere il motore propulsore di ogni cambiamento odierno, è diventata anche l'asse attorno a cui ruota la politica.

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[93] Denominato "cleavage transnazionale" da Hooghe e Marks (2018).

[94] Quindi, in ambito europeo, contro l'Unione Europea del Patto di Stabilità e della moneta unica.

[95] Le posizioni dei partiti tradizionali nei confronti della globalizzazione sono difatti poco marcate e vengono percepite dall'opinione pubblica come un'accettazione, seppur critica in taluni casi, dello *status quo*.

Gli ultimi a capirlo, in ordine di tempo, sono stati Macron, Renzi e Rivera, i quali hanno strutturato la loro offerta politica su temi estranei alla dialettica destra-sinistra, in modo speculare e contrario rispetto all'offensiva della destra radicale: ciò che propongono costituisce essenzialmente una visione revisionista e riformatrice della globalizzazione, che avanza un cambiamento di alcuni suoi meccanismi ma che si traduce allo stesso tempo nella convinzione che essa rappresenta un potenziale beneficio *universale*, e pertanto non è attraverso la sua demolizione, ma con l'adattamento dei sistemi nazionali all'ordine globale che si otterrà una situazione *win-win* a livello di preferenze sociali.

Un siffatto posizionamento rappresenta un'offerta politica rivolta principalmente ai "vincitori" della globalizzazione, come dimostrato da un'analisi sociodemografica della composizione dell'elettorato delle tre forze politiche; i criteri che rappresentano il collante tra i tre elettorati risultano: un livello di istruzione più elevato rispetto alle medie nazionali, con i possessori di un titolo di laurea che costituiscono una parte sostanziale dei tre elettorati; un reddito medio-alto; una posizione lavorativa generalmente stabile e molto spesso di rango dirigenziale; in generale: un'offerta indirizzata alle classi medio-alte dei tre paesi, con un tentativo di attrarre altre fasce più "deboli" che cambiano a seconda dei tre casi (soprattutto: lavoratori industriali nel caso di *En Marche* e pensionati nel caso del PD). Anche il posizionamento ideologico dei tre elettorati risulta alquanto omogeneo: a parte il caso del PD, che rimane un partito di centro-sinistra dal punto di vista dell'elettorato ma i cui elettori più centristi costituiscono la base dei successi di Matteo Renzi alle primarie del 2013 e del 2017, sia *Ciudadanos* che *En Marche!* hanno conquistato la fiducia di elettori provenienti da tutte le famiglie politiche, compresi soprattutto coloro che si posizionano al centro o che rifiutano le "vecchie" etichette politiche. Se l'elettorato costituisce una prima conferma della natura "radical-centrista" dei tre partiti, è analizzando i tre programmi che l'ipotesi viene definitivamente corroborata.

Le tre piattaforme, due di governo (quelle di Renzi e Macron) e una elettorale (quella di Ciudadanos nella forma del manifesto per le elezioni del 2016), presentano in effetti numerosi punti comuni che vanno a formare la base (post-)ideologica dei tre partiti-movimento. Le convergenze sono sostanziali e toccano le seguenti sfere principali: la riforma dei rispettivi mercati del lavoro nazionali, da uniformare in ambito europeo attraverso la loro *semplificazione*, con il concetto chiave della *flexicurity*[96] ricorrente sia nei casi del *Jobs Act* e della Riforma del Codice del Lavoro di Macron, che nel programma di Ciudadanos; l'intensificazione e il completamento dell'integrazione europea, con più poteri da destinare alla sfera sovranazionale dell'Unione, attraverso ad esempio la creazione di un budget autonomo da quelli nazionali (proposta di Macron), la formazione di eurobonds (proposta

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[96] Principio attraverso il quale regolare il rapporto capitale-lavoro concedendo ad imprenditori e datori di lavoro la dovuta flessibilità e garantendo ai lavoratori una conseguente sicurezza (in termini di indennità o sussidi) nel caso in cui venissero licenziati.

di Renzi), una polizia di frontiera comune (proposta di Rivera), in pratica: la messa in atto degli Stati Uniti d'Europa (visiona condivisa dai tre); l'attuazione di riforme istituzionali in ambito domestico, soprattutto riguardanti gli impianti costituzionali e di legge elettorale nei casi italiano (si ricordi la Riforma Renzi-Boschi) e spagnolo (riprendendo Rivera numerosi punti della Riforma Costituzionale di Renzi nelle sue proposte); l'alleggerimento e la razionalizzazione dei sistemi fiscali, con un abbassamento delle tasse sul lavoro e sulla produzione che consenta ai singoli paesi di non perdere attrattività per gli investimenti domestici e stranieri; un approccio fondato sul multilateralismo e sugli interessi strategici nazionali ed europei nell'ambito della politica estera; una maggiore integrazione macroeconomica internazionale, ammorbidendo i principi del *laissez faire* che hanno ad oggi costituito il fondamento della globalizzazione economica, bilanciandoli con la creazione di sistemi normativi capaci di tutelare i bisogni della classe media[97].

Programmi e basi elettorali così concordanti potrebbero essere il punto di partenza per un futuro movimento pan-europeo; in effetti, la mobilizzazione parallela di forze politiche in ambito europeo non è una novità ed è anzi riscontrabile in ognuno dei tre poli presi in considerazione in questo studio: quello del "nuovo centro radicale", appena analizzato; quello della nuova destra radicale, come già discusso il primo a mobilizzarsi in modo coerente a livello continentale e che si trova oggi riunito nel gruppo Europa della Libertà e della Democrazia Diretta al Parlamento Europeo; la "nuova sinistra radicale", in ritardo (vista anche l'eterogeneità di idee al suo interno) rispetto ai suoi due concorrenti, ma il cui primo abbozzo è tracciabile nel partito pan-europeo DiEM25 (*Democracy in Europe Movement 2025* – Movimento per la Democrazia in Europa 2025), fondato dall'ex ministro greco Varoufakis e con l'intento di radunare la sinistra europea su temi strettamente collegati al nuovo *cleavage* di cui si è parlato. È necessario tuttavia sottolineare che, seppur questa mobilizzazione transnazionale non trovi un riscontro pratico alle elezioni europee, che continuano a basarsi su liste esclusivamente nazionali e che quindi lasciano ai partiti l'onere di raccogliere consenso nei singoli paesi per poi successivamente riunirsi con altri partiti "colleghi" nei gruppi al Parlamento Europeo, la formazione di partiti su scala europea è prevista dall'articolo 10 del Trattato sull'Unione Europea, che sottolinea l'importanza che potrebbe rivestire tale sviluppo nella formazione di una coscienza politica europea, nonché nell'espressione della volontà politica dei cittadini europei. A maggior ragione considerando i nuovi temi della discussione politica più ricorrenti, il cui livello di elaborazione più pertinente sarebbe certamente quello trans-nazionale.

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[97] Si veda la strenua lotta che il Presidente della Repubblica Francese sta portando avanti per cambiare la pratica europea dei "lavoratori distaccati", che consente alle imprese di mandare i propri impiegati a lavorare in altri Paesi Membri, così da favorire le imprese stanziate in paesi (specialmente dell'Europa dell'Est) i cui costi del lavoro sono più bassi e danneggiando gli interessi dei lavoratori dei paesi più sviluppati dal punto di vista dell'assistenza sociale.