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**The impact of post-material values on European political systems and new cleavages in contemporary politics: evidence from France and Italy**

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*To my family, for having supported me in the journey called life*

*To all my dears I would have wished they had witnessed this life goal*

*To all my friends, for having been a source of joy and hope*

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## Introduction

In May 1968, France was upset by a wave of urban turmoil of intense violence that originated in university students' realm. On May 6<sup>th</sup>, Sorbonne's students occupied the university as a protest against disciplinary sanctions imposed on eight students of Nanterre University. That demonstration was not transitional. It intercepted emerging New Left's grievances against President Charles De Gaulle, Prime Minister Georges Pompidou and, in general, society's economic structures and organization. Through a re-interpretation of Marxism, students emphasized the aspect of alienation, claiming for the elimination of all its forms "*felt by the individual human being in everyday life, recreation and family, as well as in sexual and social relationships*"<sup>1</sup>. Their protest was "*anti-authoritarian and individualistic, libertarian and socialistic, as well as democratic, anti-institutional and anti-bureaucratic*"<sup>2</sup>. In the streets, walls became covered by posters with the following quips: "*It is forbidden to forbid*"<sup>3</sup>, "*Don't take the elevator, take the power*"<sup>4</sup>, "*To be free in 1968 means to participate*"<sup>5</sup>, "*The boss needs you, you don't need him*"<sup>6</sup>. Rather than emphasizing material aspects (such as social inequalities and the exploitation of the workers), their grievances were post-material, as they concerned lifestyle, political participation, claims for self-decisions of life and freedom from social and cultural constraints. Soon, the protest degenerated in a series of clashes between the students and the police that devastated the Latin Quarter. University and high-school students erected barricades all over the streets of the Latin Quarter, that were assaulted and eventually dismissed by the police during the night between the 10<sup>th</sup> and the 11<sup>th</sup> of May. In the morning, the day-after scenario recalled a violent battle without mercy. The reports of the night spread rapidly all over the country and raised a twofold sentiment of indignation against policemen's violence and support toward the students. Labor unions hold a 24-hours strike to enter in solidarity with the students. However, events degenerated also in the workers' realm. On May 14<sup>th</sup>, after the end of the 24-hours strike, workers in an airplane factory in Nantes refused to return working and, instead, occupied the buildings and impounded the plant manager. On the heels of that episode, the strike continued in many other factories of the countries, involving from 7,5 to 9 millions of workers – and all without any call from the headquarters (Gilcher-Holtey, 1998). Factories' protests were led by young workers and, most importantly, there were not economic requests at their base. Mirroring the students' model, workers demanded reform of "*management and decision-making structures of business and industry*"<sup>7</sup>, in order to reduce hierarchies and concentration of power and open opportunities for workers for self-determination and self-administration (Gilcher-Holtey, 1998). In a few words, they called for self-management within factories.

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<sup>1</sup> Gilcher-Holtey 1998, p. 257

<sup>2</sup> Gilcher-Holtey 1998, p. 255

<sup>3</sup> Inglehart 1977, p. 268

<sup>4</sup> Id.

<sup>5</sup> <https://libcom.org/history/slogans-68>

<sup>6</sup> Id.

<sup>7</sup> Gilcher-Holtey 1998, p. 264

Traditional trade unions strongly refused such a request. The CGT (*Confédération Général du travail*) defined self-management as an empty formula, as it was not oriented to what, in the view of the Old Left, was the main goal: the distribution of wealth. In a few words, trade unions fought the alliance built between workers and students (Gilcher-Holtey, 1998). Once trade unions leaders took control of the protest, they pushed for further economic concessions that concerned labor dispute, that were granted by the government in the Grenelle Agreements. As a result, the power structures within businesses and the economic order were out of the order (Gilcher-Holtey, 1998).

In the meanwhile, the country was paralyzed. In addition to factory workers, all sorts of employees went on strike. For a few days, communication, mail service, and transports were out of service. President De Gaulle, after having even consulted the army's heads for a possible intervention, dissolved the National Assembly and called for early Parliamentary elections to be held on June 23<sup>rd</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>. The elections enshrined a success on a large scale for De Gaulle.

Most importantly, the majority of workers voted for him rather than traditional left parties – i.e., the Socialist and the Communist parties. For them, the 1968 May was not an opportunity but, rather, a threat. Their primary concerns and goals were economic: purchasing power, sufficient wage, job security, and low retirement age (Inglehart, 1977). University students' protests aimed to destroy capitalistic and consumer societies, where workers, instead, had just entered and found appealing. While students had already taken for granted their material standard of life, workers feared to lose the material benefits they had achieved. As Inglehart (1977) noted, workers that experienced several, noteworthy material leaps in the previous decade (such as cars, television and home ownership), could not tolerate the burn of cars during Paris turmoil; instead, for students, that action was no more than a dramatic gesture. Not by chance, the majority of the French public disapproved Parisian turmoil.

French May protests showed that, while material concerns and goals still drove older workers, students had already gone beyond it. In short, the French May demonstrated that post-material values were emerging and spreading among the younger cohorts of Western societies.

Post-material values have had great importance on the Western political system, but, beyond the academic realm of political sociology, they have not been object of debate and interest among Western public. Post-material values, in couple with the neoliberal economic globalization, have slowly altered Western societies, social groups, and people's lifestyles and perceptions. Voters, in turn, have started to express different grievances to their political systems. Therefore, according to that account, Western politics has just self-adapted to these social changes. On the base of post-material values, new political parties arose – i.e., left-libertarian parties; they triggered the *Cultural Backlash*, which has been the leading model for authoritarian parties; they also internally changed traditional, mainstream parties, notably the socialist ones.

While political analyses usually divide Western political systems into periods that mirror the length of government by one party, I will discuss the issue from a broader sight, that covers almost five decades. Indeed,

adopting a single, broader period of analysis enables deepening the impact of post-material values and explaining the ruptures that have taken place in several political systems.

For instance, in France, political commentators were caught off guard during last Presidential elections, when both the two traditional parties remained excluded from the ballot at the second round, leaving the floor to the liberal Emmanuel Macron and the sovereigntist Marine Le Pen. However, that was the natural course of events of the political dynamics that followed the rise of post-material values and the neo-liberal globalization that occurred thirty, forty years before. The failed reaction of French political parties to these social changes led to the violent political rupture and the decline of traditional parties.

The thesis aims to describe what post-material values are and how, in couple with the neoliberal globalization, they have slowly altered Western political systems and political cleavages within them.

In Chapter 1, Section 1, I will discuss post-material values, both analyzing their origins and consequences, most relying on Inglehart's theory of the *Silent Revolution*. As I will argue, according to Inglehart (1977), the rise of post-material values resulted from two hypotheses -scarcity and socialization. The first theory states that the post-material values are directly linked with the economic growth that followed World War II and the increase of individuals' material well-being. On the other side, the second theory argues that post-material values were initially confined to younger cohorts as they could not but developed during childhood and adolescence. Post-material values altered individuals' self-perception with their positioning within the political system and their relationship with the institutions and made them claiming for more participation and inclusion in the debate and a horizontal and less hierarchical institutional framework. Moreover, post-material values introduced a new conflict dimension within societies, that put younger voters in contrast with older voters.

In Chapter 1, Section 2 I will instead discuss the cleavage theory developed by Lipset and Rokkan (1967). I will briefly present what cleavages are in the academic field of political sociology and what are the patterns for their development and evolutions in Western political systems.

Finally, in the last section of Chapter 3, I will address the current historical context. Starting from Fukuyama's theory of *End of History*, I will treat about the end of Communism and the final affirmation of capitalism and neoliberalism; then, I will talk about current social, economic and cultural changes resulting from globalization and about the European integration process that is involving the Old Continent.

In Chapter 2, instead, I will examine how political actors have emerged or developed as a result of post-materialism and globalization. First, I will cover left-libertarian parties, that I consider the direct, political emanation of post-material (leftist) values. Although they have gathered marginal electoral results, they have contributed, through direct and indirect influence, to the evolution of Western political systems. Then, I will turn to the traditional, leftist parties' embracement of neoliberalism and Third Way that followed the collapse of the Soviet Union and discuss why the neoliberal shift meant less electoral consensus for them. Finally, I will conclude the Chapter by addressing the rise of the *unwanted child* (Ignazi, 1992) of post-materialism – i.e., Authoritarian-Populist parties in the Western political system. In particular, I will expose what their

features are and what conditions allowed them to collect electoral and political consensus among lower social strata and to threaten Western political systems' previous assets.

In Chapter 3, I will conclude the thesis by presenting the new political cleavage of Western political systems, which is integration-demarcation cleavage, developed by Kriesi. As I will argue, integration-demarcation cleavage consists of two dimensions – economic and cultural. In the first section, I will describe where traditional parties and new political movements are located on the graphical representation of the cleavage. Then, I will present three other models built on the wake of Kriesi's. In the second section, I will describe new social electoral groups underpinning the cleavage, i.e. winners and the losers, and how they have emerged as a result of both globalization and the rise of post-materialism. In the last two sections, I will briefly present to case studies – France and Italy and argue whether the integration – demarcation cleavage has eventually manifested.

## Chapter 1

### 1.1 “Inglehart’s “*Silent Revolution*”

*“You don't need a weatherman to know which way the wind blows.”*

Bob Dylan, *Subterranean Homesick Blues*, 1965

The analysis of the impact of the post-material values on Western political systems began with the study made by Inglehart in “*The Silent Revolution*”. His work is widely considered as a milestone of contemporary political sociology, as he first perceived that there was an ongoing shift about value preferences, which would have a significant impact on contemporary Western politics. Indeed, post-material values heightened polarization over cultural issues in the electorate and introduced new political requests (Inglehart & Norris, 2019). In my thesis, I will also argue that post-material values contributed to creating new cleavages across European societies.

In “*The Silent Revolution*”, Inglehart addressed the undergoing shift from the material values to the post-material values within Western nations and, notably, among their youngest cohorts during the ‘70s. While material values emphasize material prosperity and physical security, post-material ones stress lifestyle and individual self-determination<sup>8</sup>. The rise of these new values and how they started to affect the organization of the political systems was the object of his study.

Values refer to deep-rooted and enduring priorities and goals for individuals, organizations, and society (Inglehart & Norris, 2019). I will use, throughout this essay, Rokeach’s definition, which argues that value is an “*enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end state of existence*”<sup>9</sup>.

The emergence of post-material values among the youngest cohorts resulted, according to Inglehart, from two hypotheses he formulated: the *scarcity* hypothesis and the *socialization* hypothesis<sup>10</sup>.

The scarcity hypothesis states that “*individual’s priorities reflect the socio-economic environment. One places the greatest subjective value on those things are in relatively short supply*”<sup>11</sup>. This theory is, in turn, constructed on the Maslow’s pyramid of needs. According to Maslow<sup>12</sup>, people’s actions are guided by needs arranged in a hierarchical order, according to their relative urgency. Once people have fulfilled their closest needs, they move up to the upper ones. Thus, Maslow argues that the most immediate priorities are physiological needs, such as water, food, and air. Next, there are the needs related to security, here intended both as the economic and physical ones. The following priorities are, respectively, the needs related to the

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<sup>8</sup> R. Inglehart 1977, p. 3

<sup>9</sup> Rokeach 1960, quoted by R. Inglehart and P. Norris, 2019

<sup>10</sup> R. Inglehart 1997, p.33

<sup>11</sup> Id.

<sup>12</sup> A. Maslow 1954, quoted by R. Inglehart 1977



social life (thus, familiar and affective sphere), those related to the self-esteem and self-recognition and, finally, those related to the self-actualization. Inglehart suggested that the prosperity and the stability experienced by Western countries, resulting from the massive economic growth and the peaceful international relations in Europe (albeit always under the axe of a possible war between the US and the USSR), allowed many people to take for granted the satisfaction of their material needs and to focus on new post-material requests, such as equality and self-determination. However, the scarcity hypothesis explains only partially the shift towards post-material values. Why, indeed, did they involve disproportionately the youngest cohorts?

The socialization hypothesis completes the explanation. It affirms that “*one’s basic values reflect the conditions that prevailed during one’s pre-adult years*”<sup>13</sup>. In other words, the values ripened during an individual’s formative years tend to remain consistent for all the life. For this reason, Inglehart noted a disproportion in the distribution of post-material values among the youngest cohorts: contrary to their previous generations, they experienced prosperity and stability in their adolescence. As they did not grow up in conditions of material deprivation, they considered self-esteem, participation, belonging, and intellectual and aesthetic satisfaction as the most prominent needs<sup>14</sup>. They claimed their emancipation from previous traditional strains and advocated libertarian policies. In a few words, young post-materialists became more socially liberal, more tolerant of individual diversity, and more interested in protecting individual freedoms (Inglehart & Norris, 2019). Hence, it was not by chance that first post-material groups requested more permissive laws on abortion, euthanasia, divorce, racial equality extramarital affairs and prostitution (Inglehart, 1997) and that the emphasis on environmental protection arose (Inglehart & Norris, 2019).

Flanagan & Lee (2004) argued that post-materialism was a movement from deference to autonomy on three subdimensions: “*an outer societal dimension, an inner cognitive dimension, and another relational dimension*”<sup>15</sup>. Moreover, they argue that morality lost its unquestioning dimension and became an object of discovery through reason and experience. Truth, thus, became replaced by relativity, and moral principles by personal preferences and feelings (Flanagan & Lee, 2003, p. 237.238). As such, post-materialism is usually accounted as the cause of the increased secularization within Western societies, which implied a decrease of church authorities, moral beliefs and faith-based teachings concerning lifestyle (Inglehart & Norris, 2019, p. 447).

Therefore, according to Inglehart’s theory, post-material values are found in those countries which have attained a high standard of wealth, especially among the most secure and affluent strata of the population<sup>16</sup>. However, the gap between people with material values and those with post-material ones is not class-based, but intergenerational, notably where there have been high rates of economic growth and a fast spread of overall well-being, and it tends to be steady over time.<sup>17</sup> Short-term fluctuations from prosperity to instability may

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<sup>13</sup> R. Inglehart 1997, p.33

<sup>14</sup> Id.

<sup>15</sup> Flanagan & Lee 2003, p. 237

<sup>16</sup> Inglehart 1977, p. 73; Inglehart 1997, p. 134. Particularly, Inglehart (1977) noted that the difference might be even equal to 10%.

<sup>17</sup> Inglehart 1997, p. 134

alter individuals' orientation of values, forcing people to stress survival ones, but, once they come to an end, people turn back to the post-material ones<sup>18</sup>.

Inglehart devoted a large part of his book about the sources of the rise of post-material values among the younger cohorts in the '70s. While the scarcity and the socialization hypotheses explain how they emerged, Inglehart tried to describe the precise social contexts which allowed them for emerging, beyond the general assumptions of prosperity and stability. As the scarcity hypothesis would have suggested, post-material values emerged among the most affluent social strata of the population. However, the American scholar argued that the most predictive variable was the formative affluence, which is more related to the individual's level of education than to his material wealth<sup>19</sup>. Therefore, people from the wealthier social strata were more prone to develop post-material values as they had easier access to higher education. His further research provided support to this latter claim: the level of education, when combined with individuals' parents' socio-economic status, is even more related with the likelihood of having post-material values than individuals' current socio-economic status<sup>20</sup>. Nevertheless, as higher education became more affordable, Inglehart predicted that post-material values would have spread across Western societies<sup>21</sup>.

According to Inglehart, post-material values had profound consequences on the conduct and structure of political systems in Western democracies.

First, they altered individuals' self-perception as political actors. People with post-material values, as they are more concerned with self-expression, do not want only to elect the decision-makers but also to have a voice in the decisional process, asking for direct involvement and participation and for controlling the whole legislative cycle<sup>22</sup>. For this reason, post-material groups tended to discredit the traditional, hierarchical organization, claiming for more horizontal and egalitarian public institutions (such as schools and local councils) and firms. Moreover, when the electorate has become polarized over new issues, it tends to show less allegiance towards the institutional system and actors. These groups, as they were better educated, have developed a political consciousness, that, however, resulted in diminishing participation in traditional political institutions and organizations, as they became less confident on the activities and the performances of traditionally organized institutions. Therefore, Inglehart, through an analysis on post-material values, forecasted and detected already in the '70s the first seeds of political phenomena that appeared in the following decades: lower rate in electoral turnout, erosion in partisanship identification by the electorate, shrinkage in party and union memberships, etc.<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless, Inglehart explained that the impact of post-material values on electorate's judgement on institution and voting behavior is limited by four factors: (i) the extent to which the identification sense with existing parties is widespread and deep-rooted; (ii) the position taken by political

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<sup>18</sup> Id

<sup>19</sup> Inglehart 1977, p. 75

<sup>20</sup> Id, pp. 79-80

<sup>21</sup> Id, p. 97

<sup>22</sup> Id, p. 13

<sup>23</sup> This is not to say that the post-material values are the only responsible for the phenomena here described. Literature on the causes of diminishing political participation is vast and post-material values consist of just a part of them.

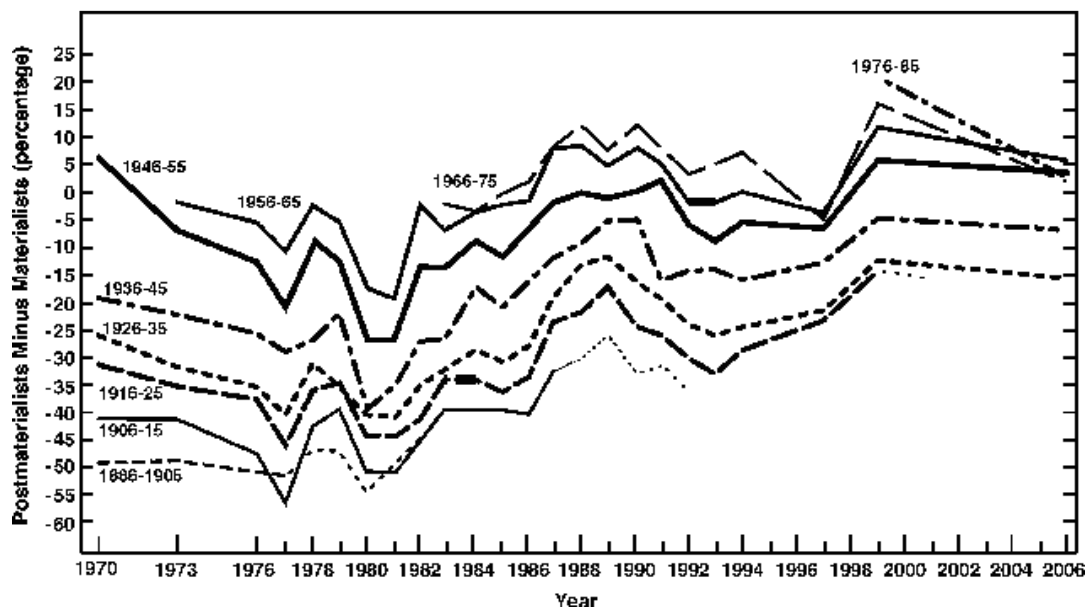


Figure 1

*Difference between post-materialists and materialists (percentage) per cohort analysis*

*From Inglehart 2008*

leaders on the most salient political issues; (iii) the number of the political parties in the system; (iv) the level and the rate of economic development<sup>24</sup>.

Second, they introduced a new conflictual dimension other than the class-based one – i.e., the inter-generational conflict - since the rise of post-material values among Western nations. I highlighted before that the emergence of post-material values provoked an intergenerational gap between the older, material cohorts, and the younger, post-material cohorts. This gap is particularly evident in figure 1, with the difference between post-materialists and materialists among younger generations persistently higher than that among older generations. The difference in values content was inevitably linked with divergence in political beliefs, even within the same ideological and political sphere. Indeed, the scopes of the materialist electorate (the redistribution of wealth and the growth management) are different from those of the post-materialist one, as the latter ones place the quality of lifestyle above (and, if necessary, to the detriment of) economic profits and collide with them. In other words, when post-material demands enter in the political life, they trigger a materialist reaction which may even encompass class cleavages<sup>25</sup>. This resulting conflict is intergenerational, due to the disproportion in distribution of post-material values in age cohorts. The 1968 legislative elections in France, held only one month after the student turmoil in the country, provided one of the earliest examples. In those elections, “*the age variable was (...) fully as important as the social class*”<sup>26</sup>, and the electoral results could not be explained just relying on class-based assumption. Otherwise, how would it have been

<sup>24</sup> Inglehart 1977, p. 256

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, p. 286

<sup>26</sup> Ibid, p. 273

possible to explain that most of the workmen voted for De Gaulle's party, the French center-right president at that time?

Third, according to Inglehart, post-material values generated new, post-material oriented, leftist parties. This New Left had a political proposal different from, yet not irreconcilable with, the material left. Indeed, the latter aimed to attain economic equality among individuals through the State's redistributive intervention. On the other side, the former claimed that economic equality, intended as an improved condition for the working class, can be equally achieved through economic development and that the quality of lifestyle is nevertheless preferable to economic concerns. Moreover, it emphasized individualism and communitarianism rather than party hierarchies<sup>27</sup>. These two sides had also an electoral gap: while the materialist left was supported by the working class, the New Left collected consensus among the young, middle class<sup>28</sup>. Inglehart quoted two interviews collected during the French turmoil in May 1968 as an example of the electoral difference between the materialist left and the New Left. While the striking workers posed only limited, economic requests, such as higher wages, job security and lower retirement age<sup>29</sup>, in contrast the young, revolting students, owning post-material values, claimed to break with the consumer society, refusing "*a world where the certainty of not dying of hunger is gained at the risk of dying of boredom*"<sup>30</sup>. As Inglehart noted in succession, many workers, who had entered in and appreciated the blamed consumer society due to an *embourgeoisement* of their class, would not have shared such a radical outlook.

The New Left was thus part of this new cleavage, which introduced new issues concerning the quality and self-determination of life and implied a shift in the electorate, and sometimes in contrast with the materialist left. However, Inglehart did not claim that the introduction of post-material values condemned Left Parties to split. Instead, he asserted that the challenge of the Left Parties after the '70s was to embrace the new values and to make them compatible with the aims of the material left, in order to avoid dissatisfying the traditional, left electorate<sup>31</sup>.

On the other side, Inglehart, contrary to Left parties, refused to acknowledge the emergence of post-material, Right parties, as he stated that Right-wing electorate, even from lower classes, could not but be materialist<sup>32</sup>. He defended his position even when analyzing Flemish and Walloon nationalist movements in Belgium, which collected consensus among Belgian postmaterialist electorate (with a ratio of post-materialist over materialist equal to 5:1<sup>33</sup>). Those movements, by claiming autonomy from the central State, supported political proposals which would be currently defined representative of the New Right (such as the expulsion of French-native

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<sup>27</sup> Id., p. 240

<sup>28</sup> Id., p. 285. However, we should furtherly distinguish, as Lipset (quoted by Inglehart 1977, p. 287) stated, between traditional middle class (thus, artisans and small and medium-sized enterprises owners) and modern middle class (officials, employed in big enterprises and contractors). Indeed, modern middle class members tend to have higher educational level and status and to support a post-material political behaviour, while the traditional middle class ones are concerned about the safeguard of their property rights and order.

<sup>29</sup> Id., p. 280

<sup>30</sup> Id., p. 282

<sup>31</sup> Id., pp. 242-243

<sup>32</sup> Id., p. 70

<sup>33</sup> Id., p. 237

students from a bilingual university located in the Flanders). Nevertheless, he stated that those movements, precisely because they were concerned by cultural issues rather than by economic issues, belonged to the New Left<sup>34</sup>.

Inglehart's "*Silent Revolution*" fueled a new field of debate about the cultural shift. In the following years, the theory of the *Silent Revolution* was used either as a theoretical base for further researches or as an object of the academic critics, which, however, generally acknowledged its importance for political sociology.

In particular, Cotgrove and Duff (1981) criticized both the scarcity and the socialization hypotheses as too simplistic and insufficient to explain the development of individuals' post-material values. According to Cotgrove and Duff (1981), the Maslowian reasoning emphasizing the weight of needs for the development of individuals' values (and on which Inglehart's scarcity hypothesis is built) underplays the intentional or goal-oriented character of human behavior. On the contrary, Cotgrove and Duff (1981) argued that it would not be possible to reduce moral judgment (and thus values) to needs. Moreover, they contended that the real engine driving human social values (especially environmental ones) is not individuals' current social existence (and their relative needs), but the conditions of social conditions that they want. In other words, ideals, and not needs, shape individuals' values. The emergence of post-material values does not necessarily depend on the achievement of some level of material satisfaction (Cotgrove & Duff, 1981). Moreover, they found that the development of post-material values is more related to ideological-cultural the background than to the socio-economic provenience.

Flanagan (1987) provided an alternative analysis too, which integrated Inglehart's study. According to Flanagan, materialist values are those who "*place a high priority on a stable economy, economic growth, fighting rising prices and, at the more personal level, on securing a high-paying job and a comfortable life*<sup>35</sup>". Thus, contrary to Inglehart's opinion, Flanagan labels support for a strong defense, law, and order and fighting crime as post-material values, thus acknowledging the presence of a New Right in parallel to the New Left. Moreover, he rejects two assumptions of Inglehart's analysis. First, he discredited both the hypothesis according to which post-material values are formed -i.e., the scarcity hypothesis (in turn based on Maslow's pyramid) and the socialization hypothesis. According to Flanagan, the shift toward post-material values, which consists of the Authoritarian-libertarian dimension, resulted from "*four major changes in the basic conditions of life under which successive generations have been socialized: (i) a growing equality in incomes and lifestyles, (ii) the accelerating pace of change, (iii) the advance and diffusion of scientific knowledge and (iv) the rise of no-risk society. These changes are (...) enabling the individual to pursue more fully the goal of self-actualization*<sup>36</sup>". Second, Flanagan contested the thesis of the *embourgeoisement* of the working class. While he acknowledged a deviant phenomenon of conservative voting among the working classes, that event concerned only its most affluent strata. As Conservative parties did not defend the economic interests of the

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid, p. 239

<sup>35</sup> Flanagan 1987, p. 1305

<sup>36</sup> Ibid, p. 1311

working class, a significant realignment event of the working class from Left to Right could not be based on an economic appeal of conservative parties to that class<sup>37</sup>.

Flanagan (1987) argued that post-material values favored the rise of a New Politics, which is postmaterialist or, as Flanagan prefers, nonmaterialist, in contrast to the Old, materialist politics. In turn, the cleavages between Left and Right remained in New politics, but their scopes were revolutionized. The New Left supported libertarian issues (such as abortion, women's rights, LGBT rights), environmentalism, anti-nuclearism, pacifism and other issues concerning the quality of life. Contrarily, the New Right is more akin to defend neo-conservative values, such as right-to-life, creationism, antipornography, traditional and religious practices, strong defense, patriotism, law and order, opposition to immigration and minority rights and respect of traditional symbols and offices of authority<sup>38</sup>.

Flanagan's approach allows having a better theoretical comprehension for current socio-political phenomena in Western democracies. Indeed, while post-material theory borrows much to Inglehart, the latter's initial theory would not have been able to explain the rise, in the following twenty years, of the first populist, authoritarian, New Right parties in Western political systems, such as, amongst the other, the National Front in France and the Austrian Freedom Party in Austria. In the following sections, I will deepen the nature and electorate's support of both the New Left and New Right.

## 1.2 Cleavage: definition and developments

*“Every religious, moral, economic, ethical, or other antithesis transforms into a political one if it is sufficiently strong to group human beings effectively according to friend and enemy”*

Carl Schmitt, *“The concept of political”*, 1927

In the previous section, I referred a few times to political cleavages. The notion of political cleavage has an important valence in political sociology, and any analysis on the impact of post-material values on Western democracies would be incomplete without a focus on how these values affected the cleavage structures. Political cleavages continuously reshape national party systems and political competition because they reflect fundamental social contrasts (Lipset & Rokkan, 1967).

An earlier definition that links the political to a division was provided by Carl Schmitt (2007), who argued that the political involves a distinction between friend and enemy. The antithesis friend/enemy connotes the political, as much as the antithesis beautiful/ugly connotes aesthetic or good/bad connotes ethic. According to Schmitt, any political division may derive from previous antithesis (be they religious, moral or economic), but whenever those antitheses become political, they lose their previous connotation. However, Schmitt had quite a radical conception of the political, as he stated that any political division implied a conflictual

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid, p. 1305

<sup>38</sup> Ibid, p. 1306

dimension. Thus, the political was, for Schmitt, “*the most intense and extreme antagonism and every concrete antagonism becomes that much more political the closer it approaches the most extreme point, that of friend-enemy grouping*”<sup>39</sup>. Accordingly, an entirely pacified world would not entail any political dimension because it would miss the distinction of friend and enemy. There might be antitheses, but they would not be political. Chantal Mouffe (2005)<sup>40</sup> moderated Schmitt’s radical outlook on the concept of political. Mouffe transformed the antithesis friend/enemy into a pluralistic agonism, that, in turn, provides a political channel for dissenting voices and conflictual representations of the world.

The first analysis of political cleavages dates back to a study made by Lipset and Rokkan (1967), which laid the groundwork for this field of study in political sociology. However, although they inspired many subsequent studies on political cleavages, Lipset and Rokkan failed to provide a univocal definition of political cleavage (Casal Bértoa, 2014) , with the result that authors provided different conceptions of political cleavage, depending on the methodological and analytical approaches they used. As a result, one of the most shared definitions of political cleavage, proposed by Bartolini and Mair (1990)<sup>41</sup>, came only in 1990, 23 years after Lipset and Rokkan’s study. Bartolini and Mair (1990) defined political cleavage as “*a form of closure of social relationships*” and it is formed “*when a particular social divide becomes associated with a particular set of values and identities, which are made politically relevant by means of an organized party group*”<sup>42</sup>. In other words, a cleavage results from a fracture dividing two or more social groups, which perceives its existence. However, in order to a social division to become a political cleavage, there must be one or more organizations that help to express and to realize the values and the beliefs of those social groups (Casal Bértoa, 2014).

As societies are complex realms, there are several fractures, divisions, conflicts, and controversies; however, only a few of them manage to polarize politics in a given system. Lipset and Rokkan (1967) talked about a hierarchy of cleavage bases, whose “*orders of political primacy not only vary among politics but also tend to undergo changes over time*”<sup>43</sup>. Lipset and Rokkan, relying on the AGIL paradigm developed by Talcott Parsons, empirically found four cleavages in their contemporary political systems: church(es)/states, center/periphery, owner/worker and land/industry, whose the former two resulted from the National Revolution and the latter two from the Industrial Revolution. The difference in timing and articulation of the national and economic revolutions account for the variegation of political cleavages and systems in Western democracies. Moreover, Lipset and Rokkan (1967, p. 35) argued that center/periphery, state-church(es) and land/industry generated national developments in different directions, while the owner/worker cleavage tended to uniform political systems across nations. I will not discuss the features of each cleavage, nor deepen how they detected them. Instead, it is crucial for the thesis’s aim to report another consideration they drew, that is that “*the party systems of the 1960s reflected (...) the cleavage structures of the 1920s. (...) The party*

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<sup>39</sup> Schmitt 2007, p. 29

<sup>40</sup> Quoted by Jaeger 2015

<sup>41</sup> Quoted by Casal Bértoa, 2014

<sup>42</sup> Id.

<sup>43</sup> Lipset and Rokkan 1967, p. 6

*alternatives, and in remarkably many cases the party organizations, are older than the majorities of the national electorate [of the '60s]*<sup>44,45</sup>. Thus, for scholars until the '70s, it seemed that the political systems were frozen, as political struggles remained unchanged for more than forty years.

However, already in the '80s, all scholars agreed that substantial transformations were affecting political cleavages and their related political systems, as post-industrial economies brought significant changes in societies' structuration. On the other side, the complexity of the new social structures made cleavages less and less fitted with Bartolini and Mair's conceptualization of cleavage (Henjak, 2010), because previously homogenous social groups split, while the "*decline of traditional organizations based on class and religion means that contemporary political divisions have less organizational closure*"<sup>46</sup>.

Shifts in political divides within one party system may result in party realignment and dealignment. In the former case, voters may massively abandon one party to support another party. This swap may show the presence of a new political order, in which previous parties are no more aligned in the new cleavage. In the latter case, there is a decline in political salience of previous political cleavages, but the underlying political structure remains intact. Measures of dealignment are increases in abstention and electoral volatility.

However, while emphasizing the restructuring of political cleavages in Western political systems, it would not be correct to argue that previous cleavages do not matter anymore; consider the case of class voting, which is a phenomenon characterizing owner/worker cleavage. Despite, as societies had become more flexible and political cleavage less stable, higher electoral volatility and fluidity in polls increased (Franklin, et al., 1992)<sup>47</sup>, we should not nevertheless underestimate the importance of class voting, even if declining, on which political cleavages in most European party systems ground on; class voting still matters and affects elections' results (Manza, et al., 1995). Its persistence indicates that the owner/worker cleavage, even if with some variation, endures. Some scholars have even noted a "path dependence" of cleavages' development (Henjak, 2010): patterns of cleavage variations depend on "*the historical strength of both religious (and other communitarian) divides and political divisions related to redistribution and welfare state formation*"<sup>48</sup> as well as on welfare regime characteristics.

In this section, I have provided a general outlook of the meaning of political cleavage and how it faces evolution throughout time. In Chapter 3, Section 1, I will discuss the features of current political cleavages and how Inglehart's post-material values contributed to change them.

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<sup>44</sup> Added by the author

<sup>45</sup> Lipset and Rokkan 1967, p. 50

<sup>46</sup> Henjak 2010, p. 476

<sup>47</sup> Quoted by Henjak 2010

<sup>48</sup> Henjak 2010, p. 478



### 1.3 The historical context: the (first) End of history

*“Our country has not been lucky. Indeed, it was decided to carry out this Marxist experiment on us – fate pushed us in precisely this direction...In the end we proved that there is no place for this idea – it has simply pushed us off the path taken by the world’s civilized societies”*

Boris Eltsin, 1991

When post-material values started to gain significant importance in party competition, the world was acknowledging a critical historical transition: the shut of the Berlin wall, the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union and the East-European Communist bloc. The collapse of the Soviet Union led many historians to consider it as the final event of the 20<sup>th</sup> (short) century, intended as the historical period of clashes between three contrasting political-economic ideologies (communism, Nazi fascism and liberal democracy), from whom liberal democracy won and opened a new historical era, whose traits and features have not been well defined yet. In this regard, Francis Fukuyama (1992) developed the theory of the *end of history*. According to Fukuyama, “*there is now no ideology with pretensions of universality that is in a position to challenge liberal democracy and no universal principle of legitimacy other than the sovereignty of the people*”<sup>49</sup>; what won was not the praxis, but the *idea* itself of liberalism<sup>50</sup>. In other words, there is no alternative political system or economic arrangement which can compete with liberal democracy and capitalism, as they proved to be the best suited for *any* society and potentially able to persist over time, due to the lack of internal contradictions which undermine liberal social systems and eventually conduce them to implode<sup>51</sup>.

The end of history presupposes a convergence towards these two forms by all societies. Fukuyama based his claiming on much empirical evidence. The introduction of neo-liberal reforms in China and Latin-American countries in spite of the socialist centralized, planned economy, the pacific transition towards democracy from previously autocratic regimes of many European countries (Spain, Portugal, Greece and Turkey), and the rapid economic growth of the *Asian tigers* (South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Malaysia and Thailand). Therefore, the underlying idea is that the success of liberalism, liberal democracy, and capitalism was so impressive that no alternative is still conceivable and that, *inevitably*, political systems will converge towards them, no matter their social and cultural backgrounds. Fukuyama argued that industrial capitalism prevailed, during the last century, over communism because it proved to be more efficient than communism in several features, such as

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<sup>49</sup> Fukuyama 1992, p. 45

<sup>50</sup> Id.

<sup>51</sup> However, Fukuyama’s theory on the end of history was not original, as it was originally conceived by Hegel and indeed Fukuyama recalls several times throughout the book the German philosopher. In particular, Hegel stated that history ended (due to the spread of liberal values across Europe) after the battle of Jena in 1806. With the end of history, Hegel argued that, as modern liberalism was based on the principles of liberalism and equality, liberal societies would have been freed from their internal contradictions that characterized earlier forms of social organization and would bring historical dialectic to an end. However, Hegel could not forecast a new historical dialectic, in which a Hegel’s fellow, Marx, developed the counterpart of liberalism.

the management of human capital, the determination of prices, the allocation of the workforce and the technological improvement.

The contrast between capitalist and communist development models becomes even more striking when analyzing the economic growth of Latin American and Asian countries.

In the former countries, it gained consensus among economists and politicians (such as Salvador Allende and Luis Echevarria) the *dependencia* theory (dependence theory), developed within socialist South-American circles. According to this theory, advanced economies controlled the world trade and the allocation of technologies and know-how, through multinational corporations, and imposed on Third-World countries an unbalanced development, based on their export raw materials and the import finished goods, thus benefiting from the surplus. Defenders of dependency theory argue that this international arrangement condemned Third-World states to perpetual backwardness. Dependency theory's policies were protectionist, as they aimed to encourage local industries in place of multinationals through high tariffs. The consequences of these policies were that local industries were not competitive on the international market, because they produced lower quality items at higher prices, due to high tariffs on components, and the lack of competitiveness within the boundaries did not spur them to innovate.

The fast development of Asian countries, for whom they were called the *Asian tigers*, contributed to discrediting dependency theories. As Fukuyama noted, these countries refused to follow the *dependencia* paradigm based on protectionist policies and State-driven economies and focused on achieving economic development through exports, tying with multinationals, foreign capital, and international markets. Multinational corporations relied heavily on these countries due to their cheaper workforce, but, on the other side, they provided markets, capitals, technologies, and technological know-how. During the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, these countries achieved high rates of economic development. Compared with their socialist neighbors (such as China and North Korea), the *Asian tigers* were much more advanced in terms of economic wealth per capita and social justice. Their outstanding economic growth convinced, already in the '80s, Latin-American statesmen to abandon dependency theory paradigms and to embrace liberal dictates imposed by IMF and WB (Marchetti, et al., 2010).

The success of Capitalism worldwide conferred it a universal element: it can be applied in any nation, and its delayed enforcement does not hinder its economic development. Whenever it fails, as happened in other Third-world economies, the reason behind is that those economies did not establish it. In other words, those economic which pretended to be capitalist in Latin American (and raised several objections which would have formed the dependency theory) were flawed by mercantilist and clientelist phenomena and bureaucracy, which hindered and slackened entrepreneurial initiatives and economic development. This latter perception was reinforced by a new study field of development economics, which is New Institutional Economics (Kamat, 2015). According to its proponents (amongst the others, Nobel prize winners Stiglitz and Krugman), institutions, ideologies, and values matter for markets to function efficiently. NIE defenders vigorously

contest that capitalism should be externally imposed, as they believe that it should, instead, become part of the rationality in a given society (Kamat, 2015).

Fukuyama's theory of the end of history is twofold, as it presupposes an economic (capitalism) and a political (liberal democracy) convergence for nations. These two aspects, despite different, are deeply intertwined. Liberal democracy grants those fundamental rights and freedoms needed for capitalism to work out, which allow economic agents to be competitive, productive, and innovative. However, the relationship between capitalism and liberal democracy is not deterministic: capitalism is not *per se* conducive to liberal democracy and vice versa. Schumpeter (1950)<sup>52</sup> even argued that capitalism should be more efficient in an authoritarian state than in a democratic State, because they do not need to account redistributive policies to some economic agents (amongst the others, workers). The economic success of some capitalist economies under authoritarian regimes (China, Singapore, and, during the 60s, South Korea) would support such a view.

Nevertheless, the relationship between liberal democracy and capitalist development is undeniable, although the nature of their relationship is more complicated than one may argue at first sight (Fukuyama, 1992). In particular, for Fukuyama, economic development necessarily makes societies better educated. Universal education levels societies and makes class divisions more and more irrelevant due to increased social mobility, spreading egalitarian ideas and concerns. Thus, the economy "*creates a kind of de facto equality before such equality arises de jure*"<sup>53</sup>. When people become and wealthier and more educated, their requests for wealth are not sufficient anymore, and they claim for *recognition*. Fukuyama (1992) thus suggests that democracy makes it possible for citizens to satisfy the human desire to be recognized for their dignity and value<sup>54</sup>. That explained why, for the American scholar, in countries such as Portugal, Spain, and China people manifested for political freedom rather than for the market economy. Hence, Fukuyama's assumptions recall Inglehart's hypotheses (1977) for the shift from material values to post-material ones. In particular, Inglehart (2003) found that high emphasis on (left) post-material and egalitarian values (tolerance, trust, political activism) is a strong predictor for democratic support in a given society. And as economic development and spread of high levels of wealth within a society bring rising levels of tolerance, trust, political activism and emphasis on freedom of speech, accordingly they lead to "*growing mass demands for liberalization in authoritarian societies, and to rising levels of direct mass participation in societies that are already democratic*"<sup>55</sup>. Inglehart (2003) thus postulated a causal relationship between economic development, levels of self-expression values, and levels of democracy.

The end of the Cold War and the advent of liberalism and liberal democracy strengthened the globalization process decisively. The concept of globalization has been the subject of many studies and raised several disputes about its definition. Roland Robertson, who first labeled it, defined globalization as the "*compression*

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<sup>52</sup> Quoted by Fukuyama 1992

<sup>53</sup> Fukuyama 1992, p. 206

<sup>54</sup> In particular, Fukuyama labels this desire with the Greek term *θυμός*.

<sup>55</sup> Inglehart 2003, p. 51

*of the world which leads to more awareness of the world as a whole*<sup>56</sup>, giving it a twofold sense: increasing connectivity and increasing reflexive global consciousness. Held and McGrew (2003:4) held that “*globalization denotes the expanding scale, growing magnitude, speeding up and deepening impact of interregional flows and patterns of social interactions*”. In a few words, globalization is a process of increased interconnection and interdependencies among world societies. Globalization, as it is a changing process that affects societies as a whole, involves several dimensions: economy and finance, military, environment, communication, law, culture, and even criminality, amongst the other ones.

Consider, for instance, the increased importance of multinational corporations (also labeled transnational corporations) in the world economy. Transnational or multinational corporations are companies that produce goods or market services across several countries (Giddens, 2015). They started to emerge after World War II, but they expanded after the creation of free market or custom union areas (such as the European Single Market, the North-America Free Trade Agreement or Osaka Declaration zone) and the liberalization of foreign direct investments. Nowadays, only a few countries were beyond the reach of transnational corporations (Giddens, 2015). MNCs have influenced competition around the globe, profoundly affecting local firms and production processes. Indeed, production processes have become increasingly globalized and been expressed in terms of global commodity chains, which are worldwide networks of labor and production yielding to finished products. On one side this has allowed some countries to move from low to middle average incomes due to manufactured goods export. On the other one, most profitable activities in the production chains (such as designing and marketing) still take place in most advanced countries, while those least profitable (such as manufacturing or assemblage) are performed in low-income ones, thus reproducing global inequalities (Giddens, 2015). However, economic variations brought by globalization impact also on most advanced countries too. As the labor force is cheaper in less advanced countries, in widening free-market world economic regimes, multinational corporations delocalize manufacturing in those countries, dismissing lower-skilled workers in advanced countries and imposing an unsustainable competition on local small and medium-sized enterprises.

Globalization affects the nature of the Westphalian states too, as they reorder the relationship between territory and political space; social, economic and political activities are not held anymore and exclusively within national boundaries (Held & McGrew, 2003). Many scholars talked about an a-polar world, in which power is spread across many players, including non-governmental actors. This model would reject the state-centric dimension, towards a new model of global governance, which includes international governing networks and non-state actors (Marchetti, 2016). Global governance has risen not only because, in a globalized world, social interactions and networks go beyond national boundaries, but also because the planet is afflicted by problems that can be handled only through a globally coordinated approach.

Global governance lacks a unique source of power and includes different authorities, often on formally unequal stages (Marchetti, 2016). Moreover, private actors have acquired power, as they can mobilize resources and

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<sup>56</sup> Robertson 2014

people to influence decisions on global issues, and they have even owned some regulative and administrative power (Marchetti, 2016). In the latter case, NGOs act as subcontractors for international institutions (IMF and World Bank) and are funded to provide and implement specific policies and campaigns in the least developed countries in place of national or local governments. Such practices have been widely criticized by post-political scholars, as it implies a depoliticization of development, through which political-economic responses to poverty and inequality are replaced by a technic-managerial approach to development issues (Kamat, 2015). Globalization should be nevertheless intended as a dynamic process, whose paces alternatively accelerate, slow, or even regress (Fernandez-Armesto, 1995)<sup>57</sup>. Therefore, an analysis of globalization should be performed through a long-term perspective, as it is a historical phenomenon lasting for a long time (or *long durée*, as stated by Fernand Braudel). It should neither be perceived as a harmonious process of a pacific convergence towards a unique culture and civilizations. Instead, globalization, being a process of social transformation, inevitably brings new conflicts and new divisions, as some people will benefit from globalization (the winners), while some others will suffer or remain untouched (the losers). Globalization should be perceived as a deeply divisive and contested process (Held & McGrew, 2003), on which new cleavages are grounded (Kriesi, et al., 2006). I will deepen the essence and the features of these new divisions in Chapter 3.

Moreover, the shut of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union marked a turning point in the process of European integration. The Maastricht Treaty, signed in 1992, represented a first, concrete step toward a political union of Europe, as, until that point, it remained just an Economic Community, and an enlargement toward Eastern Europe. Contrary to the projections developed by Mearsheimer (1993)<sup>58</sup>, according to which the end of the Cold War would have represented the comeback of regional multipolar tensions, the European Union contributed to stabilize and develop less advanced European economies. Since 1992, the EU has more than doubled the number of Member States and its boundaries englobe portion of territories of the USSR, still attracting more and more States within its influence sphere and representing a global frontrunner for human rights, primary individual's freedoms, democracy, peace building and maintenance, consumer protection, environmental laws, economic custom union, and political integration.

Despite its undeniable positive effects, consistent parts of European national electorates are still suspicious about the European Union, as the rejection of the European Constitution in France and the Netherlands already suggested in 2005. In particular, objections towards the European Union has become stronger with the financial crisis since 2011, since some Member States (Spain, Portugal, Greece, Cyprus, and Ireland) were forced to pass austerity measures, while in other ones (Italy) governments were forced to resign. Complaints against the European Union were based on two, main arguments.

First, the austerity measures, requested by the European Union to the Member States and including cuts to social welfare and retirement wages, tax increase and rise of unemployment, were seen as a sign of the brutality

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<sup>57</sup> Quoted by Held & McGrew, 2003

<sup>58</sup> Quoted by Jackson and Sørensen 2007

and oppression of the European Union on the Member States. Austerity policies were perceived as cold, blind, neoliberal measures imposed by a technocratic office located in Brussels for the benefit of the European *establishment*, ignoring the dramatic social effects and costs laid on local populations (Dalla Porta, et al., 2017). As a result, many political movements and parties started to support the economic and financial independence of Member States, the return to national currencies, and the dissolution of the European Union. Second, the European Union was accused of a democratic deficit. The democratic deficit is indeed a critical issue that has to be solved with a view to the future institutional settlement of the Union. Currently, the EU Parliament is the only elective body among EU institutions, and it has only limited supervisory powers over the other European bodies, while it shares the legislative power with the EU Council; it does not even hold the right of initiative in legislative procedures, as it belongs to the European Commission (Schutze, 2015). The democratic deficit has raised many critiques, which depict the European Union as an indistinct aggregate of technocratic, bureaucratic institutions, that are more prone to fulfill financial actors and multinational corporations' interests than citizens' ones. However, it should be noted that the process of European integration has not been completed yet, and the European Union is still halfway between an international organization and supranational (con)federation. Any change to the current institutional functioning of the European Union needs to pass through the unanimity of the Member States, which are often reticent to a further transfer of their sovereignty to the Union.

However, both the reasons for which the EU has been contested share a nexus on EU contenders' view: the threat the European Union poses for the existence of European nation-States. The final stage of the EU, as it is currently conceived (a unique, political entity), will inevitably mark the end of the meaning of nation-State and represents a menace for groups in favor of national identity and cultural distinctiveness, while for progressive, liberal movements the political union of European peoples is seen as the future, political arrangement in Europe. For this reason, the European Union and its developments have gained more and more political salience in national political debates and become a divisive issue. Since the European Union is part and a result of the globalization process, it should not surprise that the divisions concerning globalization and the EU involve similar political actors and electorate.

In this section, I described the historical context in which post-material values emerged and how they are related. Post-material left is actively supporting the historical transition towards the post-historical world (where liberal democracy and Capitalism rule). This transition has still to undergo several obstacles on his path towards the world forecasted by Fukuyama. These obstacles, in Fukuyama's opinion, are: (i) excessive presence of nationalism or ethnocentrism or the lack of national unity; (ii) religions, notably those which compel every aspect of individual's live (such as Islam and Orthodox Judaism)<sup>59</sup>; unequal social structure; the lack of a healthy civil society or the impossibility to create one (Fukuyama, 1992). However, these limits do not represent a threat to liberalism, in ideological terms. As argued at the beginning of this section, there is no

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<sup>59</sup> The problem Fukuyama here addresses does not concern democracy, as these religions may be compatible with democratic political systems (as it is the case in Iran, for instance), but rather liberalism and, in particular, the recognition of universal rights.

feasible ideological alternative to liberalism. While these years we are witnessing a cultural backlash, which is pushing more and more people to repudiate liberal democratic values, this phenomenon is not an ideological alternative but, rather, a negation of neoliberalism by the losers of the new ideological arrangement.

For traditional Left parties, the historical transition, the dissolution of the Soviet Union meant that the Marxist project turned out to be a failure and could not but embrace liberal values. These parties abandoned their focus on class struggle and emphasized new struggles against non-economic forms of inequalities, such as homophobia, racism, and sexism: their struggles concern now equal recognition for non-economic issues (Fukuyama, 1992). However, this shift involved two major issues: first, it posed left-wing parties the problem to find the correct equilibrium between freedom and equality (Fukuyama, 1992). Second, for the traditional wing electorate, it constituted a betrayal of their past values and accused left-wing parties of not to protect the lowest classes' economic rights and conditions. Hence, it is not by chance that current left-wing parties are losing electoral support from lower classes.

## Chapter 2

In the previous chapter, I provided the theoretical account for the thesis. In Chapter 2, I will, instead, focus on the political outcomes of the *Silent Revolution*, as defined by Inglehart. First, I will discuss the appearance of left-libertarian parties (LLPs) by the '70s. LLPs constituted the first utterance of post-material values within Western political systems. Furthermore, I will analyze the liberal shift of left parties and the Third Way, embraced by several European left political leaders, such as Tony Blair, Gerhard Schroder, Luis Zapatero and, more recently, Matteo Renzi. Finally, I will discuss the rise and the features of authoritarian, right populist parties.

### 2.1 Left-libertarian parties: first post-material parties in European politics

*“The consistent anarchist, then, should be a socialist, but a socialist of a particular sort. He will not only oppose alienated and specialized labor and look forward to the appropriation of capital by the whole body of workers, but he will also insist that this appropriation be direct, not exercised by some elite force acting in the name of the proletariat.”*

Noam Chomsky, *On Anarchism*, 2014

Left-libertarian parties spawned from new social movements and groups, which, by the '70s, cut across traditional lines of Lipset & Rokkan's cleavages (Redding & Viterna, 1999). Their political requests and demands suggested that Inglehart's post-material values were beginning to have political relevance and that new parties were about to fulfill the political needs which were emerging among an electoral segment, constituted by those social groups (young, highly educated middle classes) highlighted by Inglehart (1977). Besides, as post-material values were developing new demands in population and political parties were failing to meet these political demands, new movements and parties arose to respond precisely to these electoral shifts (Redding & Viterna, 1999).

The notion of the Left-libertarian party identifies a range of different parties that emerged in the '70s with the labels of, amongst the others, New Left, Greens, environmental parties and converged on programmatic outlooks and electoral constituencies. Indeed, they criticized the social development and the institutions which arose in post-WWII in Western societies from the compromise between capital and labor. Moreover, they opposed the priority of economic growth, the patterns of policy-making which prevent people's democratic participation in favor of restricted, reserved bargaining at the elite level and the bureaucratic Welfare state (Kitschelt, 1988). They commit themselves neither to conservative nor to socialist programs, as they tie together libertarian commitments to the individual economy, popular participation and a leftist concern for



equality. (Kitschelt, 1988). From the conservative side, they reject the supremacy of markets, as they restrict the possibility to participate in democratic deliberations and pursue material commodities, devaluing, in turn, social communities and endangering the supply and the protection of non-material commodities (Kitschelt, 1988).

On the other side, although they share the importance of solidarity and equality, they diverge from socialist parties in rejecting centralized bureaucracy, which had been the traditional features of traditional, leftist parties. These parties, indeed, stressed the importance of individual autonomy, participation, and self-governance of decentralized communities (Kitschelt, 1988).

The link between LLPs and Inglehart's *Silent Revolution* is tight. As I noted in the first chapter, post-material values detected by Inglehart (1997) were democratic participation, equality, and self-esteem, other than those supporting social libertarian policies such as abortion, divorce, and euthanasia. Moreover, as Inglehart had forecasted through his two hypotheses, there was an association between income *per capita* and left-libertarian party formation in countries, as well as a correlation between income levels and electoral support to LLPs (Kitschelt, 1988).

There was also a strong commitment by left-libertarian parties to post-material values. However, it is not valid the reverse: not all people owning post-material values support left-libertarian parties. Indeed, the percentage of post-material electors in countries where there were relevant LLPs in the '80s was not higher than that one in those countries where there were not relevant in the same period (Kitschelt, 1988). Thus, Inglehart's theory failed to describe political realignments due to post-material shifts adequately. While it explains why there was the pressure to represent left-libertarian interests in the political arena, it did not manage to explain how, where and when this pressure could be translated in political parties (Kitschelt, 1988).

Left-libertarian parties that emerged across several Western political systems had different fates, despite the percentage of people with post-material values in countries where LLPs emerged significantly was not higher than in those countries where they did not emerge (Kitschelt, 1988). How is it possible to explain such a difference? The rational actor's perspective helps in answering this question, as it discusses how new political parties form and gain relevance in party systems.

According to the rational actor's perspective, new political parties will form only when the unresponsiveness of existing political institutions coincides with favorable political opportunities to displace existing parties (Kitschelt, 1988). This account implies three assumptions: first, there must be new interests, claims, and requests among a sufficient broad electorate segment. In that case, these latter ones are the post-material values detected by Inglehart, which were (partially<sup>60</sup>) represented by LLPs. Second, these new requests and interests are not represented in a party system by any of the existing parties, as these latter ones are not responsive to them. Third, there must be specific political and institutional opportunities in the political system. For what concerns institutional opportunities, Lipset & Rokkan (1967) identified four obstacles which hinder the

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<sup>60</sup> We should not forget the focus posed by Flanagan which Inglehart failed to acknowledge, that is a left post-materialism counterbalanced by a right post-materialism. In this part we should assume that right post-materialism is not represented by LLPs.

formation of new parties: legitimation, incorporation, representation, and majority power. On the other side, political opportunities depend on other factors, such as the party who is currently holding the government and whether electors closer to marginal parties vote ideologically or strategically.

For what concerns left-libertarian parties, Kitschelt (1988) listed four conditions which influenced the likelihood for LLPs to emerge in the '80s.

First, the strength of welfare systems. Kitschelt (1988) found that welfare systems played a significant role in the formation of LLPs, as they created opportunities for the mobilization of left-libertarian demands for two reasons. Firstly, welfare state systems protect the material well-being of the citizens by providing a safety net from the uncertainties of business cycles and capitalist labor markets. The sense of security they raise, as Inglehart (1977) already noted<sup>61</sup>, is essential to reorient people's values and, consequently, political agenda. Moreover, they organize social services (such as education and health) in bureaucratic institutions, thus raising the individuals' sense of dissatisfaction which "*fuels left-libertarian demands for a decentralized, consumer-controlled reorganization of public services*"<sup>62</sup>.

Second, the relative strength of (left) corporatism and the socialist participation in governments. As noted by Kitschelt (1988), contrary to welfare systems, this condition represented, instead, a constraint for these post-material demands, as they could not be channeled through established political parties. Indeed, LLPs arose due and in response to the lack of responsiveness and reactivity by traditional socialist parties, which, in turn, discarded these new requests. However, partially to justify socialist parties, we should remind the readers that traditional left and left-libertarians' focus and interests partially diverge. Traditional left parties, as well as business groups, still desire to preserve the logic of industrial growth and bureaucratic regulation. On the other side, post-material values emphasized other priorities, that sometimes collide with economic growth (Kitschelt, 1988) (Inglehart, 1977). Moreover, despite traditional left parties and left-libertarian groups share anti-capitalist and anti-market attitudes, the former ones are much more prone and disposed to renounce to these spirits in favor of short-term benefits for their constituencies, such as increases in labor rights, employment, and welfare services.

Third, the political system. As stated in the previous condition, LLPs arose notably where traditional left parties do not represent a political channel for expressing new post-material requests. However, new Left-Libertarian parties' electorate, especially at their initial stages, may still consider voting strategically, according to Duverger's hypothesis. According to this hypothesis, electors may decide to vote strategically whenever the party to whom they feel closer has weak chances to win in their constituency, in order to not waste their vote (Inglehart & Norris, 2019). In this regard, post-material electors may vote for traditional socialist parties for two main reasons: either in bipolar political systems, where any vote for a marginal LLP may indirectly favor conservative parties (thus, in this case, post-material parties support the lesser evil), or in majoritarian electoral systems, where LLPs might be unable to overcome the high electoral threshold

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<sup>61</sup> Inglehart's scarcity hypothesis (see. Chapter 1.1).

<sup>62</sup> Kitschelt 1988:210.

(Kitschelt, 1988). Instead, when the traditional socialist party holds steadily and hegemonically the government, the “conservative threat” is less imminent for post-material voters, who may support LLPs. Likewise, when socialist parties are weak and continuously confined at the opposition, post-material electors tend nevertheless to vote for LLPs, as they have nothing to lose (Kitschelt, 1988).

Fourth, the nuclear controversy. Where protests against the use of nuclear power became salient in the political debate, LLPs could profit. Indeed, traditional parties, both from the right and left, were mostly in favor of nuclear power, frustrating the requests brought forward by antinuclear activists (Kitschelt, 1988). As anti-nuclear concerns were discarded by the established political institutions, shortly nuclear power became a “*symbol of the technocratic domination society by government agencies, private enterprises, and unions who defend economic growth and bureaucratic welfare states against the left-libertarian challenge*”<sup>63</sup>. Since anti-nuclear demands did not find any outlet among traditional parties, left-libertarian parties could profit from this alienation by defending their political agenda. Moreover, the anti-nuclear controversy was particularly intense in countries in which the social democrats took part in the government (Kitschelt, 1988).

Left-libertarian parties represented a novelty in the ‘70s Western political landscape, as they were spawned beyond the four cleavages identified by Lipset and Rokkan and embodied the consequences of the Silent Revolution described by Inglehart. Although remaining marginal in many countries, they played an essential role in Western political systems. Indeed, after the shut of the Berlin Walls, they influenced crucially political parties and their political issues, notably traditional left parties. For instance, it is not by chance that leftist parties started to embrace environmental values and programs. Even where they remained marginal parties, they still contributed determinately in bringing forward political battles, sometimes alone within the political spectrum.

However, in some countries, LLPs changed their political nature throughout time. In Germany, the Green Party embraced in recent decades capitalist and liberal-democratic values and organized its internal structure hierarchically, partially repudiating their original left-libertarian roots. While still defending fundamental principles such as social justice, environmentalism, participatory democracy, and multiculturalism, it bore the features of monolithic, classical political liberalism (Dalla Porta, et al., 2017)

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<sup>63</sup> Id., p. 219

## 2.2 Post-Materialism, neoliberalism and the Third Way development of Labor parties

*“Tony Blair and New Labor. We forced our opponents to change their minds”*

Margaret Thatcher, 2002, answering on a question on what her greatest achievement was

As we noted in the first section of Chapter 1, the emergence of post-materialism posed a problem for traditional left parties already in the ‘70s, as they were divided between keeping their commitment on traditional (materialist) ideologies and values and embracing new post-material demands from the young, left electorate (Inglehart, 1977). That divergence in interests and requests to political society could be already traced in the protests which characterized the French May in 1968<sup>64</sup>.

On the other side, the shut of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Communist Block of former USSR and the Eastern European States affected the nature and the ideology of traditional European leftist parties. While USSR represented just *a* form of Communism and, thus, its collapse may not have represented the eclipse of the Communist dream, it is nevertheless undeniable that they could not pass unnoticed for traditional European leftist parties, which had to rethink and redefine their ideological relationship with liberalism and capitalist economy. As Fukuyama (1992) argued, traditional leftist parties could not but embrace liberalism and treat it as the dominant economic arrangement. While still focused on fighting inequalities, their focus and targets had to change. With the end of Communism, they lost the ideological weapons through which they could fight social inequalities and, since they could not call into question the principles of liberalism, their arguments concerned the precise point at which the proper trade-off between liberty and equality should come (Fukuyama, 1992). As a result, new inequalitarian challenges did not concern class inequalities (which, if not abandoned, they were suspended), but other forms of inequality, such as racism, sexism, and homophobia. In this regard, Fukuyama (1992) noted that it would not be surprising to forecast, in the future, even natural forms of inequalities becoming not tolerated.

Furthermore, traditional leftist parties, as well as traditional right ones, had to face social-structural transformations, which affected the salience and the mobilizational capacity of social class divisions (Azmanova, 2011). These transformations resulted from three trends, according to Azmanova (2011):

- a) The formation of an enlarged middle class, which diminished the relevance of the conflict between wage-labor and capital.
- b) The emergence of new issues resulted from Inglehart’s post-materialist *Silent Revolution*.
- c) The increased individualization as a result of what Zygmunt Bauman called liquid modernity. In particular, according to Bauman<sup>65</sup>, the flexibilization of employment has entailed a social fragmentation, as individuals engage in multiple carrier trajectories. Therefore, such flexibilization and

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<sup>64</sup> See Chapter 1.1

<sup>65</sup> Quoted by Azmanova 2011

diversification of employment have undermined the connection between one's position in the economy and large-scale group categories. If classes consist of different people who avoid social closure, they have no political meaning (Esping-Andersen 1999)<sup>66</sup>. Thus, while economic inequalities persist, they are individualized, and no more class based.

During the '90s and until the first half of the '00s of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, left and labor parties in Europe started to review and replace themselves both in terms of ideologies and values, breaking up with their past. One of the most famous examples in this regard is the Third Way, whose leading political exponents were Tony Blair in the UK and Gerard Schroder in Germany. By Third Way, I refer to a political discourse developed within labor and socialist parties in order to update social democracy in a rapidly changing world (Raco, 2015). The Third Way was built out of elements both from the Left and the Right but was claimed to be new and distinct from both traditional social democracy and neoliberalism (Barrientos & Powell, 2004). Third Way's discourses did not step into the debate between social democracy and neoliberalism, but went beyond it, delivering rhetoric of reconciliation between the two ideologies. For instance, Third Way programs included economic dynamism as well as social justice, enterprise as well as fairness (Barrientos & Powell, 2004). This radical change from the past does not result only from the ideological reconfiguration which followed the collapse of the Soviet Union, but also from the economic constraints to the budget that globalization posed upon national budgets (Bremer, 2018). Indeed, globalization reduced national tax revenues due to the (almost) free movements of the capital. As a result, national governments, both from the Left and the Right, were forced to reduce welfare expenses by adopting neoliberal policies.

For what concerns values, Third Way relied on both Right and Left traditions: fairness and social justice, liberty and equality of opportunity, solidarity and responsibility, community and individualism. However, while these values are broadly agreed upon, there is much more equivocation on their correct interpretation. (Barrientos & Powell, 2004). This ambiguity led many authors to express harsh critiques against Third Way, claiming that it appropriates the vocabulary and values of social democracy in the cause of neo-liberalism (Cammack, 2004), in order to alleviate the discomfort that many would feel at the embrace of a neo-liberal political economy by Left parties (Morrison, 2004). This critique is not ill-founded. Anthony Giddens, the philosopher and sociologist, considered as the father of the Third Way, argued himself that "*social democracy must unreservedly embrace the logic of capitalism*"<sup>67</sup>. Under this logic, traditional social democratic valued adopted a new, neo-liberal fashion.

Solidarity, according to Giddens, lost its collective nature in favor of an individualist one which comes from the bottom, as individual solidarity is morally more authentic than socialist ones<sup>68</sup>.

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<sup>66</sup> Id.

<sup>67</sup> Quoted by Cammack 2004

<sup>68</sup> Id.

Likewise, for Giddens emancipation was no more the egress from the social oppression of the capital, but the individual exercise of personal responsibility in a social and political context where the government is not compelled to promote and implement further measures for social justice<sup>69</sup>.

In turn, security, whose provision represented a concern for social democrat policymakers, was, for Third Way theorist, counterbalanced by the positive effects of risks. According to Giddens, “*risk draws attention to the dangers we face [...], but also to the opportunities that go along with them*”<sup>70</sup>. Thus, for Third Way proponents, risk should be view in a positive way, as it provides opportunity and innovation and empowers citizens, thus favoring their emancipation. Risk was then the new security.

Similarly, Giddens delivered a new neoliberal meaning to the community, since he identifies it with enterprises<sup>71</sup>, as well as to redistribution and equality. In Giddens’ view, redistribution did not concern any more resources, as Marx had stated, but opportunities. Thus, accordingly, equality concerns opportunities as well<sup>72</sup>.

Finally, welfare is reduced to the idea of self-help: it should encourage recipients “*to adopt a more active risk-taking attitude and should be addressed to those who have most of need of it*”<sup>73</sup>, who were those desiring to emancipate themselves through education and capitalist behavior.

I should nevertheless consider that Third Way lacked a developed ideology, as its proponents traditionally defended a pragmatic approach, employing the slogan: “what matters is what works” (Barrientos & Powell, 2004) (Raco, 2015).

Third Way’s policies mirrored the new liberal fashion of social democratic values. The most prominent examples of Third Way’s policies are provided by Tony Blair’s New Labor in the UK and Gerhard Schroder’s SPD in Germany. Tony Blair, notably, stressed a new welfare reform, based on Giddens’s writings.

According to Giddens, modern welfare systems had to detach themselves from previous social models, as they are not designed to address the conditions of post-modernization<sup>74</sup>. Indeed, in the era of post-modernism and of post-scarcity, individuals live their lives much more actively and claim to be more autonomous, in order to fulfill their desires of self-actualization (McCullen & Harris, 2004). In this regard, welfare systems, from being characterized by coercion, dependency, and restriction, had to promote individuals’ freedom, independence, and autonomy (McCullen & Harris, 2004). In other words, welfare systems did not have to control the recipients of the services, but, instead, they should empower them and extend their autonomy, fulfilling the prerequisites for individual development.

In addressing self-actualization, Giddens employed Maslow’s pyramid, as much as Inglehart did for developing its theory of the *Silent Revolution*. However, scholars criticized Giddens’ use of Maslow’s pyramid, as he, arguing that needs from different levels of order can be fulfilled simultaneously, ignored the

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<sup>69</sup> Id.

<sup>70</sup> Id.

<sup>71</sup> Id.

<sup>72</sup> Id.

<sup>73</sup> Id.

<sup>74</sup> Quoted by McCullen & Harris, 2004

hierarchical nature of the model (McCullen & Harris, 2004). Therefore, Giddens' theoretical account seemed to fail to take into consideration that if people do not achieve security needs, they will still be motivated by them, and they would disregard higher needs' achievements. If material needs were not fulfilled, people would not be satisfied with the achievement of post-material (or post-scarcity) needs.

New Labor's welfare reforms promoted by Tony Blair traced Giddens' theory. Indeed, they promoted conditional welfare, in which the recipients became contracting parts, subjected to rights as well as to duties (Barrientos & Powell, 2004) and whose opportunities were balanced by responsibilities (Morrison, 2004). That new conception of welfare recipients mirrored a new notion for citizenship, which, in turn, derived from globalization. According to the globalized notion of citizenship, "*the responsibility of managing global change is partially shifted from being a governmental responsibility to being the obligation of a responsible citizenry*"<sup>75</sup>. Moreover, citizenship became tightly linked with the economic requirements of joining both labor and consumer markets (Morrison, 2004). Therefore, in New Labor's view, citizenship, rather than being an automatic right, was earned by fulfilling individual responsibilities, that involved the inclusion within the (economic) community and the ability to compete in the global marketplace through economic competences (Morrison, 2004). This new notion of citizenship affected the conception of welfare recipients, as it divides them into two categories: those who are deserving of receiving welfare assistance because of their willingness to take up opportunities for work and training and those who are undeserving on account either of their reluctance to work or their engagement in the black economy<sup>76</sup> (Morrison, 2004).

Equally, the new welfare systems, rather than being a (trapping) safety net, was supposed to become a trampoline. As a result, state intervention was only justified if it spurs individuals' abilities and challenges his sense of initiative, in addition to offering him some material assistance (Barrientos & Powell, 2004). For this reason, welfare recipients were encouraged to take advantage of any job opportunity, as it was considered more rewarding for self-esteem than any other welfare assistance. Among the job opportunities, even low-paid, menial, and part-time jobs were included (Barrientos & Powell, 2004). Notably, in Germany, this allowed for the appearance of the phenomenon of the so-called mini-jobs, introduced by Prime Minister Gerhard Schroder, from the SPD (social-democratic party). These mini-jobs were low paid, part-time job places offered, or even imposed, to unemployed workers<sup>77</sup>. While such measure was praised for reducing the unemployment rate, on the other side, they raised the rate of groups at risk of poverty and posed new issues, such as the low retirement assistance for long-term mini-jobs workers and deterioration of job places quality<sup>78</sup>.

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<sup>75</sup> Morrison 2004, p. 171

<sup>76</sup> This "responsible conception" of welfare recipients has gone far beyond the Third Way. Similar considerations are indeed made within the "income citizenship" promoted and enacted by the Five Star Movements. In that case, recipients of that State-provided income were even legally bound to join training courses or to accept jobs. Likewise, the recipients found to work off the records could be even sentenced up to six years. We should note that the Five Star Movements emerged also exploiting electorate's disenchantment to neoliberal policies in response to the financial crisis which hit Italy by 2011 (Dalla Porta, et al., 2017).

<sup>77</sup> "Germania, tutte le ombre dei mini-jobs", Corriere della Sera (website), 20-06-2014

<sup>78</sup> Id.

Furthermore, the New Labor welfare reforms allowed for the provision of welfare services by private actors, either in place of or in addition to public ones, becoming more oriented to an output legitimacy than to an input legitimacy (Raco, 2015). Privatization measures were undertaken in several European countries in order to liberalize the market and restore public budgets. Notably, Left governments made the most famous privatization campaigns. For instance, in France the Socialist Prime Minister Lionel Jospin privatized more than the six previous governments together and sold public holdings of banks, insurance corporations, electronics, and airlines mostly to US financial firms (Peters, 2012). Privatization also included healthcare services, trails, telecommunications, oil and gas companies.

Moreover, governments established public-private partnerships, whereby “*private sectors finances, designs, builds, maintains and operates infrastructure assets traditionally provided by the public sector*”<sup>79</sup>. In short, both through privatization and public-private partnerships, governments introduced market structures and organization into the delivery, operation, and management of public services. For some commentators, that was a model of governance which solved the “*inherent tensions between the demands of the capitalist order and democracy*”<sup>80</sup>. This model of governance was, however, supposed to hinder the national government’s liberty and accountability, as contracts for services provisions prevented sudden changes resulting from new democratically elected governments’ policy changes. At the same time, private welfare services were transforming democratic accountability from direct to indirect, as citizens do not elect policy providers but supervisors of policy providers (Raco, 2015).

Finally, Third Way governments, as well as conservative ones, engaged in restructuring the public sector, in order to decrease public spending and to boost business and economic growth, as they thought that lower taxes and tightening fiscal policies could facilitate conditions for profitable capital accumulation (Peters, 2012). However, the reduction of public services spending by Western governments was also a necessity, as they had to face rising national deficits. The reduction of public services expenditure was a characterizing trend in the Western States. Peters (2012) noted that in the US, Canada, and other 11 European countries (Western and Scandinavian ones) the public expenditure for public services and social protection fell by an average of 8 % between 1995 and 2005, with peaks of 12,7 % in Denmark and 10,8 % in Sweden and the Netherlands. In particular, public administration was highly reformed, to do more with less. Therefore, some public workers lost their jobs, while the remaining ones had to work more according to a new goal-oriented public organization. Governments adopted flexible bargaining and new corporatist arrangements to restructure labor relations and weaken traditional public sector labor power and initiated new management principles (Peters, 2012): on one side, they provided public managers more discretion power over hiring, staffing and termination, while on the other one public sector wages lowered, with more working hours and cheaper forms of employment (Peters, 2012). To do that, some countries (such as Italy, Germany and Austria) acknowledged the possibility for shifting public sector employees under private employment law, while some other ones

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<sup>79</sup> Peters 2012:217

<sup>80</sup> Jordana and Levi-Faur 2004, quoted by Raco 2015



(Scandinavian ones, Belgium and the Netherlands) merged local autonomies and reduced their budget, forcing public managers to reduce staffing, full-time jobs and labor costs (Peters, 2012). Moreover, governments preferred decentralized and flexible bargaining strategies instead of collective ones, wiping away traditional public labor bargaining power.

Corporations and trade unions' responses to those measures were weak and, in some cases, they even accepted, reluctantly, these changes in public sectors, welfare provisions, and the labor market. That apparent weakness was due to several reasons. First, unions and labor movements were aware of the problems of deficits and budget balancing and preferred to accept tax cuts and reduction in public services in order to avoid tougher consequences on the economy, such as rising unemployment and economic stagnation, which would have implied oppressive austerity measures (Peters, 2012). Second, the delocalization and the flexibilization of contract bargaining reduced their traditional labor power drastically, partially due to the lack of unions' intra-confederal coordination (Peters, 2012). Third, even where unions and labor movements managed to organize and set up bargaining campaigns and workers' mobilization, they failed to halt government reforms (Peters, 2012).

The Third Way and the neo-liberalization of the Left reduced the polarization of policy proposals between traditional Left and Right in most of the Western political systems, inducing many scholars to call for a neoliberal convergence of mainstream parties until the 2011 financial crisis (Bremer, 2018). Indeed, both New Right and Third Way Social Democratic parties agreed on considering expenditures on public services a burden on the productive sectors of the economy and on conceiving tax cuts, as well as new public management reforms, as necessary for economic growth (Peters, 2012). Similar concerns were made for the labor market: flexibility and precarity became necessary, in their views, for keeping up with the dynamism of the markets. *De facto*, due to this ideological, economic convergence, before the financial crisis, economic issues diminished their salience within European political spectra, while several political systems kept their bipolar nature.

In the meanwhile, traditional leftist and socialist parties renewed their positions on post-material libertarian values, embracing liberal social values (Inglehart & Norris, 2019). Inglehart (1977) had already noted that traditional leftist parties' ideological re-positioning, resulting from the *Silent Revolution's* emergence of post-material values, would have become necessary for their viability. However, as he noted, that re-positioning would have been complicated, since the material socialist left and the post-material libertarian one did not coincide and, partially, even collided. Why was it necessary for traditional leftist parties to shift on post-material values? Because left-libertarian post-material electorate felt to be on the left of the political spectrum, even if "*they did not share the traditional left's material agenda*"<sup>81</sup>. Mind that traditional leftist parties' repositioning on post-material issues involved all major European leftist parties. The extent of this left-libertarian cleavage mobilization, mediated with other political factors (for instance, the relative strength of class and religious cleavages), determines the length of the transition towards left-libertarian appeals,

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<sup>81</sup> Berman 1997, quoted by Encarnacion 2009

(Kitschelt, 1994). In short, the greater the extent, the faster the transition. This transition affected the nature of leftist parties' electorate. Indeed, they became increasingly supported by middle-class, highly educated and averagely wealthy people, while working classes, lower educated and older people started to vote massively right-wing authoritarian-populist newly born parties. I will furtherly deepen this aspect in Chapter 3 when addressing the new cleavage models. For the moment, it will be enough to argue that this electoral swapping was, above all, based on cultural reasons (Inglehart & Norris, 2019)

The advent of the financial crisis shifted Left parties' political positions, returning to traditional pro-State positions. The financial crisis originated in 2008 in the United States after Lehman Brothers' bankruptcy. In a few months, the crisis hit European banks, which suddenly suffered a shortage of liquid assets and too many deteriorated credits. As a result, European governments intervened directly against the crisis, by bailing out those banks and adopting social measures (such as tax cuts and expansion of social benefits) in order to mitigate the effects of the crisis (Hermann, 2014). However, these measures unbalanced already fragile public budgets and posed States in front of the real threat of insolvency. Several European governments (Ireland, Spain, Portugal, Greece and Cyprus) were thus forced to accept funding support by the so-called *Troika* (International Monetary Fund, European Central Bank and European Commission), which, in turn, imposed on those States draconian austerity measures on national budget in order to reduce governments' deficits.

The austerity measures turned out to have severe impacts on those States' welfare regimes, while, at the same time, their populations were already suffering from the tough consequences of the economic crisis. For instance, in Greece, unemployment rose from 7% up to 27%, while youth unemployment reached 58,6 %, without considering short-term, flexible and out of records labor contracts. In the meanwhile, household's income dropped by one third, while social service and retirement provisions were drastically reduced by austerity measures (Dalla Porta, et al., 2017). Equally in Spain, austerity policies requested by the *Troika* and implemented by the Socialist Prime Minister Luis Zapatero reformed the pension system, liberalized the labor market, slashed salaries and worsened the conditions for civil servants and public employees (Dalla Porta, et al., 2017).

As anticipated above, leftist parties responded to the crisis by repositioning themselves on Left: they modified their position on economic issues, redefended welfare systems and became more skeptical of economic liberalism, reversing their previous Third Way neo-liberal convergence with center-right parties (Bremer, 2018). They could not but reposition themselves on the political spectrum. Indeed, during the crisis, the neo-liberal economic model was perceived as responsible for the economic crisis by the electorate. In particular, the electorate called into question the progressive enfeeblement of welfare systems and the deterioration of social service provisions brought forward by neoliberalism and Third Way parties before and during the crisis. Some authors have thus talked of a death spiral wrapping social-democrat parties: on one side, globalization and austerity policies prevented welfare from being the social safety net for those people who lost their job or saw their income dramatically reduced; on the other, community and class solidarity (two pillar values for those parties) are being eroded by increasing social solidarity. It is not by hazard that in those countries most

hit by the crisis (Greece, Spain and, partially, Portugal), leftist parties, which adopted neoliberal policies and austerity measures, were toughly punished by the electorate and forced to drastic repositioning.

In Greece, the Socialist Party (PASOK), from being one of the pillars of bipolar Greek political system with the Conservative Party, fell from the 43,9 % of the electoral consensus in 2009 to the 6,28% in 2015, with most of its electorate flowing towards the Radical Left Party SYRIZA, led by Alexis Tsipras. In Spain, after the austerity measures enacted by the Socialist Prime Minister Luis Zapatero, the Socialist Party (PSOE) lost the anticipated elections in 2011, which were instead won by the center-right candidate Mariano Rajoy. In the same years, it faced a crisis of representation among its electorate, part of its voters flowed to the populist, vaguely leftist movement *Podemos* led by Pablo Iglesias. It managed to recover in 2019 general elections only through a real social-democratic program<sup>82</sup>. In France, at Presidential elections in 2017, Benoit Hamon, candidate of the Socialist Party (PSF), the party of the incoming President François Hollande, collected only 6% of votes, only one-third of the preferences collected by the leader of the Radical Left Party *La France Insoumise*, Jean-Luc Mélenchon.

Italy represents the only exception. In that country, the center-left party PD, led by Matteo Renzi, adopted measures much more ambivalent concerning welfare State. In particular, he enacted a reform of the labor market, which liberalized the labor market, partially wiping labor safeguards on permanent contracts and allowing very short-term contracts.

However, for what concerns cultural issues, traditional socialist and center-left parties maintained their social liberal positions. For instance, they contributed to introducing gay marriages or civil unions in their countries, they had in general opening attitudes towards asylum-seekers, and refugees and they were favorable to international and European integrations.

### 2.3 Authoritarian-populist parties: the other side of the *Silent Revolution*

*“The immigrationist religion is an insult for human beings, whose integrity is always bound to one national community, one language, one culture.”*

Marine Le Pen, 2016

As I wrote in Section 1.1, Inglehart (1977) excluded the possibility of a right-wing post-materialism. Throughout the *Silent Revolution*, he identified post-materialist with the left and materialism with the right. According to Inglehart (1977), that Manichean separation between right-wing materialism and post-materialism would have explained a trend which would have been clearer 15 years later, that is lower classes' support for right-wing populism. However, this account proposed by Inglehart (1977) appeared too simplistic. Flanagan (1987) recognized, instead, the possibility for a right-wing populism, whose features I already

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<sup>82</sup> Tommaso Verga, “Pedro Sanchez, con un programma di sinistra si vincono le elezioni”, Globalist (site), 29/09/2019

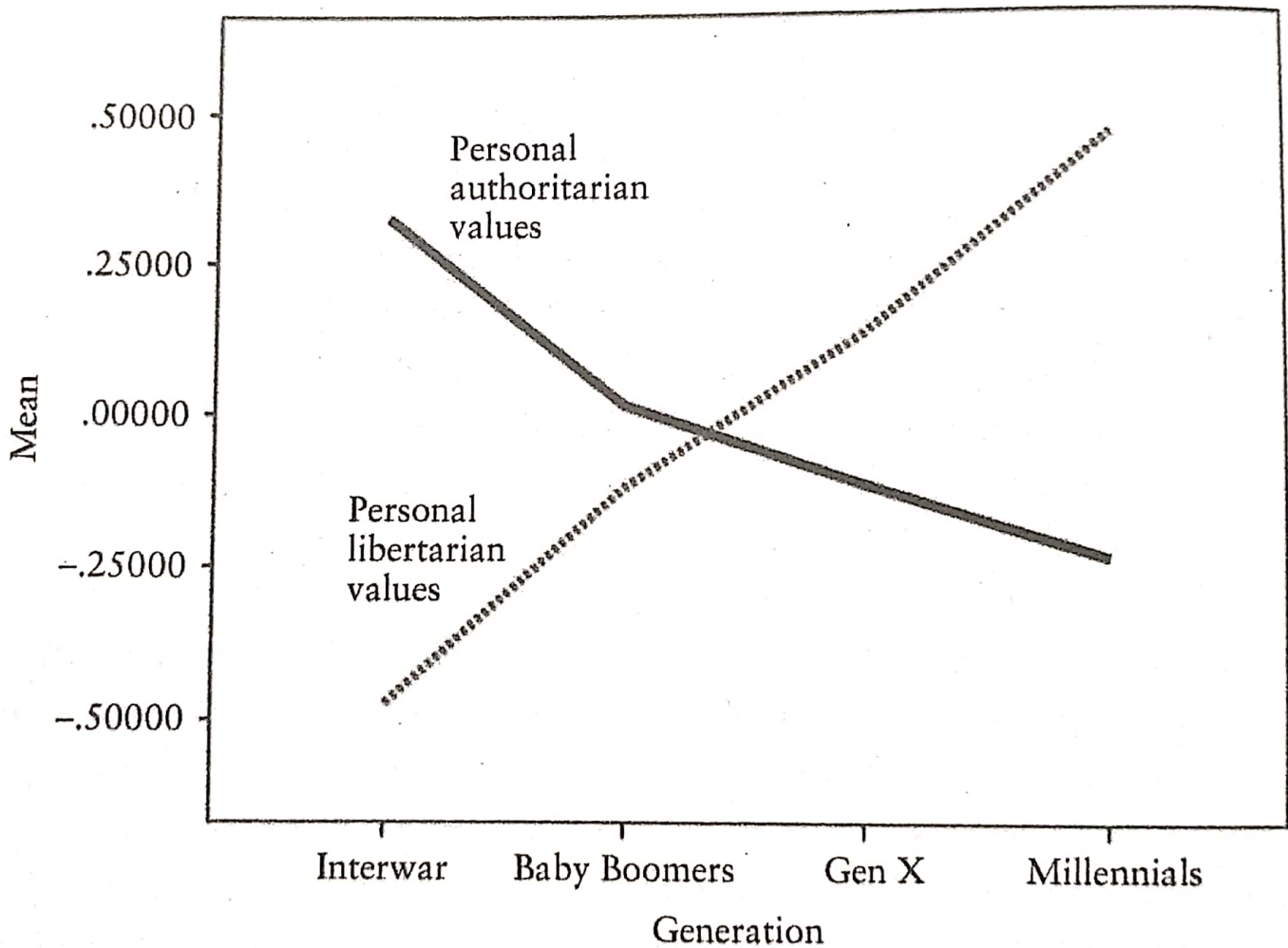


Figure 2

*Authoritarian and libertarian values by generation in Europe*

*Inglehart & Norris 2019*

*Interwar generation: born between 1900 and 1945*

*Baby Boomers generation: born between 1946 and 1964*

*Generation X: born between 1965 and 1979*

*Millennials generation: born between 1980 and 1996*

*From Inglehart & Norris (2019)*

addressed in Section 1.1; the contraposition between the post-material New Left and New Right would have constituted, according to the latter scholar, the essence of the New Politics.

Evolving patterns of Western political systems would have confirmed Flanagan's model. The new right addressed by Flanagan found its accomplishment in several authoritarian-populist right-wing parties that emerged across Europe by the end of the '80s. Their emergence led several authors to speak about a *Silent Counter-Revolution* or *Cultural Backlash*, which was already perceived as a political novelty within European political systems (Ignazi, 1992). Indeed, Ignazi (1992) argued that these extreme right parties could not be assimilated to existing political parties for two main reasons: first, because they were able to mobilize votes from all social strata and previous political alignments; second, because their message was new and

representing a different cultural and political mood, characterized by new priorities and issues, a general disillusionment towards established parties, a lack of confidence in the political systems and general pessimism about the future. Ignazi partially attributed this message to the new politics of the *Silent Revolution*. As he said in a quip, “*the Greens and the extreme right parties are, respectively, the legitimate and the unwanted children of the New Politics*”<sup>83</sup>.

How did this counter-revolution form? To what extent was it linked with the *Silent Revolution* proposed by Inglehart (1977)? In his recent *Cultural Backlash*, Inglehart (2019) argued that the far-right Counter-Revolution emerged precisely in response to the emergence of the *Silent Revolution* social liberal post-material values. In particular, the tipping point took place when holders of social conservatives (those who opposed the new post-material, socially liberal values of the *Silent Revolution*) lost their cultural hegemony, “*activating feelings of resentment towards groups blamed for change*”<sup>84</sup> and reacting to the *Silent Revolution* in the opposite way: proposing alternative and reversed values. Social conservative values defenders have increasingly displayed their intolerance with liberal social norms which have rooted within Western societies, as they view those norms not only as different from theirs but also as morally corrupt (Inglehart & Norris, 2019). They oppose the value of traditional family against homosexual marriages and divorce practices. They defend pro-life positions against libertarian rights, such as abortion and euthanasia. They emphasize their belonging to Christian religion against the migration waves (invasion, according to their discourse) of Muslim immigrants.

It would seem to witness Newton’s third law of motion applied to social sciences and, in particular, to post-material values. This different feature also involves the holders of backlash values as well. In Section 1.1, I argued that, by the ‘70s, socially liberal values spread and found their best defenders among young, college-educated citizens in Western societies. College education, indeed, other than promoting knowledge and greater openness toward a cosmopolitan world-view, mirrors other socio-economic conditions, such relative wealth and urban provenience. On the other side, supporters of the backlash values tend to come from rural communities and be old as well as non-college educated (Inglehart & Norris, 2019). Inglehart (2019) also suggests that the intergenerational value gap between older and younger generations he proposed in 1977 remained and that it is, besides, the main predictor for social liberal/social conservative values.

Moreover, socially conservative values defenders tend to be authoritarian and more willing to support authoritarian leaders too. Despite there is not any theoretical, *a priori* relationship between social conservative values and authoritarian attitudes, statistical data indicate that two factors are tightly related (Inglehart & Norris, 2019). The intergenerational gap still holds for authoritarian values too, as Figure 2 suggests.

I should note that the backlash is foremost a cultural phenomenon. This feature has been confirmed by several studies (Inglehart & Norris, 2019) (Rensmann, 2017) and needs to be reaffirmed, as the general public usually tends to overestimate the economic item for explaining the rise of authoritarian-right wing populist values and

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<sup>83</sup> Ignazi 1992, p. 6

<sup>84</sup> Inglehart & Norris 2019, p. 91

parties. Oesch (2008) argued that “*economic parameters played a smaller role than often assumed in the rise of right-wing populism*”<sup>85</sup>, the authoritarian, right-wing electorate much higher valued the fear of immigrants' influence on country culture and traditional values.

Authoritarian-populist right-wing parties share two essential features: authoritarian values and populist attitudes.

For what concerns authoritarian values, Inglehart and Norris (2019) highlighted three main components: conformity, loyalty, and security.

By conformity, Inglehart and Norris (2019) refer to strict adherence to group conventions and traditional customs, by obeying rules and cultural traditions and respecting orthodox ways of life; hence authoritarian groups support traditional customs, conventional gender role for males and females. Conformity “*endorses tradition over novelty, natives over immigrants, localism over cosmopolitanism*”<sup>86</sup>. In turn, they contrast the emphasis on individual freedom, personal autonomy, and tolerance of diverse lifestyles (which are instead associated with social liberalism). The emphasis on conformity explains why authoritarian values are often associated with social conservatism. However, social conservatism does not necessarily imply authoritarianism and vice versa as well. As Duckitt<sup>87</sup> argued, the linkages between authoritarianism and social conservatism are contingent, not inherent. Equally, some social conservatism supporters may abstain from endorsing authoritarian values, which would compel restriction or prohibition of unconventional behavior. I should neither exclude the possibility of a linkage between social liberalism and authoritarian values as well. Indeed, in that latter case, social liberals may impose conformity to their vision of politically correct views and identity politics.

However, conformity entails two main consequences. First, it creates a division of the world between Us (those belonging to a community with shared values) against Them (which are outgroups and powerful elites, both regarded as a potential threat to the shared values of the community). The boundaries of that division are marked and easily recognizable and generate, through the use of moral languages, persuasive emotional appeals (Inglehart & Norris, 2019).

Second, authoritarians tend to be intolerant against outgroups, rejecting all those minorities since they may challenge the conventional norms of the community. Outgroups are defined in terms of race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, gender, sexuality, or ideologies (Inglehart & Norris, 2019). Then, consequently, authoritarian values are thus closely associated with racism, Islamophobia, misogyny, homophobia, anti-Semitism, and ethnocentrism (Inglehart & Norris, 2019).

By loyalty, Inglehart and Norris (2019) refer to the support by the base to the group and its leaders. In democratic regimes, loyalty to authoritarian leaders usually assumes a populist tone: the leader is supported as the defender of the shared values of the community and the enforcer of law and order; at the same time, the leader challenges the institutionalized power and the elites. The loyalty to the leader implies may endanger the

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<sup>85</sup> Oesch 2008, p. 370

<sup>86</sup> Inglehart & Norris 2019, p.72

<sup>87</sup> Quoted by Inglehart & Norris 2019, p. 72

democratic rules of the system. Indeed, the executive power is emphasized, while Parliament and Court's powers are put into question. Equally, the democratic system of checks and balances is rejected (Inglehart & Norris, 2019). Loyalty to the leader is furthermore stressed by using a particular tone in the political debate, either paternalistic ("I alone can fix problems") and transgressive. This political tone allows to depict the authoritarian leader as trustful as well as to denigrate political opponents. Moreover, leaders can, through it, *"appeal to diverse groups with heterogeneous grievances, communicate messages to unsophisticated publics and, if elected to office and minimize being held into account in delivering detailed political pledges"*<sup>88</sup>.

Finally, by security, Inglehart & Norris (2019) refer to the safety and protection of the group against the risks. In the authoritarian discourse, there is usually an emphasis on the lack of security within the country, which may not correspond to the actual situation. For instance, in Italy Matteo Salvini, the leader of the League, a national, populist, right-wing party, collected electoral consensus in 2018 Italian parliamentary elections by raising and leveraging on the subjective sense of physical insecurity of the electorate, while evidence from statistical data showed that crime rates of homicides, robberies, and thefts were steadily diminishing. Equally, Salvini claimed for more several policies against clandestine migration, as a result of the migration waves from Middle Asia and Northern Africa, while, once again, data showed that landings of illegal migrants on Italian shores were decreasing.

In particular, their emphasis on security is not directed against criminals in general, but foreigners and outsiders of the community. These latter people are disproportionately and erroneously accused of homicides, robberies, and rapes; they are seen as the cause of many problems of the country (Inglehart & Norris, 2019). Therefore, the political tone of authoritarian leaders is rarely optimistic. Instead, they introduce a negative view of the world, based on dangers and insecurity, and promote themselves as the only ones who can secure the country (Inglehart & Norris, 2019). Their emphasis on security would justify very severe as well as simplistic measures against the outsiders, which entail their exclusion and not their inclusion. For instance, rather than allocating resources for including migrants, they build up walls on the borders, as it was the case for Trump in the US and Orban in Hungary. Equally, authoritarian leaders criminalize clandestine immigration. Through these measures, they want to remark the boundaries of their social community and protect citizens against threats from outsiders (Inglehart & Norris, 2019). Besides, hostility toward multiculturalism, racial equality, minority rights, ethnic diversity, and immigration is widely regarded as the defining feature of authoritarian, right-wing parties (Inglehart & Norris, 2019). Concerns about migration had increasingly become more salient in Europe in the last decade and a half when many Eastern European countries joined the EU, and eventually reached its peak between 2014 and 2016, when Europe was subjected to several migration waves of refugees and asylum seekers from the Middle East and Northern Africa. European authoritarian, right-wing politicians seized the opportunity and campaigned over migration issues, depicting immigrants as criminals and Islamic terrorists (Inglehart & Norris, 2019). As a consequence, they fueled people's cultural anxieties against migrants. Cultural anxieties arise, according to Blumer, when

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<sup>88</sup> Id., p. 75

dominant groups in society fear to lose their privileges in favor of subordinate groups<sup>89</sup>. As people found in migrants' physical and cultural differences a reason for threats to their culture, physical security, and order, they developed negative attitudes against migrants. They fear that they may lose the world in which they were born and that they had always taken for granted, due to increasing multicultural diversity and to higher immigrant's rate within the population (Inglehart & Norris, 2019).

These measures are mirrored on economic policies and international affairs. In the former case, they support protectionist measures, such as raises of levies and tariffs and questioning, if not withdrawal, of free-trade agreements, which are supposed to protect national industries from international concurrence. Equally, European extremist right-wing leaders promote the exit from the Euro, in order to provide the State monetary sovereignty, and from the European Union. However, such extremist claims are losing terrains, after the terrible consequences of the Brexit on the UK political and economic systems. On the latter one, authoritarian leaders promote military action over diplomacy and multilateralism, disregarding, hence, international law and human rights conventions.

Ignazi (1992:10) argued that all extreme right-wing parties shared some traits of fascist (or "fascistoid") ideologies. Indeed, according to the Italian scholar, extreme right-wing parties were characterized by a belief in the authority of the State over the individual, emphasis on natural community, distrust for the individual representation and parliamentary arrangements, limitations on personal and collective freedoms, exaltation of the strength of the State, collective identification in a great national destiny, and acceptance of hierarchical criteria for social organization (Ignazi, 1992, p. 10). In a very short quip, while they may not converge on all the points above mentioned, they all share that "*state or nation comes prior to the individual*"<sup>90</sup>.

For what concerns populist attitudes, authoritarian right-wing parties share an anti-establishment attitude that includes anti-parliamentarism, anti-pluralism, and anti-party attitudes (Ignazi, 1992). Even if there is not an explicit defense of non-democratic institutional regime, on the other side they undermine the democratic institutional regime, as well as the principle of equality and the rule of law, through distrust for parliamentary systems and mechanisms (Ignazi, 1992). As Ignazi (1992) argued, the anti-system feature is what precisely distinguishes authoritarian right-wing parties from neoconservative and moderate center-right parties.

This anti-system attitude found support among quite large segments of the electorate since the '80s when a crisis of political confidence spread within European societies. Lower turnouts in elections and lower levels of party identification expressed the lack of confidence and the malaise of European citizens towards politics. Political scandals amplified the sense of distrust and, sometimes, anger against politics. The Italian scandal *Tangentopoli* represents the most prominent example. In February 1992, a local socialist politician was convicted in Milan after having accused of corruption and bribery by a local entrepreneur. That inquiry opened a Pandora's box and involved the whole Milanese political class, no matter their party provenience: briefly, the judges discovered a well-enrooted system of bribes, requested as they were tariffs, deemed necessary for

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<sup>89</sup> Quoted by Inglehart & Norris, p. 189

<sup>90</sup> Ignazi 1992, p. 10



obtaining public contracts. In a short time, the scandal spread all over the country and led to the disappearance of the two main parties, the Italian Socialist Party and the Christian Democracy. Moreover, the Socialist leader Bettino Craxi was forced to flee in Tunisia, where he died in 2000, in order to avoid conviction.

Extreme right-wing parties profited from that political distrust, as they appeared as the only political alternative to the establishment's political discourse (Ignazi, 1992). Indeed, contrary to the political elites, they promoted a radical switch of the political class, offered simple (or simplistic) solutions to tax burden and unemployment, invoked law order and severe policies against immigration and promised the comeback of an idyllic and harmonious past, free from current conflicts and anxiety about the future (Ignazi, 1992).

Inglehart and Norris (2019) labeled authoritarian right-wing parties as populist. Populism is, according to the two scholars, a rhetorical style based on two claims: first, "*the only legitimate democratic authority flows directly from the people*"<sup>91</sup>; second, "*the established power-holders are deeply corrupted and self-interest, betraying public trust*"<sup>92</sup>. Thus, populism, contrary to the general belief, is not an ideology, but a discourse, endorsable by all parties and movements across the political spectrum (Inglehart & Norris, 2019). There are authoritarian populists, as I am arguing throughout this chapter, as well as libertarian populists and left-wing ones. For what concerns left-wing populism, primary examples come from South America (amongst the others, Chavez in Venezuela, Morales in Bolivia and Correa in Ecuador); there are, however, left-wing populists in Europe too, such as Mélenchon in France and Corbyn in the UK, as well as Iglesias in Spain and Tsipras in Greece.

The first claim of populism implies that people's democratic authority is consequently provided with an unconstrained majority rule. The decisions of the majority should outweigh all countervailing institutions and safeguards designed to protect authorities (Inglehart & Norris, 2019). The voice of the people is valued even when it contrasts professional specialists, legal authorities, mainstream media, scientists, and elected politicians (Inglehart & Norris, 2019). The populist agenda stresses democratic participation and involvement of the electorate and calls for further implementation of direct democracy mechanisms, such as referenda, petitions, and popular legislative initiative.

The second claim of populism seeks to undermine the legitimacy of established structures of power in liberal democracies, usually through a transgressive and outrage discourse (Inglehart & Norris, 2019). Populist leaders want to create a marked separation between Us and Them. By Them, populist leaders refer to the political, media, economic, and financial elites, who are accused of having betrayed the People. On the other side, the Us is composed of ordinary people (the silent majority). Populist leaders, by creating such a Manichean division between the elites and the people and by self-presenting as the speakers on behalf of the latter ones, want to appear as outsiders and radicals, "*disillusioned with the existing political order and seeking radical revolution to restore 'real' democracy*"<sup>93</sup>. Populist leaders provide an alternative, simplistic narration about reality and the silent majority they seek to represent and propose simple solutions to the problems and

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<sup>91</sup> Inglehart and Norris 2019, p. 66

<sup>92</sup> Id.

<sup>93</sup> Id., p. 67

issues. Since they are supported by the people, they can afford to disregard and reject the legitimacy of authority deriving from scientific evidence, book learning, and reasoned deliberation (Inglehart & Norris, 2019). They critique parliamentary institutions, as they are, in their view, a muffled building where elected representatives forget and ignore people's grievances. They blame political parties, as they have betrayed people's trust by fulfilling their interests. Populist leaders' authority, instead, comes directly from the people, through plebiscitary elections. They, thus, "*gain force by using democratic forces and democratic energies against liberal democracy*"<sup>94</sup>. However, their aim is not to restore democracy and direct participation of the people as they claim, but to get enough legitimacy and to justify their excess of executive power in the name of people's will. As a result, they may suppress liberal democratic elements, such as the check and balances procedures with the legislative authority, the safeguards of minority rights, the independence of the judicial power and fundamental democratic freedom (amongst the other, press freedom). They may seek to entrench their power through constitutional reforms and establishing an authoritarian regime, too (Inglehart & Norris, 2019).

However, their democratic legitimacy may even be just a matter of formality. While stressing the importance of direct participation of electors, they may not even respect necessary democratic procedures, such as the democratic requirements to vote, the absence of real contenders to the leader, limited transparency of the results. Usually, topics are chosen by above and other kinds of direct participation of the electors, such as within legislative procedures, are dispersive and inefficient, suggesting that the main aim is to provide an illusion sense of participation rather than an effective one (Dalla Porta, et al., 2017).

As Inglehart and Norris (2019) argue, there is a conjunction between populism and authoritarianism. Indeed, since populism undermines the legitimacy of liberal-democratic institutions and, thus implicitly, the mechanism of checks and balances on the executive power, it opens doors to the advent of authoritarian leaders. However, that conjunction is contingent, since "*populist discourse [...] can be endorsed by all sorts of actors located on both the economic right and left*"<sup>95</sup>

In this chapter, I have discussed how post-material values have impacted on political systems and how they contributed to develop new political actors and transform the existing ones. I have argued that left-libertarian and environmental parties were the first movements bringing post-material issues at the political stage and expressing new cultural grievances from the electorate, representing, thus, a novelty among contemporary European politics. In the second section I have argued the transformational path experienced by traditional socialist parties, leading them to embrace economic liberalism, in the field of political economy, and left-libertarian values for what concerns cultural issues. This political realignment had several negative consequences, as they were electorally punished in several countries after the outbreak of the crisis and brought them to reconsider their recent development. In the last section, I have presented the unwanted child of New Politics, which is the Authoritarian Populist challenge, and described its features.

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<sup>94</sup> Id., p. 67

<sup>95</sup> Id., p. 217

## Chapter 3

In this final chapter, I will focus on the core of the thesis. In the first section, I will first discuss the new cleavages in Western political systems and, then, how the electorate groups have changed their features and self-repositioned in front of these political changes; in particular, I will deal about the new electoral strata, that consist of winners and losers of globalization. Instead, in the last two sections. I will provide some empirical evidence of how new cleavages reshaped the political competition in France and Italy.

### 3.1 The new cleavage in Western political systems and how the electorate self-repositioned

*What is the proverb? The old is dead, but the young is not born!*  
*A Sportsman's sketches, Ivan Sergeevič Turgenev*

As I have written in Chapter 1.2, there is a widespread consensus among academia researches that new cleavages have emerged in Western political systems. As I have argued in Chapter 1, the rise of these new cleavages is linked both to new historical phenomena (amongst the others, globalization and its economic and political consequences) and to sociological changes (the *Silent Revolution*). However, there is not an equal consensus over the extent and the natures of these new cleavages. What are the new divisions of these new cleavages? Which are the new axes? The length and scope of this thesis do not allow me to present all the models in detail. I will confine myself to expose Hanspeter Kriesi's model (Kriesi, et al., 2006), on which there is a greater consensus among political sociologists, and three other models developed in the wake of Kriesi's one.

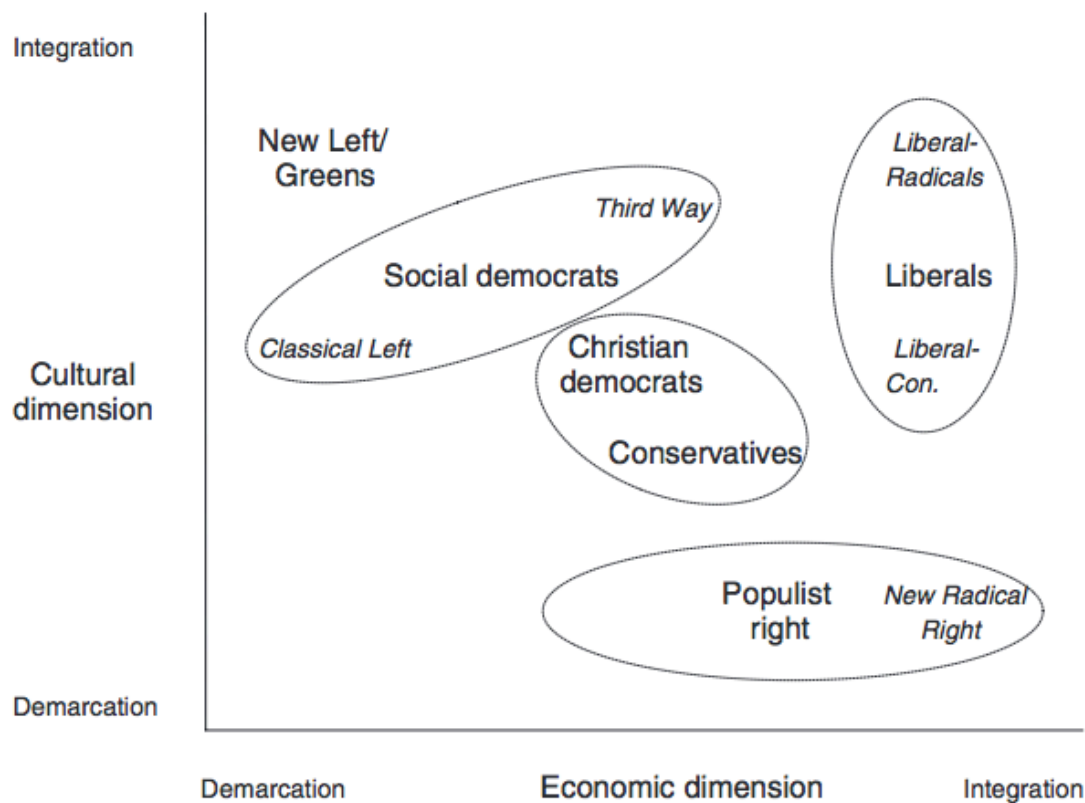
Kriesi et al. (2006) argued that globalization processes had created a new cleavage between *integration* and *demarcation*. In particular, this new cleavage emerged from a trend of politicization where globalization issues have increasingly become more salient (Teney, et al., 2014). It expresses the divisions between new political potentials, which are the so-called winners and losers of the globalization and manifests itself, perhaps paradoxically, at the national level, as the “*lowering and the unbundling of national boundaries (resulting from the globalization processes)*<sup>96</sup> *render them politically more salient*”<sup>97</sup>. This new cleavage has two dimensions – economic and cultural – and they are both expressions, yet modified, of two previous cleavages: the class cleavage and the religious cleavage. That would confirm the “path dependence” of cleavage structures evolution.

However, the new economic dimension concerns now the role of State within the economy. Pro-State partisans

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<sup>96</sup> Added by the author

<sup>97</sup> Quoted by Kriesi et al., 2006



*Figure 3*  
*Political space and position of political parties*  
*From Kriesi et al. (2006)*

support a defensive and protection economic approach in world trade, while pro-market ones stress the importance of open economies in order to enhance national competitiveness in the world market (Kriesi, et al., 2006).

On the other side, the cultural dimension is no more about religion divisions (between Protestant and Catholics in mixed countries) or the relationship between State and Religion (in Catholic and Protestant countries). Instead, the new cultural cleavage, as a result of post-materialism, has as objects of divisions liberalism and libertarianism, as if it were a secularized religion. On one extreme of this division (which would correspond to libertarian movements), there are social liberals and new social movements. On the other side, there are social conservators, who defend national tradition on an ethnic and nationalistic base (Kriesi, et al., 2006). The latter dimension finds its expression especially on immigration policies.

Figure 3, developed by Kriesi et al. (2006), shows the new political space resulting from the new cleavage and the positions of political parties on it. At first sight, it is possible to make three observations. First, New Left and left-libertarian movements and Authoritarian right parties are at the opposite extremes, thus confirming Flanagan's assumptions<sup>98</sup> about the features of New Politics. Second, there is a vacuum in the graph

<sup>98</sup> See Chapter 1.1

corresponding to cultural and economic demarcation. As, in politics, there is no vacuum, that would suggest that there has not a politically and statistically relevant electorate, which is both economically and culturally closed, yet. Third, the three extremes (New Left, Authoritarian Right and Liberal-Radical) draw a triangle that encompasses the relevant political space and includes mainstream parties, leading to a tripolar political system. However, I should mind that there would be that “triangle” only in a hypothetical case where cultural and economic dimensions were *equally* salient. Otherwise, the political conflict would follow just one of the two dimensions, with the other one “overlapping” it (Henjak, 2010).

As Figure 3 suggests, main-stream political parties converged on moderately pro-integration positions, as they tend to view “*the process of economic denationalization both as inevitable and beneficial for the maintenance of their established positions*”<sup>99</sup>. Hence, they tend to defend a program in favor of further economic and cultural integration (Kriesi, et al., 2006). However, there is not a general agreement about those political developments within mainstream parties.

First, traditional left-wing parties may face the dilemma that economic integration to markets represents a menace for their welfare achievements, and they may differ on the extent to which they support and endorse economic integration. As I have written in Chapter 2.2, that internal divisions involved classic leftism (more in favor to a statist and pro-welfare position) and the Third Way, that has, instead, a more positive attitude towards globalization and, in general, neo-liberalism (Kriesi, et al., 2006).

Second, traditional right-wing parties face the opposite dilemma. While endorsing economic liberalization and opening to international markets, they vary along the cultural dimension, being more or less opposed to cultural integration (Kriesi, et al., 2006).

Third, traditional liberal parties seemed to be less concerned with economic and cultural integrations. However, there is some divergence within them as well. On one side, liberal-radicals are more prone to support economic and cultural integrations with a left-wing concern; on the other one, liberal-conservatives emphasize more market liberalization, with opposition to cultural and supranationally political integrations (Kriesi, et al., 2006).

New Left and Authoritarian Right Extremists, despite placed at the opposite vertexes of the political spectrum, share some peculiarities. First, they both own an extreme demarcation attitude, either economic (New Left and left-libertarian movement) or cultural (New Right). Second, they both appeal to the so-called losers of globalization, yet in different manners. Left-libertarians and the Radical Left challenge globalization as it undermines the national achievements in social service and brings severe economic consequences for the losers (such as de-industrialization and economic depression of peripheral regions). In turn, authoritarian right contrasts globalization as it introduces new forms of social and cultural competition and threatens national identity (Kriesi, et al., 2006). Third, as a consequence of the previous statement, both the extremes tend to be Eurosceptic, as the European integration embodies the consequences feared by them. Concerning their

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<sup>99</sup> Kriesi et al. 2006, p. 926

Euroscepticism, Taggart<sup>100</sup> argued that Euroscepticism has the form of an “inverted U curve”, with the least support for European integration placed at the extreme of the left-right axis.

Kriesi et al. (2006) argued the winning formula for appealing the so-called losers of globalization is led with higher success by authoritarian right parties, as they have mixed cultural demarcation with (more or less) economic neoliberalism<sup>101</sup>. That statement should not surprise: throughout Chapter 2.3, I have argued that the *Cultural Backlash* is, above all, a cultural phenomenon. Despite, as I will argue below, economic factors have some roles in explaining losers’ support to authoritarian right, losers’ cultural fears are more important and mobilizing than concerns for economic defense. In short, cultural appeal for defending the national identity and national community against threats (immigration, threats to traditional families, cosmopolitanism, drug liberalization) constitutes the smallest denominator for their mobilization (Kitschelt, 1994). Moreover, collective mobilization assumes vast importance, as, contrary to the winners, losers of globalization “*do not have individual exit options at their disposal*”<sup>102</sup>. Once again, cultural issues are, thus, more salient than economic ones. That is a general trend affecting Western political systems. The only exceptions to this general rule are those countries most hit by the crisis and where the crisis left harsher consequences (Spain, Greece and Southern Italy), where leftist movements prevailed, and authoritarian right parties did not emerge as strongly as the previous ones. In Greece, the success held by Golden Dawn (Authoritarian right) is not comparable to that of SYRIZA (populist left-libertarians). In Spain, only recently an authoritarian right party emerged (Vox), but its rise intercepted an already existing and acknowledged segment of the Popular Party electorate, nostalgic of the Francoism. Once again, its success is not comparable to that of Podemos. In Italy, the League (authoritarian right) has not as much electoral support as the Five Stars Movement (M5S) in Southern, least developed regions; vice versa, the M5S has lower appeal in Northern, wealthier regions, where cultural threats and concerns against immigration are more salient than economic issues. However, as we will see, they are exceptions to the general rule, dictated from particular national situations.

Other scholars, relying on Kriesi’s model, contributed to developing similar theories.

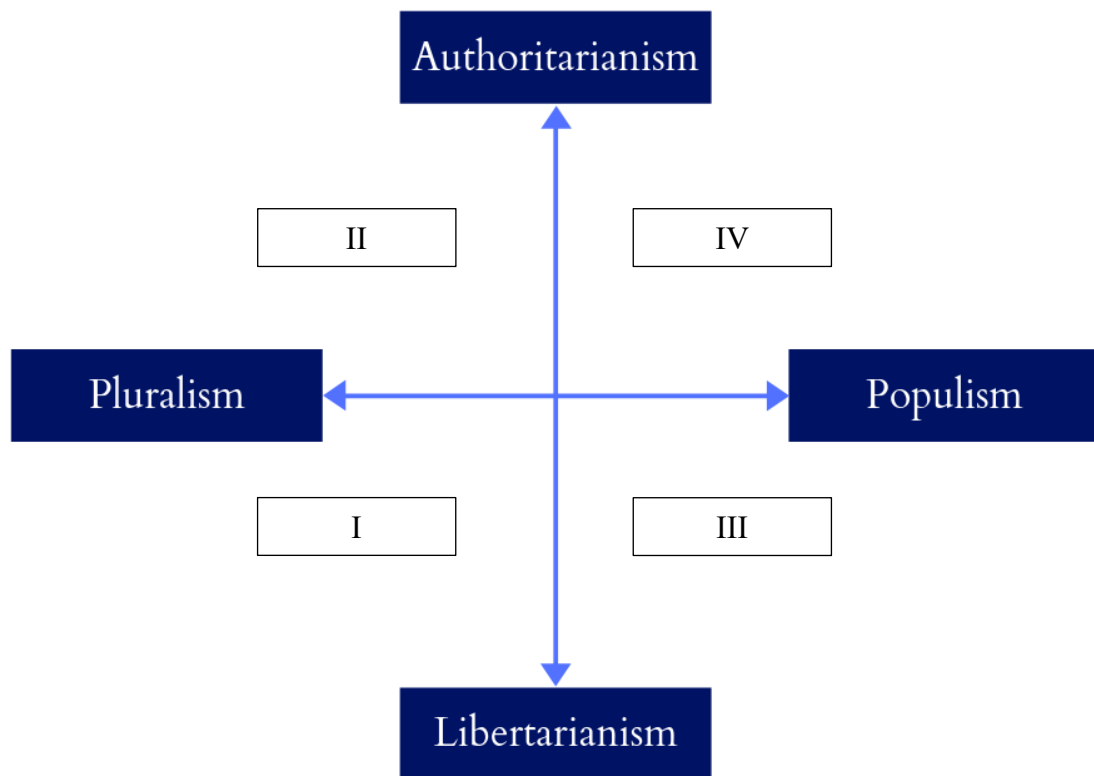
Inglehart & Norris (2019) argued that the traditional one-dimensional left-right cleavage, which concerns the role of the State and markets in (inter)national economies, is no more sufficient to explain political competitions over many other party positions. As Kriesi, they argued that political competition is based on two political cleavages – cultural and economic. The cultural cleavage has authoritarianism and libertarianism as extremes. Instead, along the economic cleavage, traditional left (thus, state management of the economy, redistributive measures, welfare, and social policies) contrasts traditional right (a minimal role for the State,

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<sup>100</sup> Quoted by Kriesi et al. 2006

<sup>101</sup> However, on economic affairs authoritarian right populists lack consistency and unanimity. On international trade, some authoritarian leaders support protectionist measures (Trump), while some others have more open positions. On economic policies, they general support neoliberal measures (Trump with tax cuts for corporations, Matteo Salvini for the Flat Tax). They even differ for relations with supranational, economic institutions. While, for instance, Salvini pushes to break with the economic and financial constraints imposed by European Treaties, Kurz instead claim for their respect. Thus, their position on economic affairs seems contingent and dictated by the moods of the electorate rather than by a clear and consistent economic strategy and it is absolutely secondary to their socio-cultural proposals.

<sup>102</sup> Kriesi et al. 2006, p. 929



*Figure 4*  
*Authoritarianism – Libertarianism and Pluralism – Populism cleavages model*  
*From Inglehart & Norris (2019)*

deregulation, international trade and low taxation). Besides, Inglehart and Norris (2019) add a third, further cleavage, that is populism vs. pluralism, that they place on a distinct dimension. While the economic (left vs. right) and cultural (authoritarianism vs. libertarianism) are content-based - that means that they involve ideological conflict between parties on issues – populism vs. pluralism cleavage concerns governance. That latter cleavage derives from different beliefs about where governors’ institutional legitimacy flows from and how public decision-making processes should be taken.

As I have argued in Chapter 2.3, populism emphasizes *vox populi* and the unconstrained majority of the people as the primary foundation for institutional legitimacy to which elected representatives *must* conform, regardless of minority rights and constitutional warranties. Instead, pluralism advocates the liberal-democratic division of powers and defends a decision-making model delegated to elected officials.

That latter cleavage stems out from any ideological positioning from the other two cleavages. As I have written in Chapter 2.3, Inglehart & Norris (2019) argued that any conjunction between populism or pluralism and the other two cleavages is contingent. Moreover, I should also note that populism-pluralism cleavage, as it regards governance and concerns a rhetorical scheme, allows parties, at least theoretically, to change their campaign

tone. While it is commonly thought that political parties are not flexible (Hooghe & Marks, 2018), populism-pluralism cleavage transcend this latter general rule.

Moreover, Inglehart & Norris (2019) developed a graph (Figure 4) that relates the populist – pluralist cleavage with the authoritarian–libertarian one. While that graph does not include the economic cleavage, it helps to frame the development of political systems and reveals a clear separation between traditional Western European parties with alternative and newly formed ones. According to them, parties from traditional blocks (social-democrats, conservators, liberals), whatever their cultural values, tend to be pluralist, while extremist parties, which represent more recent political positions, are more likely to be populist. The only exception might be represented by left-libertarian and Green parties, which are pluralist as well.

According to Inglehart & Norris (2019), among the libertarian-pluralists (panel I from Figure 4) there are liberals, social-democrats, and Green parties. Indeed, they all share a liberal consensus and endorse multilateral cooperation in international affairs. On the cultural dimension, they advocate socially liberal positions, *“reflecting the expansion of personal freedoms and individual rights on moral issues, tolerance and pluralistic diversity, supported by liberal democratic institutions and norms of governance”*<sup>103</sup>. Equally, among the authoritarian-pluralists (panel II), there are conservative parties. While possessing weaker or no emphasis at all for populist appeals, those parties promote social conservatism and, to a certain extent, identity politics and have negative attitudes toward asylum laws, multiculturalism, and immigration. On the international sphere, they support closer ties with NATO and military engagement abroad, as well as environmental protection (Inglehart & Norris, 2019). In the other side, for what concerns libertarian-populists (panel IV), they promote socially liberal attitudes with anti-capitalist appeals in favor of social justice and end to austerity cuts. They also advocated newer forms of participation for local communities (Inglehart & Norris, 2019). Finally, I would not dwell about authoritarian-populists (panel III), as they have been the object of Section 2.3.

Hooghe & Marks (2018) agreed with Kriesi about the existence of a transnational, integration - demarcation cleavage. In particular, they argued that authoritarian–populist parties and left-libertarian ones contributed to form it and gave transnational issues much greater salience than traditional mainstream parties. However, according to them, previously salient cleavages (class, territory, and religion) are still present, though weakened, and have affected the response to the new transnational cleavage. In particular, they argue that there are in Europe three primary, different expressions of the transnational cleavage, reflecting *“the contrasting effects and differential timing of the economic and migration crisis in the different regions of Europe which play out in the context of prior cleavages”*<sup>104</sup>. In Southern Europe, radical left parties have mobilized on class divides, as it has been the case for Greece, Spain, Portugal and, partially, Italy. In Eastern Europe, the radical right has catalyzed the transnational cleavage, while radical left, due to the Communist past shared by those countries, was “naturally” prevented to collect electoral success. Finally, in Central and Northern Europe,

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<sup>103</sup> Inglehart & Norris (2019), p. 242

<sup>104</sup> Hooghe & Marks (2018), p. 127



radical right parties have collected consensus by emphasizing the cultural dimension, with left-libertarian and Green parties focusing on distributional issues (Hooghe & Marks, 2018).

Finally, Henjak (2010), relying on Kriesi's model of the demarcation-integration cleavage, argued that either the cultural or the economic dimension prevails, and the predominance lies in "*interactions between welfare regime characteristics and the historical strength of both religious (and other communitarian) divides and political divisions related to redistribution and welfare state formation*"<sup>105</sup>. In short, Henjak believes that previous cleavages' salience and the sort of welfare regimes shape transnational cleavage patterns. As well as Hooghe & Mark (2018), he identifies three different configurations.

The first configuration concerns liberal-welfare regimes and finds Great Britain as a unique case in Europe. According to Henjak, these countries pose higher salience on economic issues than on cultural ones. Thus, in those countries, the new transnational cleavage divides mainstream left-wing and right-wing parties, with the former ones supporting redistributive-protectionist positions and the latter ones market-liberalizing positions. As the cultural dimension is tightly linked and depends on the economic one, the division opposes restrictions on immigration and greater cultural homogeneity (supported by New Right parties) to open society and libertarian multiculturalism (supported by the New Left) (Henjak, 2010). Remarkably, these patterns of transnational cleavage were confirmed by empirical evidence from the Brexit results.

The second configuration concerns social-democratic welfare regimes that are Scandinavian countries. In these countries, the economic dimension is dominant, as well as in the first configuration, but the cultural dimension is nonetheless significantly prominent. The tension between winners and losers of globalization is low, as generous welfare programs prevent the emergence of outsiders. In turn, cultural issues, such as cultural homogeneity, environmental protection, and nuclear energy, have gained much more salience, due to the rise of new, post-material values. Within the cultural dimension, left-libertarian positions were advocated by public sector employees and part of the professional middle class, whereas the low bourgeoisie and the working class hold radical right values (Henjak, 2010). However, cultural divisions do not mirror the economic ones. Indeed, support for liberalization and market-oriented solutions are held by high-income groups and the professional middle class. On the other side, public sector employees and low-skilled workers endorse protectionist measures, envisaging to defend the general concessions of the welfare regimes (Henjak, 2010).

Finally, the third configuration regards Christian-democratic welfare regimes (amongst the others, Austria, Germany, Italy, Belgium, and the Netherlands). In these latter countries, the cultural dimension has traditionally been much more salient than the economic one, as, in post-war period, Christian-democrat parties converged with socialist ones in order to create "*a social security system based on providing insurance against risks and income support to families, while opposing any significant government intervention in the economy and service provision*"<sup>106</sup>. Due to that convergence, the economic cleavage lost its competitiveness in the political system (Henjak, 2010). Therefore, the transnational cleavage has been declined in cultural terms,

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<sup>105</sup> Henjak (2010), p. 478.

<sup>106</sup> Id., p. 482

in two fundamental ways. First, there is a conflict between “*traditionalists, willing to preserve gender division of labor, traditional morality and cultural homogeneities of societies, and modernizers [...], wanting to make society more open, respectful of individual freedoms and supportive of changing women’s role*”<sup>107</sup>. In this regard, dissension over alternative lifestyle raised the role of Christian morality and individual freedom in the definition of fundamental rights (Henjak, 2010). Second, there is a division over the definition of community, opposing multiculturalism to ethnocentrism, intended, in turn, both in cultural (cultural homogeneity within the society) and welfare (immigrants’ accession to social service) meanings. In this latter configuration, the economic dimension tends to be aligned with the cultural predominance of the cleavage.

### 3.2 Cleavage’s electorate: winners and losers

*All the lonely people / Where do they all come from?*

*All the lonely people / Where do they all belong?*

*Eleanor Rigby, The Beatles*

Throughout the thesis, I have referred several times to the so-called winners and losers of the globalization as the new voting blocks underpinning the integration – demarcation cleavage, without any further description of their internal structure. I will remedy that gap in this section.

In the past, any study about political cleavage was, either implicitly or explicitly, aware of the social groups which constituted it. The notion itself of social cleavage, as provided Chapter 1.2, is founded upon social divisions, which separate societies in two or more contrasting social groups. For instance, class cleavage involved working classes contrasting entrepreneurs; equally, religious cleavages entailed Protestants and Catholics. For what concerns integration – demarcation cleavage, the two social groups are, broadly, winners and losers of globalization and they differ in both (cultural) identity and (economic) interests (Teney, et al., 2014). This section aims, thus, to study them and to understand who they were before. As it would be unreasonable to expect a sudden demographic replacement, I would, instead, presume that there are social trends, resulting from broader social phenomena, which guide the transition from previous electoral groups to existing ones. These social trends are, necessarily, of dramatic importance for understanding new cleavage’s features.

The so-called losers of globalization encompass a range of distinct social groups who have found personal condition somehow worsened by globalization’s phenomena and who constitute the electoral blocks for those parties having a losers’ program (for instance, as we have seen, Authoritarian – populist ones). The losers’ side thus includes low-skilled production workers, small entrepreneurs, artisans, farmers, and low-rank management employees. All those categories have experienced a contraction of jobs, raised unemployment,

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<sup>107</sup> Id.

lower salaries, job insecurity and rising income inequality due to increased globalized economic competition and unfavorable development conditions, without having the capability to reconvert their professional profile and to re-enter into the labor market (Kapstein, 2000). For example, low-skilled production workers feel threatened by de-industrialization dynamics, as a result of delocalization and automation of production processes.

These categories account for the losers' side also because they have a low education profile, which does not let them benefit from the openings of the (economic borders) (Teney, et al., 2014). However, I should note that what matters is the *subjective* level of deprivation (Inglehart & Norris, 2019) (Teney, et al., 2014). While relying on objective economic and demographic data, losers of globalization are such because they *perceive* globalization as a threat. They contrast globalization because they fear their condition worsened.

However, as I have argued in previous Chapters, globalization is an economic phenomenon too, as well as the backlash is foremost a cultural phenomenon. Equally, losers of globalization are as such also for cultural losses. Thus, they perceived to be part of a national community, with its exclusionary norms and political institutions (Teney, et al., 2014). Their contrast to immigration is above all due to their fear of losing their national identity. What the winners of globalization advertise for integration and multiculturalism, they consider that as cultural substitution and eclipse of their traditions.

Moreover, cultural motifs are the *trait d'union* of the losers. While, despite deprived by globalization, they do not share common economic concerns, they all converge on non-economic issues. As Oesch (2008) noted, production and service workers are more worried by immigration for their impact on national culture than on the national economy and national welfare system. Equally, Iversflaten (2005) argued that losers of globalization are most divided on issues along the economic dimension. However, economic divides are overcome as they converge “*on position issues that cut across the economic left-right spectrum – the punishment of crimes, the restriction of immigration and asylum, and limiting the reach of the European Union*”<sup>108</sup>.

Losers of globalization started to emerge in the last twenty year when neo-liberal policies in favor of globalization were first enacted. On the cultural side, they are enrooted on the reaction against post-material values about which I have talked in Chapter 1.1 and which are the driving engine of this thesis. After all, left post-material values, resulting from the *Silent Revolution*, emphasize freedom, social liberalism; they went beyond the concept of nations, they inspired multiculturalism, racial equality, civil rights. In Chapter 2.3, I have, moreover, argued that the reaction against post-material values manifested itself in the guise of the *Cultural Backlash*. Thus, losers of globalization draw strength from that and they embodied its values. Once again, we find a close relationship between post-materialism and economic globalization, thus suggesting that, though not being two sides of the same coin, they are intertwined.

Guilluy's judgment (2019) about the losers of globalization is slashing and critical against the dominant class. According to him, losers of globalization are not but what remained of the conscientious destruction of the

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<sup>108</sup> Iversflaten 2005, p. 489

middle class by the élites. Moreover, he argues that the several categories of the losers, ruined by globalization, were considered as *marginal* scapegoats for economic liberalism and globalization. Thus, accordingly, workers and farmers have become residuals of the previous economic model; low-management employees have been unable to adapt to the new requests of the digital age; young people from lower strata have not managed to get the necessary, qualified skills for the new economy. They were all marginal, but “*summing up all these marginals it comes out a comprehensive set: that of the old Western middle class*”<sup>109</sup>.

Moreover, Guilluy (2019) there is an increasing trend of distancing between metropolises and the losers. As he said, “*for the first time in Western economic history, low wages groups do not reside in those places where jobs and wealth are created and, even more important, they cannot anymore afford to live there*”<sup>110</sup>. They are therefore confined to live in the deindustrialized backcountry, condemned to economic stagnation and job insecurity and renouncing to the pillar value of globalization, that is mobility, and to its related opportunities. On the other side, metropolises are being characterized gentrification: they attract high-skilled employees, managers, professionals, throwing out workers, and low-skilled employees. To quote the French case, in Paris 27,9 % of total workers in 2011 were executive cadres, while, for instance, in Toulouse 24,5%. Instead, workers population has fallen from 25% (1968) to 8% (2006) (Guilluy, 2015). Similar processes are taking place in other European cities, such as London, Milan, and Barcelona. In the meanwhile, cities’ peripheries are facing increased immigrant population, in conditions of high unemployment, poverty, and social hardship (Guilluy, 2015). However, what characterizes the most urban peripheries is their extremely high residential mobility. In France, the mobility rate of the *banlieues* was the highest in the country – 64% (Guilluy, 2015). Thus, the population of those neighborhoods benefits the most from the Welfare State (as they are the most deprived categories) and the risk of losing a job is outweighed by the possibility of finding one another in a short time. Thus, metropolises are based on a paradox: they are the unequal territories, but, in the meanwhile, those who perform the most both economically and socially, due to high mobility from the top (higher classes) and the bottom (immigrant groups).

There is, therefore, a geographical aspect of the transnational cleavage, which sees opposed the center against the periphery. However, this is not a geographical cleavage, as the center–periphery one developed by Lipset & Rokkan (1967). Guilluy argued that his analysis does not come from the localization of the losers, but, instead, from the distribution of different social categories (Guilluy, 2019). The fact that losers are experiencing a distancing trend from cities does not add anything that is to the economic and cultural dimensions of the integration – demarcation cleavage. Therefore, I would add that the geographical dimension is not a dimension of the cleavage, but rather a consequence of it.

The country’s periphery, instead, attracts what remains of the lower middle class (administrative employees, qualified workers, technicians) “*that are willing to access to house property, who are moving away from city-centers and the most active employment zones*”<sup>111</sup>. These citizens share social fragility, have financial

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<sup>109</sup> Personal translation from Guilluy 2019, p. 33

<sup>110</sup> Id., p. 17

<sup>111</sup> Free translation from Guilluy 2015, p. 59

problems (for instance, difficulty to repay the mortgage and the necessity of owning two cars) and tend to be (over)indebted.

Winners of globalization are, instead, those who benefit from globalization and see opportunities in the opening of borders (Teney, et al., 2014). They are, in general, students, self-employed professionals, entrepreneurs, public employees, middle and high-rank management and socio-cultural professionals. Winners of globalization tend to have higher Socio-economic status and to live in urban environments.

On the economic side, they see globalization as a great opportunity for their academic and professional careers and their salary perspectives (Teney, et al., 2014). For them, globalization means to move to other countries for work, to export their products or to save money through imported components. Equally, globalization allows students to take part in academic exchanges and to learn easily foreign languages, in order to improve their cv. Thus, in contrast to the subjective insecurity which characterizes the losers, they are instead subjectively optimistic about future, further integration.

On the cultural side, they tend to identify more with supra-national communities than with regional or national ones and to rely on cosmopolitanism, in contrast to losers' communitarianism (Teney, et al., 2014). Besides, their cosmopolitan disposition egresses from a combination of individualism and universalism and comes in two different strands – legal and moral (Pogge, 1992)<sup>112</sup>. Legal cosmopolitanism “*refers to the commitment to an institutionalized global order of the rule of law and justice*”<sup>113</sup>. Thus, winners of globalization support international and supranational institutions, as guarantees for the stability of the international law and order and the further integration of national stakeholders within the globalized international realm. On the other side, “*moral cosmopolitanism requires the respect of every human being's status as ultimate units of moral concern*”<sup>114</sup>. Therefore, winners advocate tolerance toward immigrants, if only for the respect of their human rights and for granting them the possibility to reside where they wish.

Flanagan and Lee (2003) took a portrait of the winners too. According to them, winners focus on the pursuit of personal self-realization, even at the cost of breaking with the constraints of traditional morality and social norms. Moreover, “*they live in nations where the opportunities for the realization of the goals are at an all-time high*”<sup>115</sup>. As such, they highly value the educational system as the mean through which they can achieve their goals, and that is confirmed by the fact that winners have, on average, a higher educational level than the losers.

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<sup>112</sup> Quoted by Teney et al. 2014.

<sup>113</sup> Teney et al. 2014, p. 580

<sup>114</sup> Id.

<sup>115</sup> Flanagan & Lee 2003, p. 243

### 3.3 The transnational cleavage in France: evidence from 2017 Presidential elections

French political system has profoundly changed since the last Presidential Elections held in 2017, which saw the rise of Emmanuel Macron as new President of the Republic. In those elections, the traditional parties who had dominated French politics since the end of World War II, the UMP – Les Républicains (center-right) and the Socialist Party (center-left), were both excluded from the second round and collected, together, only 26,37% of the votes<sup>116</sup>, less than they each collected in previous 2012 elections. In particular, it is remarkable the collapse of the Socialist Party, the party of the incumbent President François Hollande. While Hollande collected 28,63% of votes in the first round in 2012 elections, in 2017 elections the Socialist Party candidate, Benoit Hamon, did not go beyond the 6,36% of votes.

On the second round, the two candidates were Emmanuel Macron (En Marche!) and Marine Le Pen (Front National). The results provided Macron a landslide victory over Le Pen, as he collected 66,1 % of votes against the 33,9 % of his opponent<sup>117</sup>. Part of this great victory is due to the so-called *front républicain*, which is the willingness of French voters to keep the radical right out of power (Gougou & Persico, 2017). The contribution of the *front républicain* for the victory of Emmanuel Macron becomes more evident if comparing the results of the second round with those of the first round, where even four candidates competed for the ballot. In addition to Macron and Le Pen, which were voted, respectively, by the 24,01 % and the 21,3%, François Fillon (UMP – *Les Républicains*, center-right) and Jean-Luc Mélenchon (La France Insoumise, left) arrived both closer to the second place, as they were voted by the 20,01 % and 19,58 % of French electors. While the turnout in ballot decreased from the 75,77 % of the first round to the 65,97 % of the second round<sup>118</sup>, it is reasonable to expect the many voters of Fillon, Mélenchon, and Hamon converged towards Macron in order to prevent Marine Le Pen from winning. Consider, for instance, the case of Paris. In Paris, in the first round, Fillon prevailed in the Western *arrondissements* of the city (the most affluent neighborhoods, that are VI, VII, VIII, XVI, and XVII), Mélenchon in the Eastern ones (those with most labor tradition, that are XIX and XX) and Macron in the remaining ones, with Le Pen below the 5%<sup>119</sup>. In the second round, Macron was voted by the 89,68 % of Parisian electors<sup>120</sup>. Besides, when Marine Le Pen's father, Jean Marie Le Pen, attained the second round in 2002 Presidential elections, the defeat of the FN candidate was even more impressive, as his opponent, the incumbent President Jacques Chirac reached the 82,21 % of votes.

Macron was a new entry into the French political system. Formerly a student at Sciences Po and the ENA, after a short career as a banker at the *Rothschild*, he supported François Holland in 2012 elections and became assistant secretary of the newly elected President in 2012. In August 2015, he became Minister of Economics

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<sup>116</sup> Source: Ministère de l'Intérieur Français

<sup>117</sup> Id.

<sup>118</sup> Id.

<sup>119</sup> Id.

<sup>120</sup> Id.

in Government Valls II for a year, as he resigned in August 2016 when he declared to run for 2017 Presidential elections with a new political movement build around his figure, *En Marche!*<sup>121</sup>. Despite being a member of a Socialist Prime Minister led Government, Emmanuel Macron is generally considered a centrist candidate (Kriesi, 2018) (Gougou & Persico, 2017) (Gil, 2018). As a centrist candidate, he benefited from the victory, in Socialist Party and *Républicains* primary elections, of the most extremist candidates in both parties, respectively Benoit Hamon and François Fillon, who left a electoral centrist block that voted for him at the first round (Kriesi, 2018).

Moreover, he profited also from incumbent President Hollande's refusal of not running in the 2017 Presidential Elections, as well as from the reimbursement scandal of Fillon (Kriesi, 2018). Ideologically, he is pro-globalist and has liberal positions for cultural values, thus standing on the integrationist side. While its positions on immigration might appear as ambiguous, it is genuinely in favor of further economic integration of France in the globalized economy, other than supporting environmental measures (quite iconic its quip "*Make our planet great again*"<sup>122</sup>). Furthermore, he presented himself as a European candidate: he restressed the membership of France within the European Union and proposed a plan for restructuring and for eventually attaining the political Unity of Europe, in a famous speech he pronounced at Sorbonne University<sup>123</sup>. Macron places himself on the liberal groove, with a left-wing concern for social programs but yet in favor of cultural and economic integration. He adopted, thus, a program of the winners of globalization. It should not, thus, surprise that in the second ballot, Macron collected his most significant results in urban environments, who are those most integrated into the economic and cultural culturalism. I have quoted, above, the votes collected by Macron in Paris in the second round. Similar results can be found in other major French cities. Amongst the others, in Lyon he got 84,11 %<sup>124</sup>, in Bordeaux 85,92%<sup>125</sup>, in Toulouse 82,97%<sup>126</sup>, in Nantes 86,52 %<sup>127</sup>.

On the other side, Marine Le Pen, contrary to his opponent, was not a new-entry of politics. Daughter of Jean-Marie Le Pen, the founder of the extreme-right party *Front National* (FN), Marine Le Pen was elected as Member of the Regional Council of Nord – Pas de Calais in 1998. In 2004 she was elected as Member of the European Parliament and, after supporting his father in 2007 Presidential Elections, she was elected leader of FN in 2011. As soon as she started to lead the FN, she renewed the party in order to moderate its political image and to make it politically acceptable in the eyes of the electors. As a result, she started a process of *dédiabolisation*, distancing herself from the unhappy racist, revisionist and anti-Semitic declarations of his father<sup>128</sup> and presenting as a republican, yet populist, alternative, neither of right nor of left (Stockemer, 2017).

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<sup>121</sup> The personalistic nature of the party, which after the Presidential elections would have been renamed *La République en Marche*, is stressed by the fact that the initials of the name of the movement are the same of Emmanuel Macron.

<sup>122</sup> "Emmanuel Macron: Make our planet great again", Le Monde.it, 02-07-2017

<sup>123</sup> "Les principales propositions d'Emmanuel Macron pour relancer le projet européen", Le Monde.it, 26-09-2017

<sup>124</sup> Source: Le Monde

<sup>125</sup> Id.

<sup>126</sup> Id.

<sup>127</sup> Id.

<sup>128</sup> Amongst the other, his father was, unfortunately, widely known for considering the Holocaust as a "*detail of history of the Second World War*" (Stockemer, 2017).

However, as her father, Marine Le Pen supports ethnocentric, authoritarian and anti-immigrant positions and proposes radical measures against immigrants, such as expulsions of illegal immigrants, change in citizenship rights and new strict measures for regulating new immigration (Stockemer, 2017). Equally, she promoted a chauvinistic view of welfare, including “*the elimination of welfare of all pensions for foreigners who have not worked in France for at least ten years, and the suppression of all family benefits if the parents do not have French nationality*”<sup>129</sup>.

Moreover, concerning the differences from her father’s conduct, the FN, under Marine Le Pen’s lead, has become so much personalistic that in the electoral program for 2012 Presidential elections the FN was equated with the name of Marine Le Pen (Stockemer, 2017). She presented herself as “*the personification of change, the beginning of a new chapter in French history*”<sup>130</sup>. Furthermore, she started to directly appeal to lower working classes, who are those feeling most alienated from recent political and economic developments (Stockemer, 2017). Marine Le Pen adopted a program for the losers of globalization, based on two pillars: more purchasing power for those possessing low incomes and pensions and the protection of the French economy through increase national sovereignty (Stockemer, 2017). For what concerned the latter point, she advocated the *Frexit* (a possible exit of France from the EU, mirroring the UK *Brexit*) and the return to the French franc, to allow France to regain control over monetary policies (Stockemer, 2017). Thus, Marine Le Pen appealed to losers’ social groups I described in the previous sections; those who have moved from cities in rural areas, as they could not afford to live in cities or who did not tolerate any more to live in increased multicultural neighborhoods. At the same time, she stands for the demarcation side, both economically and culturally.

It is not by chance that Marine Le Pen’s supporters are by far the most opposed to immigrant access, with 60% of them disagreeing or strongly disagreeing generous judging applications of refugee status<sup>131</sup> and distancing voters of other parties decisively. Only 31% of the electors of the *Les Républicains* share these views, percentages that are even lower for electors of the Socialist Party (11,6%)<sup>132</sup>. After all, immigrants’ huge massive has raised a deep fracture over the collective identity of the country (Guilluy, 2015) and it is not by chance that the most reactionary segment of the electorate supports the FN, which embodies the Cultural Backlash against left-libertarian multi-culturalism.

Equally, it is not by chance that Marine Le Pen collected most consensus in most stagnant departments. As figure 5 suggests, there is a quite strong correlation (0,57) between votes for Le Pen at the second round and the level of unemployment in 2016 (just five months before the elections) in each department. Marine Le Pen, despite largely defeated at the second round (66,1% collected by Macron against the 33,9 collected by Le Pen), managed to overcome Macron in two departments – Aisne (02) and Pas de Calais (62) – where there were two of the highest unemployment levels in the country. Moreover, the political competition was also balanced in

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<sup>129</sup> Stockemer 2017, p. 33

<sup>130</sup> Id., p.32

<sup>131</sup> Source: European Social Survey, 2016

<sup>132</sup> Id.



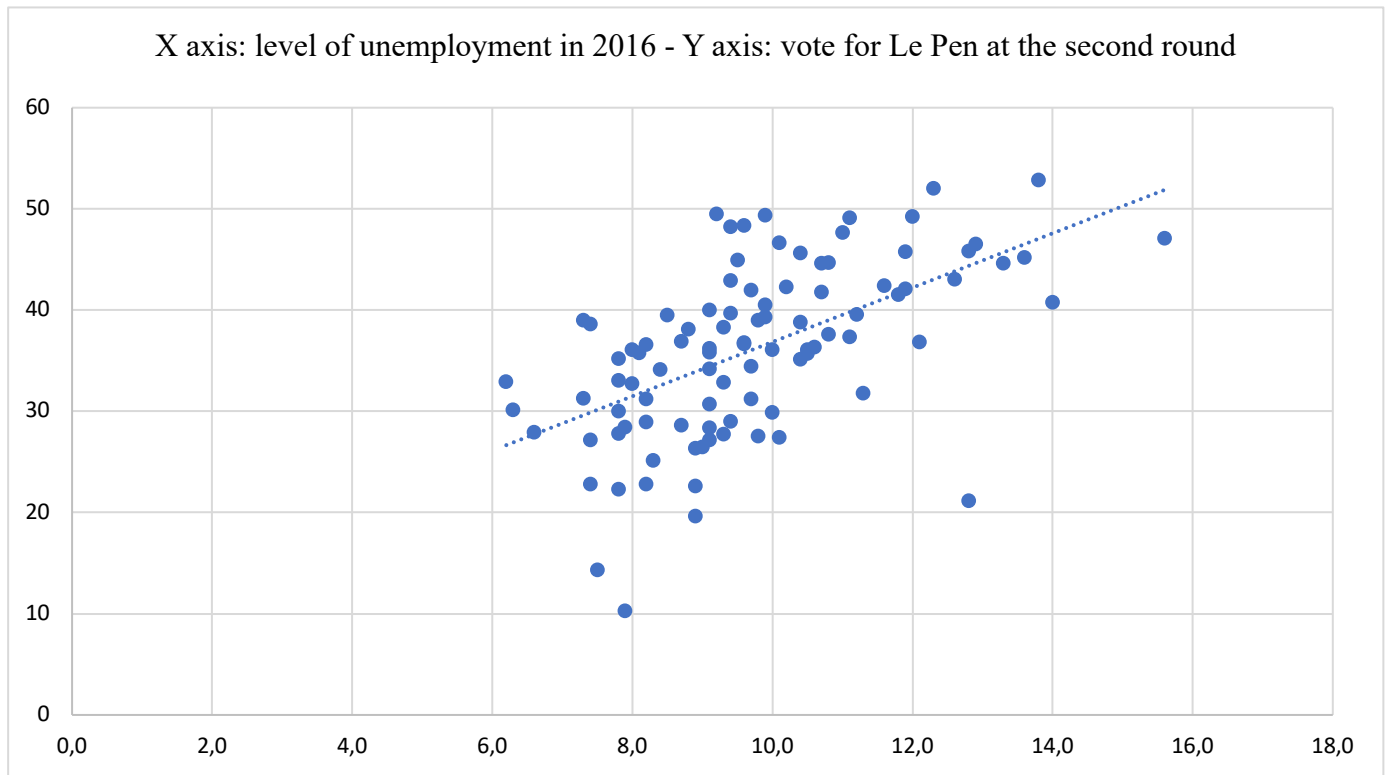


Figure 5

*Vote for Le Pen – level of unemployment in 2016, departments*

*Sources: Ministère de l'Interieur – INSEE*

other departments with high unemployment. In Pyrénées-Orientales (66), where there is the highest unemployment level (15,6%) she reached the 47,14 %, in Gard (30), with a level of unemployment equal to 13,6 %, she reached the 45,25. Similar results can be found in other departments. These electoral outcomes should not be underestimated: we should remind that Le Pen suffered the direct ballot with Macron, due to the reputation for the FN of being an authoritarian party and to the *front républicain*. In these latter departments, the electoral competition with Emmanuel Macron was much more balanced than the national results would suggest.

Furthermore, there is even a higher correlation (0,6) between votes for Le Pen and the level of unemployment in 2011 in each department (figure 6). Picking up that last results with a grain of salt to avoid leaping to conclusions, I would argue that it is in line with the feeling of subjective economic insecurity felt by losers. Besides, losers develop their fear by living in long-lasting economically depressed areas, that have not recovered from the tremendous economic crisis yet. Far from joining the rest of the country in economic growth, those areas were still economically stagnant, marginalized in the process of global integration and ignored by investments.

Moreover, there is also a significant correlation between departments' density and electoral results; in the first round, Macron's percentage of votes was correlated with departments' density by 0,44%, while at the second

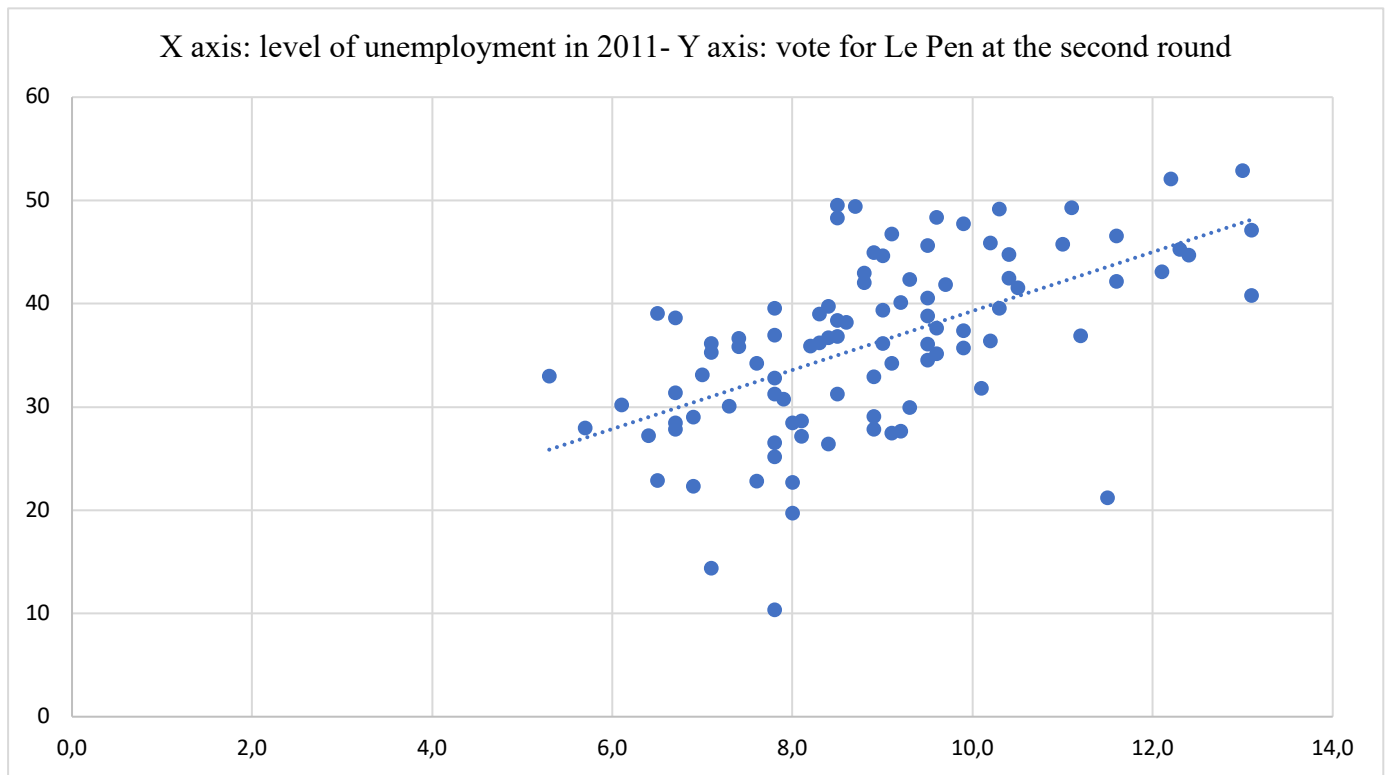


Figure 6

*Vote for Le Pen – level of unemployment in 2011, departments*

*Sources: Ministère de l'Interieur – INSEE*

that values slightly decline to 0,42%<sup>133</sup>. Likewise, Le Pen had similar – yet naturally negative – correlations. At the first round, her percentage was negatively correlated by -0.41, while at the second one by -0,42<sup>134</sup>. These results would confirm Guilluy's suppositions: country's periphery, composed of small towns and villages, are increasingly becoming the catchments of globalization's losers, that coherently support candidates who defend their interests.

On the other side, Marine Le Pen collected few votes in urban peripheries (the *banlieues*), where there is a high percentage of immigrants, primarily from former French African colonies. For instance, in department Seine-Saint-Denis (93), located in the North of Paris and one of the poorest suburbs in France, Macron collected 78,82 of preference, while at the first round Mélenchon prevailed with 34,02 of preferences. These results should not surprise; Le Pen's positions, especially those concerning immigrants, find little support among urban peripheries' populations. Therefore, in the second round, it is reasonable to expect that the cultural dimension was more salient than the economic one. While Le Pen supports a program that pushes for cultural demarcation, metropolitan suburbs preserve their inner multicultural nature and cannot be reduced to a unique, majoritarian national identity.

<sup>133</sup> Sources: INSEE and Ministère de l'Interieur.

<sup>134</sup> Id.

What change did the French political system undertake after the Presidential elections in 2017? Before the elections, political commentators agreed that French politics was essentially tripolar, with three main actors: the Socialist Party (left-wing block), the *Républicains*<sup>135</sup> (moderate right-wing block) and the *Front National* (extreme right block) (Gougou & Persico, 2017). However, since 2007, political commentators noted a growing radicalization of conservative voters on cultural matters, such as on immigration policies and law and order. Moreover, the rise of Emmanuel Macron, the affirmation of the left-candidate Jean-Luc Mélenchon and the tight electoral results of the first round, where all the four candidates could realistically hope to overcome the first round and the gap between Macron and Mélenchon was less than 5 % of votes, contributed to foster the change. At first sight, the political system that came out after the 2017 French Presidential elections is quadripolar. Several commentators argued, however, that French politics has turned towards bipolarism (Kriesi, 2018) or, quoting Duverger, a *quadrille bipolaire*, organized around two poles each composed of two parties (Gougou & Persico, 2017). The resulting bipolar model would be provided two dimensions: economic and cultural (Kriesi, 2018) (Gougou & Persico, 2017). The cultural dimension opposes left-libertarianism and cultural openness (Macron and Mélenchon's electorates) against authoritarianism, social conservatism and anti-immigrant policies (Le Pen's electorate), with Fillon's electorate located between them, yet closer to Le Pen's one. On the economic dimension, the ecologist and interventionist pole (Mélenchon) contrasts the productivist and neoliberal one (Macron and Fillon). Le Pen's position on the economic dimension is quite tricky to locate, as her electorate's position is unclear and controversial (Gougou & Persico, 2017). Some other scholars had already highlighted that the FN electorate was economically divided, notably between blue-collar workers and owners of small businesses (Ivarsflaten, 2005). These economic divisions did not, nevertheless, prevent the formation of a rather compact electoral block, united over (cultural) issues that transcend the economic left-right axis (Ivarsflaten, 2005).

The political system that came out after the Presidential elections of 2017 in France mirrors the model developed by Kriesi et al. 2005. It is evident that the transnational cleavage has penetrated French politics and has completely revolutionized the political asset within the country. In this regard, the second-round ballot assumes an iconic fashion, with the candidates most at the extremes of the new integration-demarcation cleavage competing for winning. However, there are several caveats. The rupture represented by the second round is softened by the tight competition of the first round, where the two candidates of the previous left-right cleavages were excluded for a few percentage points. That would suggest that, while it is emerging a new cleavage as that one described by Kriesi et al. (2005), the transition is more diluted than it might appear. Finally, I would conclude this section with a note for the Socialist Party and its electoral collapse at the Presidential elections, where it performed the worst result of its long-lasting history. Several factors concur in the explanation of its breakdown. First, the unpopularity of the incumbent President François Hollande, that,

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<sup>135</sup> The moderate right wing block undertook several transformations throughout the last twenty years, yet continuously referring to the Gaullist tradition. I designated it with the name with which it competed in Presidential elections in 2017.

at the end of its five-year mandate, did not go beyond the 20%<sup>136</sup>. Second, the Socialist Party candidate, Benoit Hamon, suffered for both Mélenchon and Macron's competition. Indeed, the former one attracted former socialist, lower-class, urban strongholds, while the latter one appealed the former socialist, upper class, the urban electorate (Gougou & Persico, 2017). The sudden rise of Mélenchon's *La France Insoumise* and its capability to subtract most of the former socialist electorate to the Socialist Party made this radical left movement the hidden winner of the elections (Cautrès, 2017)<sup>137</sup>. However, while for many commentators, the results of the *Parti Socialiste* turned out to be a catastrophe at those elections, Guilluy (2014) had already forecasted its fate in 2014. According to him, throughout the XXth century, the Socialist Party became the party of the middle class, "where social mobility was still a reality for lower social classes"<sup>138</sup>. As the inequalities within the middle class would not allow any more to talk about it as an organic, unique class, its split favored both Mélenchon and Macron, as stated above. Therefore, its collapse was not but an inevitable development of the political path it had engaged.

### 3.4 The transnational cleavage after 2018 Italian parliamentary elections

Last Italian parliamentary elections, held in March 2018, provided a new portrait of the Italian political system. Indeed, with respect to 2013 previous parliamentary elections, the main traditional parties - the Democratic Party (PD – center-left) and *Forza Italia* (FI – center-right), led respectively by Matteo Renzi and Silvio Berlusconi - suffered a setback in favor of antisystem, populist parties – the Five-Stars Movement and the (Northern) League, headed respectively by Luigi Di Maio and Matteo Salvini- as Figure 7 suggests.

The political system resulting from the 4<sup>th</sup> of March was still tripolar, as it was the case in 2013, with three main electoral blocks. First, the leftist block, composed of the PD, +*Europa* (left-libertarians) and *Liberi e*

Years	PD	Pdl – FI	Sel – Leu	League	FdI	Sc	M5S	+Europa
2013	25,43	21,56	3,2	4,09	1,96	8,3	25,56	//
2018	18,76	14,00	3,39	17,35	4,35	//	32,68	2,56

Figure 7

*Results of parliamentary elections for the Chamber of Deputies in 2013 and 2018. Votes from Valle d'Aosta and abroad are not included*

*Source: Eligendo – Ministero dell'Interno*

<sup>136</sup> "Hollande quitte l'Élysée avec une popularité qui replonge sous la barre des 20%", HuffingtonPost.fr, Geoffroy Clavel, 04/05/2017

<sup>137</sup> Quoted by Kriesi, 2018

<sup>138</sup> Free translation from Guilluy 2014, p. 85

*Uguali* (LeU, left-wing)<sup>139</sup>. Second, the rightist block, formed by FI, the League (populist-authoritarian right), and *Brothers of Italy* (FdiI, populist-authoritarian right). Third, the M5S (populist), that forms a standing-alone block both for ideological divergence and political choice.

The two main changes brought up by the 2018 elections were the balance of the political forces and the inner equilibria within the center-right. As we can see, the real loser of those elections was the whole left-wing block, as the PD, that supported the three governments of the previous legislature (*Letta I*, *Renzi I* and *Gentiloni I*) together with minor, moderate parties, LeU and *+Europa* collected fewer votes than those forecasted by surveys. The PD got its worst result since its formation, while *+Europa* did not even manage to overcome the electoral threshold of the 3%. On the other side, the M5S confirmed and bettered off the results of the previous elections, while the center-right block collected about 37% of votes.

At the same time, the equilibria within the center-right coalition were profoundly altered, due to the unexpected rise of the League, that quadruplicated the votes of previous elections and took votes from its ally *Forza Italia*. The success of the League paid off the *sovereigntist* shift of the League wanted by his secretary Matteo Salvini, who transformed the party from a populist-autonomist into an authoritarian-populist one, mirroring Le Pen's *Front National*.

Did 2019 parliamentary elections in Italy make the evidence of the presence of the transnational cleavage integration – demarcation within the *Bel Paese*? I will try to provide a comprehensive answer to that question. In the previous section, I have described the case of France, where the presence of the transnational cleavage became evident in the ballot between Macron and Le Pen. If compared with the French case, in the Italian political system the integration – demarcation cleavage is much less evident and, even admitting it, its presence is usually not acknowledged, due to four main differences. First, the center-left traditional party (the PD) still plays a crucial role in Italian politics, despite the unsuccess of last elections. Second, contrary to France, the moderate right-wing party (FI) and the League (authoritarian-populist right) have traditionally been allied and cooperated in several governments (*Berlusconi I, II, III and IV*) until 2011 – when, however, the League was still a populist-autonomist party. Third, the presence of the M5S makes Italian politics very different from the French one, which, instead, lacks a comparable party. I will discuss later in the chapter which are the features of the M5S, that represent a *unicum* among European political systems. Fourth, the most striking geographical contrast does not oppose center and periphery, like in France, but North and South; in this context, latest elections accounted for the reduction, if not disappearance, of the Red Area (consisting of the central regions, that have traditionally, massively voted for leftist parties).

However, there are some hints from the parties' electoral bases that it may eventually emerge the transnational integration – demarcation cleavage.

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<sup>139</sup> The tripolar block is, however, not united. On 2018 parliamentary elections only the PD and *+Europa* decided to run together, while LeU was part of a separated coalition. Nevertheless, I have decided to include all these parties in one block as they partially share ideological points (especially on the cultural side). Moreover, LeU was formed by "spillages" that exited out of the PD between 2015 and 2017, as they dissented with the former PD secretary Matteo Renzi. Thus, it should not be excluded the possibility that they will run together in the future

In this regard, the left-wing coalition (in particular, the PD and *+Europa*, despite recent elections suggest that it is not able to overcome its status of niche party) has been assuming more and more the role of winners' party, in favor of further economic and cultural integration. Indeed, the Democratic Party has collected broad consensus among the electorate's segments who have not economic insecurities neither anxieties and whose occupational status, professional skills, and abilities allowed them to overcome the last decade crisis with relative easiness (Maraffi, 2018). Moreover, the center-left electorate is the most supportive of further European integration<sup>140</sup>, as well as for immigrants' integration<sup>141</sup>. Compared to the results collected on the latest parliamentary elections, its main supporters turned out to be students and retired voters, as well as middle and high management workers (Maraffi, 2018). Furthermore, despite the poor results in the whole country, the PD was the most voted party in major cities of the center-north, such as Florence, Milan, Bologna, and Turin<sup>142</sup>. The label of the center-left coalition as winners' block finds some arguments also looking at the laws passed during the previous legislature, where the PD was the government party. During that five-year term, the Parliament enacted laws concerning "civil unions" for homosexual couples, environmental crimes, gang-master employment, and disabled people assistance<sup>143</sup>.

On the other side, the League seems becoming the reference party for the so-called losers, at least in the center-north. The League resulted as the most voted party among autonomous workers (thus, artisans, small-business owners) and collected a discreet consensus from workers and executive, low-management employees (Maraffi, 2018), who constitute the hard-core of losers' social groups. The party was slightly more voted than the average in small towns (up to 30.000 inhabitants) and resulted as the most voted party in the most affluent and industrial regions in Italy (the North-East) (Maraffi, 2018). In general, it collected most of its consensus in the Center-North (Maraffi, 2018). The appeal of the League, as an authoritarian-populist party, is foremost cultural. Concerns against immigration are considered as the most urgent topic to be addressed by League voters, be them traditional voters or newcomers (Passarelli & Tuorto, 2018). Around 66% of League voters are against immigrants' integration<sup>144</sup> and support no or small further European integration<sup>145</sup>.

Moreover, on the economic side, the electorate's demands are inconsistent, with traditional voters calling for lower taxes, while newcomers request measures against unemployment (Passarelli & Tuorto, 2018). However, as I argued in Chapter 2.3, the economic interests of the several segments that constitute the authoritarian-populist electorate are usually hardly coherent and reconcilable. Moreover, League's appealing to lower classes based predominantly on economic measures would be difficult to prove, as League's main economic proposal is the *flat tax*, that is generally supposed to increase inequality and polarization and to put higher burdens on low and middle-income households (Paulus & Peichl, 2009). However, on the economic side,

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<sup>140</sup> Source: European Social Survey, 2016

<sup>141</sup> Id.

<sup>142</sup> Source: YouTrend

<sup>143</sup> <http://www.senatoripd.it/affari-costituzionali/elenco-leggi-e-decreti-legislativi-approvati-nella-xvii-legislatura-in-ordine-cronologico/>

<sup>144</sup> Source: European Social Survey, 2016

<sup>145</sup> Id.

several party leaders expressed opinions in favor of economic demarcation too. In particular, the League opposed the process of further economic integration within the European Union and expressed a negative opinion about the single currency – the Euro. Moreover, the leader Matteo Salvini, at the beginning of its experience as Minister of Internal Affairs within the Conte government, stated that he would not have ratified the CETA (the free-trade agreement between the EU and Canada)<sup>146</sup>.

How would the above analyses be valid and coherent with the success of the M5S, that turned out to be the most voted party in the country at the latest parliamentary elections (32% of votes)? Its electoral success would prevent to consider it as a mere *third wheel* in the Italian political system, but, instead, as the dominant political player.

The most significant M5S success was collected in Central and Southern regions, where it gathered averagely 40% of votes, with peaks of 50% in some Campania and Sicily districts (Cerruto & Raniolo, 2018). On the other side, in the North, it resulted as the second most voted party (23,7%) behind the League (27,6%) (Cerruto & Raniolo, 2018). These vast discrepancies of about 20% suggest a sharp contrast between the North and the South of the country. In Southern regions, there was hardly a real political competition, as the M5S far prevailed both at the party and at coalition level (Cerruto & Raniolo, 2018). In Northern ones, the political competition was more agonistic, yet the dominant political players were the League and, in general, the Center-right coalition (Emanuele & Vassallo, 2018 ).

The *Five-Stars Movement* won in most-deprived regions, where the economic crisis hit the most, and social fragilities were higher. That did not happen by chance: the M5S committed during the electoral campaign and the previous five-year term of the legislature to reduce economic inequalities through an economic policy proposal known as *citizen income* – a generous unemployment benefit, according to their promises. Such a proposal found much consensus among those electoral segments seeking to reduce economic inequalities (Biorcio & Ceccarini, 2018). Furthermore, there is a robust correlation (0,94) between the rate of unemployment and vote for the M5S at the regional level, as Figure 8 displays. That would suggest that M5S was voted, at the latest parliamentary elections, by those with income hardships and precariousness. However, these two last items are not related to the individual level of income, but with the subjective perception of insecurity (Maraffi, 2018). That recent electoral evidence of M5S' electorate reports how it has changed over time since the foundation of the Movement by Beppe Grillo and Gian Roberto Casaleggio. Indeed, at its beginning, the party found consensus among well-educated employees or self-employed voters, active as white-collars or in small businesses and from medium citizens (between 10.000 and 250.000 inhabitants) from Northern or Red Zone regions (Dalla Porta, et al., 2017). Instead, social groups who most voted the M5S at the latest elections were workers (both qualified or ordinary), employees and unemployed citizens, notably from the South (Maraffi, 2018).

On the other side, precisely the failed recovery of the economy of the South seemed to have condemned the PD to poor results at the latest elections. Indeed, symmetrically to the M5S, there is a strong negative

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<sup>146</sup> “Non ratificheremo il trattato CETA. Altri ci seguiranno”; Maurizio Tropeano, LaStampa.it, 14-06-2018

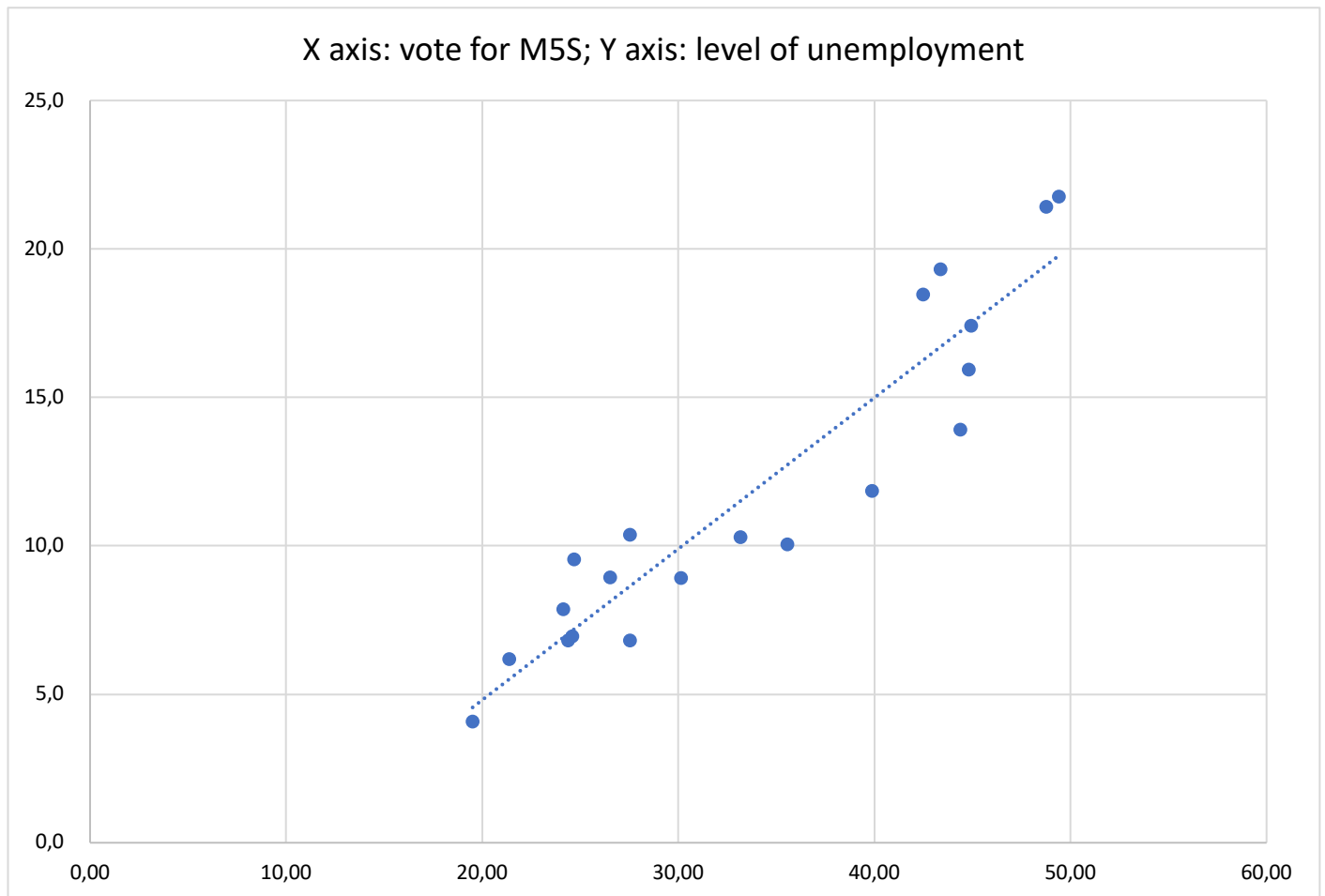


Figure 8  
*Levels of unemployment vote for M5S, regions*  
 Sources: Istat, Ministero dell'Interno

between levels of unemployment and vote for PD, equal to  $-0,72^{147}$ . At the same time, there are other, similar strong correlations between levels of unemployment and results of the League ( $-0,86$ ) and FI ( $0,86$ ). However, I argue that these correlations are spurious: we should bear in mind that the League has traditionally collected poor results in the South, as it was, before Salvini's sovereign shift, a party committed to Northern autonomy (if not secession) and with negative attitudes against Southern regions. Therefore, while Salvini's party overcame FI in the North, in the South traditional predominance -both within and outside the center-right coalition - of Berlusconi's party remained untouched.

Hence, I would argue that, so long the M5S has such a wide success in the Italian political system (especially in Southern regions) without changing its proposals and political image radically, the transnational cleavage integration-demarkation will be hardly visible in the *Bel Paese*. M5S' political perspectives depend mainly on its performances during the Conte government in the currently<sup>148</sup> XVIII Legislature.

Indeed, the *Five-Stars Movement*, since its origins, has always had blurred, unclear ideological positions. Its activists have always refused to self-position on the left or the right and have never conceived the M5S either

<sup>147</sup> Sources: Istat, Ministero dell'Interno

<sup>148</sup> End of May 2019



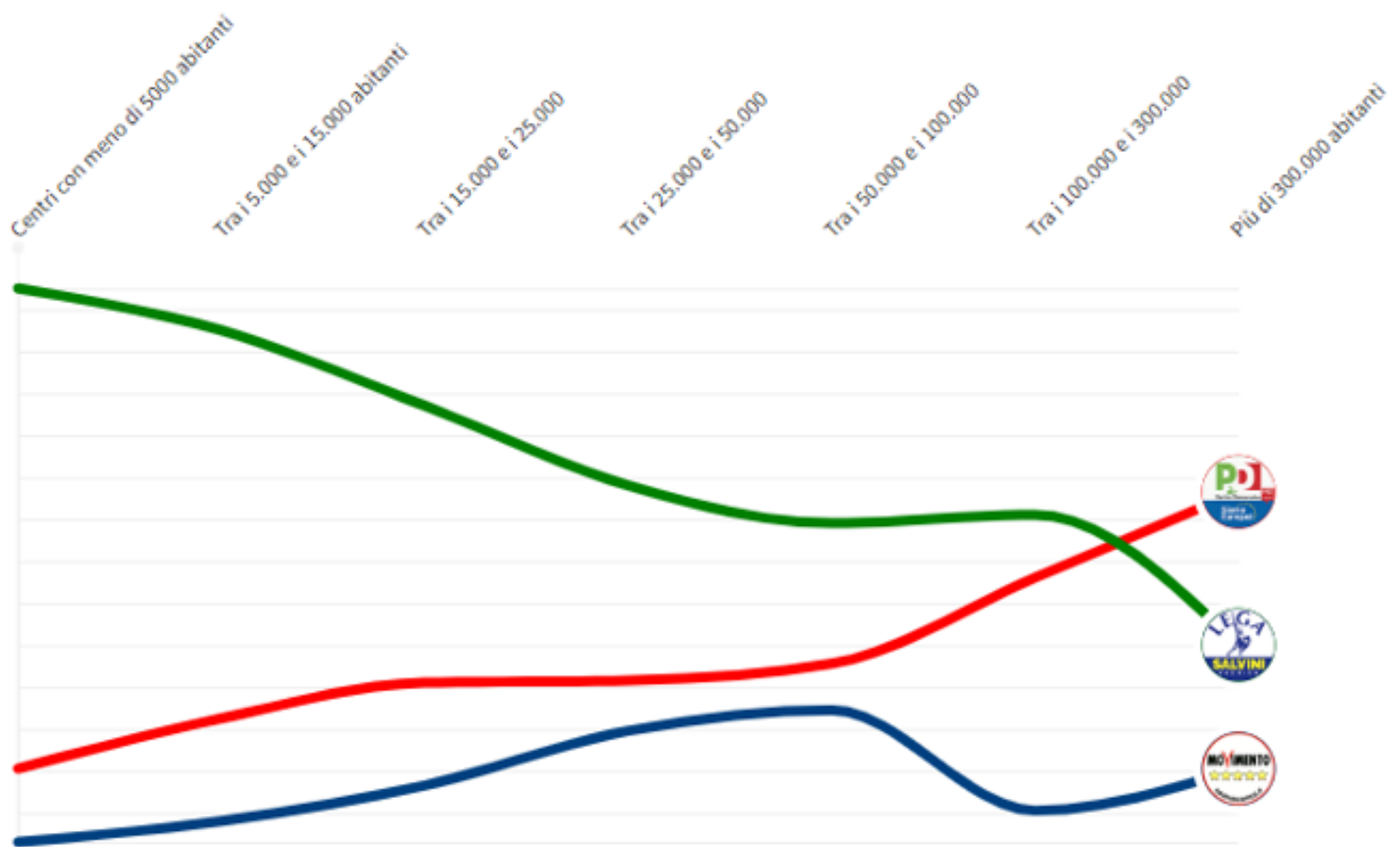


Figure 9

Vote for parties at 2019 European elections per number of residents, towns

Source: Corriere della Sera

as left-wing or as right-wing (Dalla Porta, et al., 2017) (Biorcio & Ceccarini, 2018). That has been an initial strength of the Movement, that managed to attract leftist voters through “*the emphasis on the environment, the pledge for an universal basic income, support for the public health and educational systems*”<sup>149</sup>; as well as rightist voters, through “*proposals to lower taxes on house property, criticism of the Euro, support for small entrepreneurs and a cautious approach towards any opening on immigration policy*”<sup>150</sup>. Likewise, on the integration – demarcation model developed by Kriesi, it would be challenging to collocate the M5S. While its positions on the economic side tend to be “demarcationist”, on the cultural side, they are unclear, reflecting the different political proveniences of the *Five-Stars*’s electorate.

Perhaps, the unique label that may fit the M5S’s ideological position is populist. However, as Inglehart & Norris (2019) argue, populism is not an ideology but a rhetorical style, claiming that “*the only legitimate democratic authority flows directly from the people and established power-holders are deeply corrupt and self-interested, betraying the public trust*”<sup>151</sup>. The M5S has thus succeeded by leveraging on the sense of distrust and disenchantment of large groups of the Italian electorate towards the Parliament, the Government and other national and supranational institutions (Biorcio & Ceccarini, 2018). In this wide realm of political

<sup>149</sup> Della Porta et al. 2015, p.127

<sup>150</sup> Id.

<sup>151</sup> Inglehart & Norris (2019), p.66

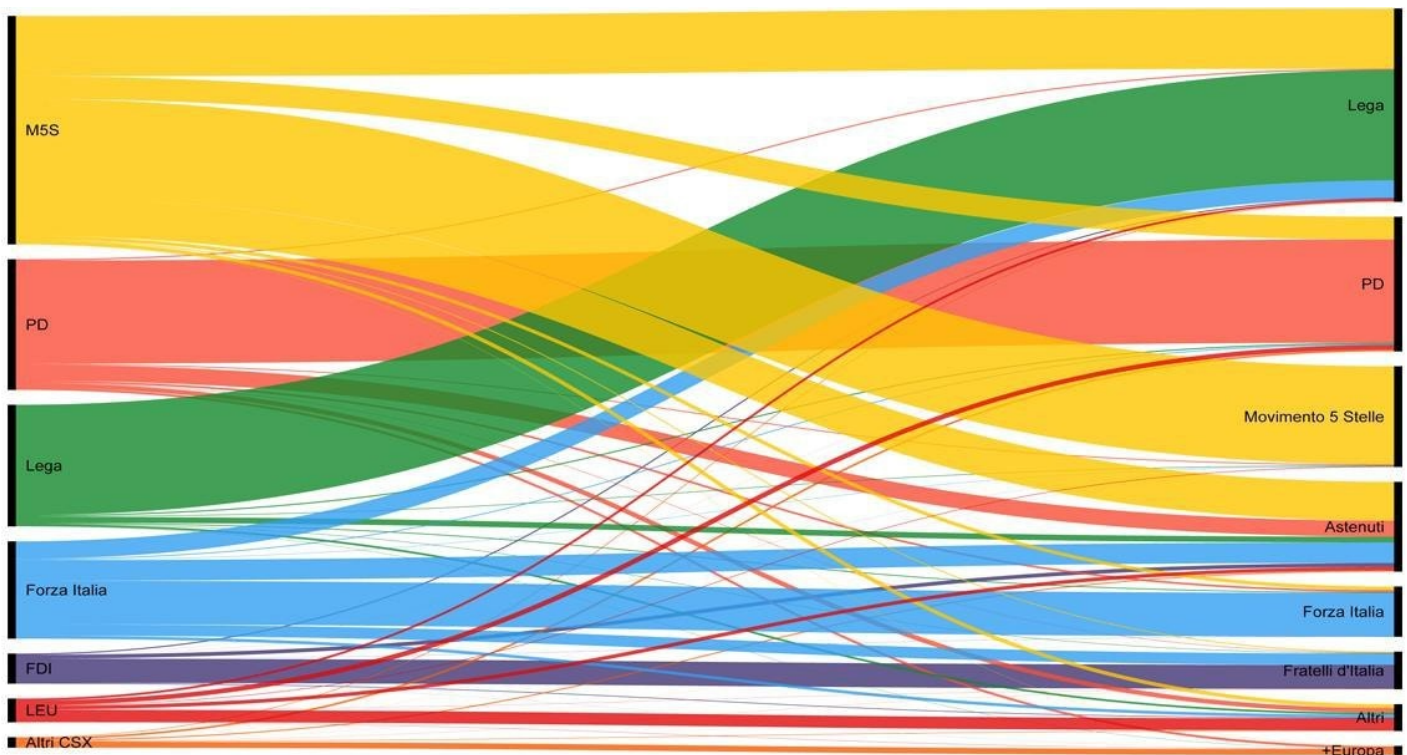


Figure 10

*Electoral flows from 2018 Parliamentary elections to 2019 European elections*

*Source: Youtrend*

distrust, the M5S may have appealed the electorate as an alternative party to try and to give a change. The lack of a clear ideology has enabled, throughout time, the M5S to adopt ambiguous, often opportunistic positions over several issues. While such plasticity may have paid off in the short term, the M5S needs to be able enough not to betray itself and to behave as much coherently as possible.

Moreover, the fate and the future success of the M5S seems depending also from the success of its key policies. At the beginning (first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century), M5S' key policies were five (the so-called Five Stars that gave the Movement the name): public water, environment, transports, connectivity, and development<sup>152</sup>, within a general promise of keeping dishonest politicians out of elective bodies. I would precise that the M5S does not fall out of the scope of what is the object of this thesis, which concerns the impact of post-material values and globalization on Western politics. At least at its debut, the M5S catalyzed the popular will for further direct political participation and direct democracy, social justice, less institutionalization and hierarchization of politics, environmental policies and political disintermediation (Dalla Porta, et al., 2017). Not by chance, the M5S was initially labeled as a left-libertarian political movement.

During the XVII legislature (2013-2018) they have shrunk to just two: the reduction of the costs and the moralization of politics and the citizen income. The success of the latest elections opened the doors to the M5S to the government (Conte I government). If during the (presumed) five-years legislature the Five-Stars movement will be unable to enact the policies it promised, it might lose much of its support from its electoral

<sup>152</sup> <https://www.movimento5stelle.it>

core: workers, small-framework employees, and unemployed citizens.

In this regard, recent 2019 European elections may have provided additional hints about the development of Italian politics. In those elections, the M5S suffered a dramatic decrease of consensus – from 32% of 2018 Parliamentary elections to just the 17,07 %<sup>153</sup>. On the other side, the League has become the dominant party in the country, with 34,33 %<sup>154</sup> of the votes. Finally, the PD has become the second party with 22,69 %<sup>155</sup> of votes. While the M5S remained the first party in the South, with 29%<sup>156</sup> of consensus (far below of the 40% of the previous year), it suffered significant setbacks in the Northern and Central Regions, where it, respectively, collected 10% and 15% of votes.

On the base of the electoral statistics, I argue that the country is electorally divided into two areas, each following distinct electoral dynamics. The border dividing the two areas corresponds, quite curiously, to the Gustav Line (the defensive line established along the Garigliano and Sangro rivers by the German Army between October 1943 and May 1944).

At the North of the renewed Gustav Line, the two contenders have now become the League and the PD, despite in certain regions there is, in fact, no political competition. That is, for instance, the case of Veneto, where the League collected half of the votes. However, apart from a few exceptions, the leading party in major cities is the PD. For instance, it prevailed in Rome, Florence, Milan, Turin, Genoa, Ancona, and Bologna. Figure 9 indicates that the League has been, by far, the most voted party in smaller towns. However, the more populated the town, the fewer votes it has collected, up to the point of being overcome by the PD in major cities. Thus, above the Gustav Line, it seems that it is emerging the transnational cleavage, with the winners' party (PD, in favor of further economic and cultural integration) opposed to the losers' party (the League, that, instead, defends both cultural and economic integration). Moreover, it is also undertaking the geographical dimension that I have already described in France, with the Periphery contrasting the Center.

On the other side, below the renewed Gustav Line the M5S is still predominant in most cities and smaller towns. However, its dominance is not as strong as it was in 2018; moreover, the League has attested the 23% in the South and become the second largest party there. Should the decline of the M5S persist, there might emerge in Southern regions electoral dynamics similar to those of Central and Northern Italy.

Nevertheless, there are some caveats. As Figure 10 suggests, the M5S has been penalized the most by the turnout, which has been 16% lower than the 2018 Parliamentary elections<sup>157</sup>. Hence, the dynamics I have just described might have been amplified with regard to their true extent. That does not mean that the sudden changes that have occurred between the 2018 Parliamentary elections and 2019 European elections should be underestimated. In particular, European elections have shown that the transnational cleavage is enrooting in Italy too: only future national elections will eventually manifest us its true extent.

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<sup>153</sup> Source: Ministero dell'Interno

<sup>154</sup> Id.

<sup>155</sup> Id.

<sup>156</sup> Id.

<sup>157</sup> Id.

## Conclusion

In the thesis, I have focused on how the emergence of post-material values, together with globalization, has altered Western political systems and its political cleavages. Although some commentators have stressed the economic side of the transition, political sociologists agree on the fact that political changes are foremost cultural, as they derive from a post-material shift of citizens' values and preferences.

Ronald Inglehart (1977) first acknowledged such a rise of post-material values and renamed it the *Silent Revolution*. His work has been rightly considered as a milestone of political sociology. His analysis of younger cohorts' political values had new social perspectives of voters' values come out. As I have argued in Chapter 1.1, Inglehart stated that post-material values emerged as a result of the impressive economic growth that characterized the decades following World War II and spread initially among younger cohorts as they could grow up in milieus of material wealth, far better than those of their parents. These post-material values, emphasizing new concerns on individual lifestyle and self-determination and stressing social liberalism, introduced both new issues in political systems (amongst the others, environmental concerns, and civil rights) and new ways of political participation, that enabled inclusion and direct participation of individual activists in the decision-making process.

Even though Inglehart's account on the process and dynamics of formation of post-material values was contested, the magnitude of his work was out of the question. The work of other scholars and, notably, Flanagan integrated his analyses. One of the limits of Inglehart's considerations was that he confined the *Silent Revolution* to the Leftist dimension. According to him, post-material values cannot but be leftist, despite different from the propositions and the aims of the material Left. In doing that, he excluded the possibility that there could exist a post-material Right. Flanagan (1987), instead, conceived such an assumption. According to Flanagan, post-material values generated both a New Left and a New Right<sup>158</sup>. The former one would support social liberalism, while the latter one social conservatism and their contrast would have been foremost cultural.

Post-material values favored the rise of two new families of parties. Social liberal, post-material values boosted left-libertarian parties, which were the first political emanation of post-material values and can be traced up to the '70s. Left-libertarian parties denoted a range of different parties (environmental, Greens, radical, New Left) sharing criticism against the primacy of economy in political debates, a general libertarian outlook, and support for individual direct, democratic, political participation.

On the other side, social conservatism boosted the rise of authoritarian-populist parties. These parties are connotated by a nationalist and ethnocentric defense of traditional values and lifestyles and contrast social liberalism. They are usually run by authoritarian leaders, who enforce a marked separation between the

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<sup>158</sup> Inglehart conceived such a possibility throughout time too. He argued that New Right's social conservatism arose in reaction to the spread of New Left's social liberalism (Inglehart & Norris, 2019)

national community and foreigners and mistrust towards liberal democratic institutions and governance. As well as left-libertarian parties, they contributed to introducing new issues and concerns among the electorate. Both these parties contributed to polarizing political systems on the issues they have initiated and forcing existing traditional parties to reconsider their position. Socialist and leftist parties were most concerned by that. While embracing neoliberalism and the Third Way on the economic side, on the cultural one, they embrace left-libertarianism; they thus started to stress the importance of self-determining individual lifestyle, with a non-economic concern of equality for minorities, whatever their extent and features. That internal economic and cultural reconfiguration brought traditional, socialist parties to reconsider their electorate: from being the parties of the working classes, they have progressively been supported by upper middle class and highly educated voters.

The acknowledgment of the New Left and the New Right also brought several commentators to reconsider the existence of the four cleavages, that was found out by Lipset & Rokkan (1967). In particular, Kriesi argued that the new cleavage underpinning Western politics opposes integration to demarcation and has twofold dimensions – economic and cultural. The economic dimension derives from globalization dynamics and opposes protectionism to the opening of custom borders to international markets and trade. It draws its origin from the traditional left-right cleavage on the redistribution of wealth and the extent of State's intervention. The cultural dimension, instead, opposes social conservatism to social liberalism, and it is expressed especially on immigration.

At the same time, two new electoral groups, corresponding to winners and losers of cultural and economic global integration, underpin the integration – demarcation cleavage. Their condition about the integration is not objectively established but depends on their subjective perception. Although the economic dimension is usually considered as crucial, it is less salient than the cultural one. Part of that reason lies on the economic inconsistency of the electorate of authoritarian-populist parties, which promote the most a demarcation program. Winners of economic and cultural integration tend to support integrationist parties, while losers demarcation ones.

In the last chapter of the thesis, I have briefly presented two case studies (France and Italy) about the empirical existence of the integration – demarcation cleavage.

For what concerns France, I have concluded that, during the latest Presidential elections, the integration – demarcation cleavage was made evident by the second-round ballot that opposed Macron (supporting an integration program) to Le Pen (with, instead, a demarcation program). The electoral groups voting for the candidates support that evidence. Losers of the integration have massively supported Le Pen, as evidence from most deprived and economically stagnant French departments suggests. On the other side, Macron collected a plebiscitary victory in urban departments, that most benefit from cultural and economic integration. However, the close electoral distances of Mélenchon and Fillon to Le Pen and Macron indicate that the integration – demarcation cleavage is less developed than what the second round might suggest. Therefore,

only future elections will necessarily show the development rate of the integration - demarcation cleavage in the *Hexagone*.

On the other side, I have argued that, on the evidence of the latest Italian Parliamentary elections, the integration – demarcation cleavage is not as developed as in France. Despite the PD and the League are supposed to play the role of representing, respectively, winners’ and losers’ interests, the political system is puzzled by the presence of M5S, whose success seems more depending from its policy proposals than from its ideological position. In this sense, I have argued that the electoral decline of the M5S at the latest European elections, at least in Central and Northern Italy, has made integration – demarcation cleavage far more evident. Not surprisingly, the geographical dynamics acknowledged in France have also reproduced in Italy. However, recent European elections have provided further hints about the presence of the integration – demarcation cleavage in Italy. As the French case, only future elections might confirm or not whether the cleavage is rooting in the *Bel Paese*.

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## Italian summary

In questa tesi ho trattato l'impatto che i valori post-materiali, insieme al fenomeno della globalizzazione, hanno avuto sui sistemi politici Europei e, in particolare, sui *cleavages* politici, secondo il modello teorico sviluppato da Lipset & Rokkan (1967).

L'analisi è partita dalla teoria della *Rivoluzione Silenziosa* formulata dal sociologo statunitense Ronald Inglehart nel 1977. Per primo, lo studioso americano si accorse dello scostamento, nei Paesi Occidentali, dei valori e delle priorità dei giovani nati dopo secondo conflitto mondiale rispetto a quelli dei loro genitori. Infatti, se i valori di questi ultimi miravano al raggiungimento di traguardi materiali (quali potevano essere la casa di proprietà, reddito fisso, stabilità occupazionale e benessere economico), i giovani, invece, aspiravano a raggiungere condizioni post-materiali, quali un determinato stile di vita o l'autodeterminazione della propria esistenza e delle proprie relazioni sociali. A partire dalla fine degli anni '60, questi ultimi contestarono il primato dell'economia e richiesero sia l'emancipazione dai vincoli sociali imposti dalla tradizione sia nuove politiche libertarie, tramite leggi che permettessero, per esempio, il divorzio e l'aborto.

Inglehart (1977) formulò due ipotesi diverse, seppur legate, per spiegare lo scostamento verso i valori post-materiali da parte dei giovani: l'ipotesi della scarsità (*scarcity hypothesis*) e l'ipotesi della socializzazione (*socialization hypothesis*).

La prima ipotesi (*scarcity*) afferma che le priorità individuali riflettono l'ambiente socioeconomico. Le persone pongono un maggiore valore soggettivo su quei beni che sono relativamente meno disponibili (Inglehart 1997). Tale ipotesi si fondava a sua volta sulla piramide di Maslow, che indica l'ordine gerarchico dei bisogni umani, in base alla loro relativa necessità. Alla base della piramide di Maslow sono presenti i bisogni relativi alla sussistenza, quali, per esempio, acqua e viveri. Successivamente, seguono i bisogni riguardanti la sicurezza, sia essa economica o fisica. Vi sono poi i bisogni relativi alla vita sociale, all'autostima e al riconoscimento e, infine, alla realizzazione personale.

Inglehart (1977) ritenne, dunque, che il benessere diffuso nella popolazione dei Paesi Occidentali scaturito dal *boom* economico del secondo dopoguerra avesse permesso alla maggior parte dei cittadini di appagare i propri bisogni materiali ed elaborare richieste post-materiali, quali per esempio uguaglianza ed auto-determinazione. La seconda ipotesi (*socializzazione*) spiega, invece, come lo scostamento verso i valori post-materiali abbia interessato per lo più i giovani. Secondo questa ipotesi, i valori individuali riflettono le condizioni socioeconomiche che hanno prevalso durante il processo di educazione e formazione antecedente all'età adulta. Questa teoria spiegherebbe perché soltanto le fasce più giovani di determinati gruppi sociali svilupparono valori post-materiali.

A parziale conferma delle ipotesi sopracitate, Inglehart notò come i giovani più propensi ai valori post-materiali fossero coloro che provenivano da famiglie con uno status socioeconomico (SES) più elevato e che avevano conseguito un più alto livello educativo<sup>159</sup>.

Inglehart (1977) ritenne che i valori post-materiali avessero sin da subito influenzato il comportamento politico degli elettori e sul sistema politici in generale, rilevando, nello specifico, tre conseguenze.

In primis, i valori post-materiali alterarono l'auto-percezione degli individui in quanto attori politici. I cittadini con valori post-materiali, infatti, non si accontentarono più di eleggere chi avrebbe preso le decisioni per loro, ma richiesero un maggior coinvolgimento e partecipazione sia nel processo decisionale sia nel controllo dell'intero *iter* legislativo. Ciò indusse i cittadini con valori post-materiali, da un lato, ad esigere organizzazioni istituzionali più orizzontali ed egualitarie; dall'altro, a mostrare meno fedeltà verso le istituzioni politiche.

In secondo luogo, i valori post-materiali introdussero una nuova dimensione conflittuale di tipo intergenerazionale, che oppose i giovani post-materialisti agli anziani materialisti, a causa della sproporzionata distribuzione dei valori post-materiali nelle coorti di età. Tale conflitto trascese le precedenti divisioni politiche e coinvolse, pertanto, esponenti della medesima sfera politico-ideologica. Cito, come esempio, le divergenze sorte durante il Maggio '68 francese, quando la sinistra tradizionale comunista e socialista non appoggiò le proteste e le richieste post-materialiste dei giovani studenti dimostranti, che pure si professavano di sinistra.

Infine, i valori post-materiali permisero la nascita di nuovi partiti appartenenti alla sinistra post-materiale. Questa Nuova Sinistra (*New Left*) aveva una proposta politica differente, ma non irreconciliabile, con la Sinistra tradizionale: se quest'ultima ambiva all'eguaglianza economica, intesa come miglioramento della condizione della classe operaia, da perseguire tramite la redistribuzione dei beni, la Nuova Sinistra riteneva prioritaria la qualità dello stile di vita e affermava che il miglioramento delle classi inferiori era raggiungibile anche solo tramite lo sviluppo economico della nazione.

La *Rivoluzione Silenziosa* di Inglehart aprì, quindi, una nuova materia di studi nella sociologia politica. Negli anni successivi, tale opera fu, infatti, usata sia come base teorica per ulteriori ricerche, sia come oggetto di disputa accademica. In particolare, Inglehart fu criticato per aver escluso la possibilità di una Nuova Destra post-materialista, in quanto per lui il post-materialismo non poteva delinarsi che a Sinistra.

Flanagan (1987) aveva, invece, accettato questa ipotesi. Secondo Flanagan, i valori post-materiali avevano consentito la nascita di una Nuova Politica post-materiale (o, come lui preferiva definirla, non-materiale) e in contrasto con la Vecchia Politica materialista. In questa Nuova Politica, permanevano ancora la Sinistra e la Destra, ma il loro ambito era intrinsecamente mutato. La Nuova Sinistra aveva posizioni libertarie, ambientaliste e pacifiste, con alla base una preoccupazione generale verso la qualità della vita. La Nuova Destra si proponeva, di contro, di difendere valori neoconservatori e tradizionali, con una forte opposizione di base alle politiche migratorie.

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<sup>159</sup> Numerosi autori hanno contestato la teoria di Inglehart sulla formazione di valori post-materiali. In particolare, Cotgrove & Duff (1987) affermano che la formazione dei valori post-materiali sia collegato più al background ideologico-culturale che al SES.

I valori post-materiali hanno incominciato a guadagnare una rilevanza significativa nella competizione politica in un contesto storico di transizione. Nel 1989, infatti, la caduta del Muro di Berlino innescò la dissoluzione dell'URSS nel 1991 e il conseguente collasso del Comunismo. Francis Fukuyama formulò, a tal riguardo, la teoria della *Fine della Storia*, asserendo che il crollo del Comunismo pose fine ad ogni tentativo di contrastare, da parte di altre ideologie, il liberalismo capitalistico e democratico, inteso come idea e non prassi. In altre parole, secondo Fukuyama non vi sono più stati sistemi politici ed economici in grado di competere con il liberalismo democratico e con il capitalismo, dal momento che questi ultimi si sono dimostrati applicabili in ogni società e potenzialmente longevi nel tempo. Il filosofo americano prevede, quindi, la convergenza di tutte le società verso questi due sistemi.

La fine del Comunismo ha rafforzato e accelerato il fenomeno della globalizzazione. Per globalizzazione si intende il processo di compressione del mondo che conduce ad una maggiore consapevolezza dello stesso nella sua totalità (Robertson, 2014), tramite una maggiore interconnessione e interdipendenza tra diverse nazioni. La globalizzazione non può essere intesa come un fenomeno unico, dal momento che si riflette in numerose dimensioni: economia, finanza, militare, ambiente, comunicazioni, diritto e cultura, solo per citare alcuni tra i numerosi ambiti.

Due sono i principali effetti della globalizzazione: la riconfigurazione dello Stato Vestfaliano e la rilevanza degli attori privati nei processi decisionali mondiali.

Nel primo caso, risulta modificata la relazione tra territorio e spazio politico, dal momento che le attività politiche ed economiche non sono più circoscritte ai confini nazionali. Numerosi studiosi parlano, a tal riguardo, di mondo apolare, in quanto il potere è diffuso tra numerosi enti ed istituzioni, inclusi quelli non-governativi.

Nel secondo caso, sono due le tipologie di attori privati che riescono ad influenzare i processi decisionali mondiali tramite la mobilitazione di risorse e persone: le multinazionali e le organizzazioni non-governative (ONG). Le multinazionali, grazie alla loro capacità di agire in diversi mercati internazionali di beni e servizi, condizionano le dinamiche produttive e concorrenziali in tutto il mondo, inducendo, allo stesso tempo, i governi a stringere accordi di libero scambio e ad applicare regimi fiscali a loro favore. Le ONG, invece, agiscono, soprattutto nei paesi in via di sviluppo, come subappaltatori per istituzioni internazionali per l'attuazione e l'implementazione di politiche e campagne specifiche verso la popolazione, al posto dei locali governi nazionali.

Da ultimo, la fine del Comunismo ha segnato un punto di svolta per il processo di integrazione Europea. Nonostante dal trattato di Maastricht (1992) l'Unione Europea abbia più che raddoppiato il numero di Paesi Membri, espandendosi anche in territori un tempo sotto la sfera comunista e abbia rappresentato un bastione di pace, sviluppo economico, democrazia e garanzia dei diritti umani, negli ultimi anni una parte sostanziale dell'elettorato europeo è rimasta (o, in certi casi, diventata) diffidente nei confronti dell'UE, per le politiche di austerità imposte agli Stati durante la recente crisi economica e per il deficit democratico delle istituzioni europee, oltre che per la sua minaccia alla sovranità nazionale dei singoli Stati membri.

Come spiegato nella tesi, i valori post-materiali hanno avuto conseguenze sugli attori dei sistemi politici. Dapprima, hanno stimolato la nascita di nuovi partiti politici, vale a dire i partiti libertari di sinistra e i partiti populistici-autoritari di estrema destra.

Nel primo caso, per partiti libertari di sinistra si intendono quei movimenti politici (ambientalisti, Verdi, Radicali, Libertari) sorti a partire dagli anni '70s in risposta alle nuove richieste politiche post-materialiste provenienti dall'elettorato. Questi partiti da un lato si opponevano al primato dello sviluppo economico e del compromesso tra capitale e lavoro, alla restrizione del processo decisionale a livello delle *élites* e allo stato sociale burocratico; dall'altro, proponevano un modello economico individualista e libertario ed enfatizzavano la partecipazione popolare e l'uguaglianza e la solidarietà tra individui (concezioni, queste, provenienti dalla sinistra). Questi partiti trascendevano, dunque, la vecchia divisione materialista tra sinistra e destra.

Tali partiti si rifacevano, come detto, ai nuovi valori post-materialisti sorti in ampi segmenti dell'elettorato. Tuttavia, come nota Kitschelt (1988) non è vero il contrario: non tutti gli elettori post-materialisti sostenevano i partiti libertari di sinistra. In particolare, Kitschelt notò come, nonostante la percentuale di elettori post-materialisti si equivalesse tra gli Stati occidentali, il successo dei partiti libertari di sinistra variava considerabilmente tra di essi. Dunque, la trasposizione dei valori post-materiali in partiti politici era molto più complessa di quanto la *Rivoluzione Silenziosa* di Inglehart suggerisse. Secondo Kitschelt (1988), quattro sono le condizioni che influiscono sullo sviluppo dei partiti libertari di sinistra: il corretto funzionamento del welfare, la relativa influenza politica del sindacalismo e la partecipazione del partito socialista al governo, il tipo di sistema politico e la salienza della controversia sul nucleare.

Di contro, il post-materialismo di destra ha trovato rappresentanza politica nei partiti autoritari – populistici di estrema destra. La formazione di questi nuovi soggetti politici ha portato numerosi autori a parlare di *Controrivoluzione Silenziosa* (Ignazi, 1992) e di *Reazione culturale* (Inglehart & Norris, 2019). Tali partiti, sorti a partire dagli anni '80, non erano, come i partiti libertari di sinistra, assimilabili alle precedenti formazioni politiche, dal momento che il loro messaggio coglieva consenso in tutti gli strati sociali e rappresentava un mutato clima politico e culturale. Per citare Ignazi (1992:6), i Verdi e i partiti di estrema destra erano, rispettivamente, i figli legittimi e indesiderati della nuova Politica.

Secondo Inglehart & Norris (2019), tali partiti sorsero in risposta alla *Rivoluzione Silenziosa* social-liberale. Il punto di svolta fu la perdita dell'egemonia culturale da parte dei conservatori sociali proprio a causa della *Rivoluzione Silenziosa* e la loro reazione di matrice opposta: la proposta di nuovi valori, alternativi e contrari a quelli post-materialisti social-liberali. Questi nuovi valori erano, nei fatti, social-conservatori: difesa della famiglia tradizionale contro il divorzio e i matrimoni tra omosessuali, posizioni *pro-life* contro l'aborto e l'eutanasia, richiami alla tradizione Cristiana contro le ondate migratorie.

Come si può notare, tale *Reazione culturale* fu un fenomeno essenzialmente culturale; tale affermazione è sostenuta dall'inconsistenza delle richieste economiche da parte dell'elettorato di tali partiti, che si trova, invece, unito dalla paura nei confronti delle ondate migratorie e dai valori tradizionali.

Come suggerisce il nome, i partiti autoritari – populisti di estrema destra condividono due elementi di fondo: i valori autoritari e l'attitudine populista. Il legame tra conservatorismo sociale e autoritarismo è molto stretto, nonostante esso non sia *a priori*. Invece, la relazione tra conservatorismo sociale e populismo è invece meramente congiunturale, dal momento che il discorso populista può essere sostenuto da ogni sorta di attore politico, sia esso di destra o di sinistra.

Come affermano Inglehart & Norris (2019) i valori autoritari sono: conformità, lealtà e sicurezza. Per conformità si intendono l'osservanza alle convenzioni della comunità, l'obbedienza delle regole e la fedeltà agli usi e costumi tradizionali. Tale conformismo crea una netta separazione tra chi è membro della comunità nazionale e chi, invece, ne è escluso. Verso quest'ultima categoria i partiti autoritari – populisti sono estremamente intolleranti, dal momento che è percepita come una sfida alle norme tradizionali della comunità. Per lealtà, ci si riferisce al sostegno incondizionato della base verso il gruppo e verso il *leader*. Tale lealtà enfatizza, dunque, il potere esecutivo, ponendosi in termini antidemocratici ed esprimendosi tramite toni paternalistici. Per sicurezza, si evoca la protezione del gruppo dai rischi che possono interessare la comunità. Tuttavia, se da un lato i leader dei partiti autoritari – populisti accentuano la mancanza di sicurezza, tale enfasi spesso non corrisponde alla reale situazione. Inoltre, additano come principali responsabili per la presunta, accresciuta insicurezza proprio chi è escluso dalla comunità nazionale (*in primis*, gli immigrati).

Per populismo si intende, invece, uno stile retorico basato sulle due affermazioni: l'unica autorità legittima deriva direttamente dal popolo; coloro che hanno tradizionalmente detenuto il potere sono estremamente corrotti e perseguono i loro interessi, tradendo la fiducia pubblica. Nel primo caso, l'autorità è fornita di un illimitato potere maggioritario, che non è tenuto a rispettare né i diritti delle minoranze né le opinioni degli specialisti, quali, per esempio, autorità legali o istituzionali e scienziati. Nel secondo caso, invece, si mina l'autorità delle istituzioni liberal-democratiche, tramite un discorso trasgressivo e denigratorio. Ai Parlamenti vengono contrapposti i leader politici, la cui autorità deriva direttamente dal popolo tramite elezioni dirette e plebiscitarie. Se, dunque, vi si pone marcatamente l'accento sulla democrazia diretta, l'obiettivo dei leader autoritario – populisti non è di ristabilirla, ma soltanto di ottenere legittimità sufficiente per giustificare l'eccesso di potere esecutivo nel nome del popolo sovrano.

Infine, i valori post-materiali hanno contribuito a trasformare la natura dei partiti tradizionali. I partiti socialisti sono stati quelli più stravolti. La riconfigurazione di questi fu resa necessaria dalla caduta del muro di Berlino: come sostenuto da Fukuyama (1992), tali partiti non poterono che abbracciare *in toto* l'ideologia liberale sia in campo economico sia in campo culturale. Proprio in questo senso fu formulata la teoria della *Terza Via* da parte di Anthony Giddens, che trovò il suo più importante esecutore nel Primo Ministro britannico Tony Blair. La *Terza Via* si prefigurava di riconciliare il neoliberismo e la social-democrazia, in una forma tuttavia diversa da entrambe. In pratica, i termini cardine della social-democrazia vennero reinterpretati in chiave neoliberale. Per citare due esempi: l'uguaglianza non fu più intesa tra classi, bensì tra altri gruppi sociali (di razza, di sesso

ecc.); l'emancipazione non fu più concepita come liberazione dall'oppressione del capitale, ma come esercizio individuale della responsabilità personale.

L'assistenza sociale ne risultò ridimensionata dalla Terza Via. Dal momento che il welfare, dall'essere ritenuto una rete di salvataggio, fu considerato come un trampolino, le fasce più basse della popolazione furono costrette ad accettare lavori part-time (i cosiddetti *mini-jobs*), così da ridurre la spesa sociale. Inoltre, molti servizi sociali furono affidati ad attori privati o addirittura privatizzati, per ridurre il deficit pubblico. Infine, si provvide pure ad una ristrutturazione del settore pubblico, che aveva l'obiettivo di espletare più lavori con meno personale.

La Terza Via contribuì a ridurre la polarizzazione delle proposte economiche tra la sinistra e la destra tradizionali: entrambe gli schieramenti furono d'accordo nell'attuare tagli a tasse e alla spesa pubblica e flessibilizzare il mercato del lavoro, con l'obiettivo di tenere il passo alla dinamicità del mercato.

Dal punto di vista culturale, i partiti socialisti e laburisti abbracciarono i valori social-liberali dei gruppi libertari di sinistra. Si ritenne necessario tale sviluppo perché l'elettorato post-materiale social-liberale si percepiva e si posizionava a sinistra dello spettro politico. Ciò implicò anche un cambiamento nel tipo di elettorato di questi partiti: dall'essere votati dalle fasce operaie e meno educate della popolazione, essi divennero i partiti dell'alta ed istruita classe media.

La crisi economica e finanziaria del 2011 mise severamente in crisi i partiti di sinistra. Infatti, i disagi sociali provocati dalla crisi colsero impreparato il welfare sociale, già messo a dura prova dalle misure descritte sopra. Inoltre, il salvataggio delle banche tramite fondi pubblici aveva destabilizzato i già fragili equilibri di bilancio pubblici, esponendo gli Stati europei con alto debito pubblico di fronte al rischio di bancarotta. Per far fronte all'insolvenza, questi ultimi furono costretti ad accettare aiuto economico e finanziario dalle istituzioni internazionali (FMI, Commissione e BCE) in cambio di stringenti misure di austerità. I Partiti Socialisti, al governo negli Stati più colpiti dalla crisi (Francia, Portogallo, Spagna e Grecia, per citare i casi più rilevanti), persero gran parte del sostegno popolare in favore di movimenti populistici sia di destra sia di sinistra.

I valori post-materiali, insieme alla globalizzazione, hanno creato un nuovo *cleavage* nei sistemi politici europei, che oppone integrazione e demarcazione, secondo il modello formulato da Kriesi. Tale *cleavage* è sorto a causa della crescente politicizzazione attorno sia a valori post-materiali sia alla globalizzazione economica ed esprime le divisioni tra due nuovi macro-gruppi elettorali: i cosiddetti vincenti e perdenti dell'integrazione culturale ed economica. Pur essendo il *cleavage* transnazionale, il rinnovato dibattito politico si manifesta, forse paradossalmente, a livello nazionale, dal momento che la diminuita compattezza dei confini nazionali ha reso questi ultimi politicamente più salienti.

Tale *cleavage* ha, per l'appunto, due dimensioni, culturale ed economica. Entrambe derivano da i due più rilevanti *cleavage* precedenti, rispettivamente il conflitto religioso e di classe. La dimensione culturale ha mutato l'oggetto della contesa: al centro non vi è più lo scontro tra due confessioni religiose o il ruolo della religione nello Stato, bensì il liberalismo, come se fosse una religione secolarizzata. Invece, nella dimensione



economica l'oggetto non è più la distribuzione delle risorse, ma il grado di apertura dell'economia nazionale ai mercati e al commercio internazionale.

In reazione a questi cambiamenti, i partiti tradizionali (socialisti, conservatori e liberali) hanno generalmente adottato una posizione favorevole ad un'ulteriore integrazione economica e culturale. Tuttavia, tale riposizionamento li ha indotti a divisioni interne: di tipo economico per i socialisti e di tipo culturali per i conservatori e i liberali. I nuovi movimenti trattati prima tendono invece ad assumere posizioni demarcazioniste, opposte tra loro ma, in entrambe i casi, euroscettiche. Se i libertari di sinistra sono contrari all'integrazione economica ma a favore dell'integrazione culturale, dall'altra parte i gli autoritari – populistici contestano l'integrazione culturale e sostengono la controparte economica. Questi ultimi, visti i loro successi elettorali, sembrano aver formulato la “ricetta” vincente agli occhi dei perdenti; d'altronde, come spiegato precedentemente, i problemi culturali sono più urgenti e vicini agli occhi degli sconfitti dell'integrazione.

L'ascesa del nuovo *cleavage* integrazione – demarcazione non implica la scomparsa definitiva dei *cleavage* precedenti. Proprio questi ultimi hanno, invece, influenzato sia il riposizionamento dei partiti tradizionali rispetto al nuovo contrasto politico sia il primato di una delle due dimensioni rispetto all'altra. A tal proposito, si può dunque parlare di *path dependancy* all'interno dei sistemi politici europei. Henjak (2010) ha inoltre affermato che anche il tipo di welfare regime contribuisce a influenzare lo sviluppo nuovo *cleavage* transnazionale.

Nella tesi, ho poi passato in rassegna chi sono i perdenti e i vincenti dell'integrazione. I primi hanno come punti di riferimento politici i candidati demarcazionisti, mentre i secondi i candidati integrationisti.

Analizzandoli sulla base delle categorie professionali, i perdenti sono operai non specializzati, piccoli imprenditori, artigiani, agricoltori e impiegati di basso fascia, che, a causa dell'integrazione economica, hanno avvertito una contrazione dei salari e una maggiore insicurezza di lavoro e di reddito, senza avere la possibilità di riconvertirsi professionalmente, in quanto privi di un adeguato profilo educativo. Tuttavia, bisogna rimarcare che i perdenti sono tali perché si sentono minacciati dall'integrazione e si identificano soggettivamente in quella categoria. L'aspetto culturale gioca comunque un ruolo di primo piano. Infatti, pur sentendosi danneggiati dall'integrazione dei mercati, i perdenti non condividono una visione economica comune. Ciò che unisce loro sono invece le questioni culturali, in primo luogo quelle riguardanti l'immigrazione. Guilluy (2019) ha inoltre notato come i perdenti della globalizzazione costituiscano, per larghi tratti, ciò che è rimasto della sparizione della classe media. Ha inoltre notato come i perdenti tendano a risiedere nelle zone periferiche del Paese, vale a dire nelle zone rurali o nelle piccole e medie città, dal momento che i centri più grandi e le metropoli erano diventati economicamente per loro inaccessibili, mentre evitano le periferie urbane, il cui fallimento politiche di integrazione multietnica ha trasformato quei quartieri in ghetti etnici. Tuttavia, la periferia del paese è economicamente stagnante, con alti tassi di fragilità sociale ed economica e caratterizzate da una progressiva deindustrializzazione. Ivi, le prospettive di mobilità sociale sono praticamente nulle, proprio al contrario delle periferie urbane, tra le più socialmente dinamiche.

I vincenti dell'integrazione sono invece gli studenti, i liberi professionisti, gli imprenditori, i dipendenti pubblici e gli impiegati di media ed alta fascia. L'integrazione economica permette loro di arricchirsi ulteriormente e di essere ancora più ottimisti riguardo al loro futuro. Dal punto di vista culturale, si identificano con le comunità sopranazionali e con valori cosmopoliti. Tendono a risiedere nelle grandi città e nelle metropoli, vale a dire le zone più ricche ed economicamente più dinamiche. Sono inoltre a favore dell'immigrazione, anche solo per difendere i diritti umani degli immigrati e di garantire loro la possibilità di scegliere dove risiedere.

Il nuovo *cleavage* presenta dunque un rilevante aspetto geografico. Tuttavia, non si può parlare di una dimensione geografica a sé stante, dal momento che consegue e dipende da entrambe le dimensioni culturale ed economica.

Nelle ultime due sezioni ho infine esaminato, tramite due casi studio, se il *cleavage* integrazione – demarcazione si sia già radicato in Francia e in Italia.

In Francia, il ballottaggio delle ultime Elezioni Presidenziali, tenutesi nel 2017, conferma tale supposizione. I due candidati del secondo turno, Emmanuel Macron e Marine Le Pen, erano, rispettivamente, l'uno il candidato delle posizioni integrazioniste, l'altra di quelle demarcazioniste. Inoltre, i due partiti tradizionali (Partito Socialista e i Repubblicani) furono entrambe esclusi dalla seconda consultazione, con i socialisti che hanno altresì visto ridursi enormemente il proprio consenso elettorale. I risultati del ballottaggio hanno decretato una vittoria con largo margine per Macron, dovuta, in parte, al cosiddetto Fronte Repubblicano, ovvero la volontà dell'elettorato francese di escludere la destra radicale e, specificatamente, il FN (di cui Le Pen è leader) dal potere. Tuttavia, i voti del ballottaggio hanno rivelato le stesse dinamiche geografiche che ho evidenziato poco fa. Il voto per Le Pen per dipartimento era positivamente correlato (0,57) con il relativo tasso di disoccupazione del 2016. La correlazione era lievemente maggiore (0,6) se si legava il voto per dipartimento al relativo tasso di disoccupazione del 2011. Marine Le Pen ha dunque raccolto più voti proprio nelle zone economicamente più stagnanti del paese, dove la percentuale dei perdenti dell'integrazione è maggiore. Non a caso, dunque, gli unici dipartimenti in cui la Le Pen ha prevalso (Aisne e Pas de Calais) presentano livelli di disoccupazione tra i più alti del paese. Invece, Macron ha ottenuto le percentuali di voto più alte proprio nelle città e nelle metropoli.

Tuttavia, è doveroso precisare che lo scarto di voti tra primo e quarto (rispettivamente Macron e Mélenchon) era di solo 4,5%. Ciò indica che il *cleavage* integrazione – demarcazione si è radicato meno di quanto il secondo turno suggerirebbe e solo future elezioni nazionali chiariranno la misura della transizione verso il nuovo *cleavage*.

In Italia, le Elezioni Parlamentari del 2018 suggeriscono che il *cleavage* in questione è meno radicato che in Francia. Nonostante il PD e la rinnovata Lega rappresentino, rispettivamente, gli interessi dei vincitori e dei perdenti, il sistema politica è reso ambiguo dal Movimento Cinque Stelle, la cui affermazione elettorale sembra

essere dipesa più dalle loro proposte politiche che dalla loro posizione ideologica, che, per altro, non è ben definita. In tal senso, le recenti Elezioni Europee hanno visto un netto calo dei Cinque Stelle nelle regioni Centro-Settentrionali del Paese, mentre rimangono ancora il partito più votato al Sud. Perciò, ho parlato di una nuova Linea Gustav che separa l'Italia in due aree, con dinamiche politiche diverse. Sopra tale linea, il *cleavage* integrazione – demarcazione è più evidente e segue le stesse dinamiche geografiche già constatate in Francia. Al Sud, invece, tale *cleavage* è invece meno sviluppato, ma l'avanzamento di Lega e PD induce a ritenere che le regioni meridionali seguiranno il trend del Centro-Nord. Anche in questo caso, solo le future elezioni confermeranno la validità di queste considerazioni.