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The emergence of political ecology in Western Europe and the agenda setting of ecological resilience

Comparative analysis of European green parties: the Ecolo (BEL), the
Verts (FR), the Verdi (ITA)

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Acronyms

DC Democrazia Christiana

DP Democrazia Proletaria

Ecolo Écologistes Confédérés pour l'Organisation de Luttes Originales

ELV Europe Écologie - Les Verts

END European Nuclear Disarmament

EU European Union

FdV Federazione dei Verdi

GDP Gross Domestic Product

GE Génération Ecologie

LN Lega Nord

M5S Movimento Cinque Stelle

MEI Mouvement Écologiste Independent

NATO North Atlantic Treaty Organization

PDS Partito Democratico della Sinistra

PR Partito Radicale

RUE Revenu Universel d'Existence

SESs Socio-Ecological Systems

SOS Safe Operating Space

TNF Theater Nuclear Forces

TVA Taxe sur la Valeur Ajoutée

UN United Nations

ZAD Zone À Défendre

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Abstract

With the advent of the Covid-19 pandemic, the ecological thought and the green political project have been undergoing a renewed interest among the western European societies. This first research work aims to study the very topical themes of political ecology and resiliency toward the prism of the green parties.

At the end of the 1960s, the environmental concerns upsurge as a political issue notably thanks to the rise of the new social movements contesting the capitalist economic model. The gradual emergence of the green parties in western Europe attests that the issues of natural resources degradation and climate change have succeeded to deeply anchor in the European political scenes as objects of agenda setting. Environmental political phenomena contributed to the constitution of a proper green ideological family characterized by an original internal party organization, a common political culture and project, a specific profile of electorate and more importantly a singular ideology.

Although the western European green parties belong to the same theoretical and historical roots, they experienced a different evolutionary path. We will examine the differences between the green formations in terms of political influence and inclusion within their political scenes arguing that they result from structural national peculiarities and internal party' strategical choices. Through a comparative manifesto analysis, this thesis attempts to present the ideological positioning of three case studies: the francophone green party Ecolo; the French Les Verts then reorganized in Europe Écologie – Les Verts; and the Italians greens with the Federazione dei Verdi.

The large corpus of the political ecology highlights the controversies of capitalism and the liberal market economy and represent indeed a various theoretical framework for the green parties. The wide use of the concept of resilience, as we will examine, refers in reality to a complex framework which tends to comprise all the complex dynamics within and between the ecosystems and the social systems with the purpose to find solutions to the actual unsustainable relationship between human and nature. This thesis will enable to understand the range of these two concepts and to put light on their connections and limits. More importantly, we will examine the complexity of the socio-ecological resilience framework and investigate the green parties positions on this theoretical frame for managing environmental resources and climate hazards.

Keywords: Western European Green parties, Political Ecology, New social movements, Comparative Manifesto Analysis, Socio-Ecological Resilience Framework, Green Ideology, Programmatic profile.

Introduction

Since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020, the advent of an ecological awareness is a recurrent theme among the western European media and political debates. The lockdown measures and the following economic slowdown have highlighted a quasi-immediate impact on climate change and environmental degradation. The « positive » consequences of the sanitary crisis on the environment had been observed, with stupefaction sometimes, by the European citizens confined to their home. The famous dolphins adventuring in the clear and calm water of Venice canals, the decrease of 9 per cent of the global greenhouse gas emissions during the first months of lockdown¹, and the multiplication of other phenomena illustrating the problematic human impact on its environment led to think that the crisis will be an occasion for greater ecological consciousness and lifestyle changes. More recently, during the summer of 2021, the apparent accumulation of environmental hazards on the old continent with floods devastating the northern countries while the southern Europeans were facing droughts and fires have stimulated public debates on the human capacity to face and adapt to climate change.

In this context, the notion of resilience is widely used in political and scientific discourses calling populations to resiliency and advocating for the « resilient capacity » of the populations and their ecosystems. Adopted by the deputies and senators on July 13th of 2021, the draft law entitled « Climat et Resilience » tends to make France reach the goal to decrease of 40 per cent the greenhouse gases emissions by 2030² and to face the pandemic. The term resilience is also largely used in the French president speeches dealing with other issues such as economic crisis, military operations, sanitary crisis, and terrorism. The advent of the COVID-19 crisis has triggered a renewed interest for the term in Western European public policies to a large spectrum of thematic going from the economy, finance, defense, to the ecology. As we will examine in the path of this thesis work, this term, proliferating the public policy discourse, is largely criticized for having no consistency and to rather consist in a communication tool for politicians from very diverse political orientations. Moreover, the concept is highly negatively connotated and is also often interpreted as a call for individuals to lonely manage their capacity to bounce and overcome the crisis. With the purpose to reduce the confusion around this concept which conveys both the idea of social submission and resignation to environmental hazard and crisis, this work is in the lineage of the literature on the socio-ecological resiliency. It will help to clarify what it takes to be resilient in social and ecological terms and to further examine the implication for environmental public policies. We will demonstrate that resilience is highly instrumentalized by political discourses and thus refers to very diverse realities.

¹ According to a survey made by Nature Climate Change published in May 2020 entitled « Temporary reduction in daily global CO₂ emissions during the COVID-19 forced confinement », this global decrease of CO₂ emissions had been observed between the 1st of January to the 30th of April 2020. (Le Quéré et al. 2020)

² For further details on the draft law and its implications see the article: Le Monde.fr. 2021. 'Projet de loi Climat et résilience : vers une adoption définitive cet été', 13 July 2021. https://www.lemonde.fr/planete/article/2021/07/13/projet-de-loi-climat-et-resilience-vers-une-adoption-definitive-cet-ete_6088089_3244.html.

The actual debate on an eventual post-pandemic electoral downturn positioned the European green parties at the center of the political attention. Indeed, the mediatic discourse points out the possibility of a general shift in the electoral vote triggered by the pandemic that would benefit either the green formations, the extreme-right parties, or even both. The current public talk on the « green waves », as the overwhelming expansion of the green electorate among European societies, has also significantly oriented the choice of this thesis topic. The Covid-19 crisis and its socio-economic repercussions have stressed the need to implement a political ecology approach to the gestion of natural resources and especially the redefinition of our place on earth. Often compared to the well-known May 1968 turn, the behavioral and lifestyle changes that the crisis seems to spark within the European societies as spotlight on the actual controversial public management of the environment and natural resources. The green parties, often considered as the last of the political class, would thus emerge as pivot of a political recomposition answering to the popular revendication of self-sufficiency and sustainability. With the purpose to understand the green political phenomenon, this thesis will focus on the examination of three green parties which are: the Belgian francophone party of Ecolo, the French greens Les Verts then transformed into Europe Écologie – Les Verts, and the Italian Federation dei Verdi reconstituted recently toward Europa Verde. The examination of the parties' theoretical roots and their political proposal will enable to have a first insight on the transformations the greens advocate for western politics.

With the aim to understand resiliency and the specific political object that represent the green parties, our research would attempt to answer the following research question: Do our three case studies address resilience in their programs as an object of agenda setting and which social, ecological, and political transformations they prevail for fighting against climate changes?

This thesis would be structured in two broad parts. First, as political subjects of our research work, we will examine the emergence of the green parties through an historical and theoretical perspective. Indeed, the state of the art will enable to define and examine both the concepts of political ecology, as theoretical corpus of the green parties, and the resilience framework as a scientific and political guideline for a sustainable management of natural resources and climate change. We will also examine the literature on the emergence of environmental mobilization toward the new social movements emerging at the end of the 1960s. Then, we will question the existence of a proper green political class arguing that green parties share a proper « green » ideology, a common political culture and form of internal organization together with an electorate sharing the same socio-economic profile. While the green parties possess common historical and ideological roots, they have experienced diverse destiny since their proper constitution during the 1970s. We will present the political evolution of the western European greens from a social movement type of party toward their progressive banalization as professionalized formations and even sometimes as proper party government. The evolutionary path of the green parties will emphasize their gradual divergences in terms of political influence, institutional

inclusion, and internal structural strength and stability. As another element that is convincing the choice of this thesis work, the understanding of the disparate green party success and political anchorage would represent another reading key of the green political phenomenon. Lastly, we will present our three case studies and start to further highlight their differences.

Lastly, the precedent part of this thesis would be dedicated to the comparative analysis of our party manifestos. As we will see, here resides the complexity and the originality of my research work as the green parties have not been largely the object of programmatic analysis and especially no comparative research on our three peculiar political parties has been realized yet. In addition, the complexity of the resilience framework and of the political ecological thought will challenge the realization of comparative thematic. Nevertheless, we will identify differences and similarities among our case study manifestos based on their proposal for radical democratic changes; alternative economic models and their redefinition of the human-nature relationship. Finally, we will answer our research question in conclusion part.

State of the art

The study of the western European green parties requires the examination of the political ideas and theoretical foundations of these relatively recent political formations. As we will demonstrate, understand the ecological thought is a difficult mission as it covers a large variety of academic works and theories. The state of the art will also define and clarify the concept of resilience, in its social and ecological terms, and depict its limits and controversies. Moreover, we will return to the historical and theoretical roots of the ecological movements emerging at the end of the 1960s arguing that they constitute the essence and the singularity of the green parties and their political project. The study of the green thought will thus reveal the context of emergence of political ecologists in Western Europe. Henceforth organized as proper political formations, the green representative parties will necessarily have to adapt to the reality of the electoral competition and will thus operate changes in stances and in internal organizations.

1) The Political Ecology and the ecological resilience in the Western EU

The conditions of emergence of the political ecology and ecological resilience are not easy and univocal. These two concepts are both multidisciplinary, often catch-all, and always protean which make their comprehension a difficult task and their interpretations recurrent. However, define and conceptualize these two concepts is fundamental as it enable to understand the theoretical roots of the ecological movements emerging during at the end of the 1960s. These activist-type movements, founded by the « generation of 1968 », have constituted their own ideology, a « green » ideology, which enables us to interrogate the existence of an ecological political family in Western Europe.

a) The roots of political ecology and ecological resilience: understanding and operationalize of the concepts

i. The emergence of the Political Ecology: a shift of paradigm

Political ecology, in the Anglo-Saxon sense of the term, refers to a transdisciplinary academic discipline which incorporates a diversity of sub disciplines such as geography, anthropology, cultural ecology, political economy and history. The date of emergence of this discipline is source of debate. Some scholars argue that this scientific field was born in the aftermath of the second world war and has experienced a period of large expansion during the decades of the 1960s and 1970s (Bourg and Whiteside 2017). Others argue that political ecology has emerged from the 1970s and has been put forth for the first time by Alexander Cockburn, Graham Beackhurst and Eric Wolf (Gautier and Benjaminsen 2012).

Peterson (2000, 2) conceives political ecology as « a trans-disciplinary attempt to integrate natural and social science approaches to understanding the relationship between human and ecological systems ». For him, a

political ecology approach combines the concerns triggered by the ecology, as a natural and scientific discipline, together with the dimensions of political economy which merged diverse scales from local, national to the global scale of the Earth. The trans-disciplinarity feature of political ecology tends, as pointed out by the author, to examine the evolving tensions between the ecosystem changes and the human transformations. Moreover, it is necessary to apprehend environmental degradation by transcending the lonely local level and going through a cross-scale approach that enables to encounter the whole complexity of the human-nature interactions.

While scientific ecology gives a precise description of the current state of the planet, it is the purpose of the political ecology to be prescriptive and normative on the socio-political actions to undertake for the preservation of the Earth. Robbins (2012) makes the distinction between political and apolitical ecology, the latter focuses only on the biophysical and technical aspects of the environment. Here resides indeed the peculiarity of political ecology as it brings a new way to see and to understand ecological changes as they are socially conducted. In that sense, political ecology encounters ecological issues within public policies and social organizations. In addition, ecology become political when it intends deep economic and social transformations together with the reconfiguration of the human-nature relationship. Environmental changes and hazards are no longer only explained by biological and physic features. The exercise of economic and political forces, such as the management of raw resources and wealth distributions, is also taking into consideration. Environmental disasters are interpreted as «unnatural» disasters as they are socially produced (Barca 2014).

As Deléage (2010) explains, political ecology is also an attempt to approach political issues on a global scale. The global environmental and climate crisis impacts certainly in different ways the Earth' regions but it also determined the whole future of the societies. Consequently, the author underlines that political ecology tends to think social and political transformations within the framework of the « economy-ecology-world » (Deléage 2010, 24).

Political Ecology is indeed prescriptive as it claims the reconfiguration of the human-nature relationship. The tragedy of the commons and the breakdown of the ecosystems, whether they are land; ocean; or air, led the scholars to speak about a new period in the earth history that is the aera of the Anthropocene. Paul Josef Crutzen, together with Eugene Stoermer, develops and popularizes the concept of the Anthropocene in 2000 to describe the new geological period in which humanity is entered (Ibid. 2010). This period has been characterized by global warming, the exploitation of natural resources for agricultural monoculture and the extinction of species and vegetation. Thus, political ecology permits to reconcile the two traditionally separated human history with the natural history and indeed to find direct correlation between the histories of industrial capitalism and the ecosystem evolution (Ibid. 2010). The human-nature relationship based on the exploitation of natural resources have been significantly boosted by the capital accumulative human behavior

and has presented deep contradictions. Social-Human system and natural system are interdependent in the sense that human need nature to grow, develop and survive. The green thought thus invites us to rethink the ecosystems no longer as an exploitable stock and thus implies radical behavioral change to exit from this utilitarian management of nature. Deléage (2010) speaks about the re-elaboration of a new social contract between the human and the Earth which shall be no longer based on mercantilism relationships and consumerist lifestyles.

Bourg and Whiteside (2017) have observed different types of ecological thought emerging in the contemporary history. We will not be exhaustive on the multiple types of political ecological thought, rather we will examine the ones that fundamentally influenced the green parties until today. We argue that these different ways to apprehend the linkage between ecology and politics are still nowadays part of the wide theoretical corpus on which the European green parties based their political projects. According to the authors' work of classification of the political ecology theories, we will focus on the school of thought that emerged after the Second World War arguing that they represent strong intellectual influence for the constitution of the green party ideology.

The first type of political ecology thought refers to the « Malthusian ecology » (Bourg and Whiteside 2017). As the oldest school of thought born after 1945, it conceives the demographic growth as the cause of the ecosystem exploitation and the reason of the inadequate natural resources management which triggered notably food production scarcities. These ecologists prescribe indeed a demographic decrease and advocate for deep agricultural reforms at the world scale. The Malthusian and neo-Malthusian ecologists have been very criticized as they target poor countries arguing that their overpopulation represent an ecological threat for the entire humanity. They denounce the incapacity of the under-developed countries to face the problem of demographic explosions and contest their insufficient agricultural production management that recurrently led to scarcity. In addition, as explained the authors, the Malthusian ecologists fustigate the overexploitation of fields and advocate for a new management of resources based on the law of the nature. However, as Bourg and Whiteside (2017) argue, despite that the Malthusians stress the need of economic decrease, they are hardly considered as political ecologists since they recognized the lonely responsibility of the less advanced countries in the environmental crisis. Effectively, this approach can be questioned as a smaller population do not necessarily guarantee a better management of natural resources. Moreover, during the 1970s the scholars of radical geography refuted the link between demographic growth and environmental crisis. In the framework of this thesis research, we can question the political attempt to control demography as an effective way to enhance resilience. Nevertheless, it is possible to observed that the neo-Malthusian ecological thought experienced recurrent recall in the path of the environmental crisis. Fustigations on the demographic density of the southern countries appears today to be rather part of the conservatist ecologist rhetoric from the right-wing of the political spectrum. However, we can still interrogate the eventual influence that the Malthusian type of ecological thought can have on the new left green parties' political proposals.

As presented by Bourg and Whiteside (2017), a second type of green thought is embodied in the defenders of the « Arcadian ecology ». Composed mostly by French scholars such as André Gorz, Ivan Illich or Pierre Fournier, this approach denounces the industrial capitalism and the liberal market economies that encourage behaviors of capital accumulation and natural capital exploitation. As a critic of the modernization theories and of the economic efficiency, the arcadian ecology advocates for a return to pre-consumerist societies in which the non-accumulation of capital and the sufficient lifestyle were better orienting the human existence toward the well-being and self-fulfillment. Member of this school of thought, Ivan Illich developed in the 1970s the famous concept of the counter-productivity. The notion stresses the gap between the industrial productivity and the final material unsatisfaction of the individuals. Bourg and Whiteside (2017) underline that the environmental consequences of the capitalist economy, such as the climate change and the degradation of natural resources, are therefore a secondary object of contestation for these arcadian ecologists. By underlying the need to go back to a simpler and non-extravagant lifestyle, which would satisfy the lonely essential needs, this theory apprehends environmental crisis as another manifestation of the limits of capitalist model. In addition, Bourg and Whiteside (2017) add that the class struggle pattern is not considered in this approach. Thus, the arcadian ecologists do not look at the struggle of power as inherent cause of the unequal access to natural resources. As we will examine latter in the following part of the thesis, this courant of political ecology represents a crucial intellectual ground for the new social movements and the *new politic* alternative parties emerging at the end of the 1960s. We will see that the European green parties considerer and denounce the capitalistic economy as central actor of the environmental crisis. Therefore, the greens will also tend to compose with more technical and scientific aspects of political ecology and thus integrate biological and physic facts into their political projects.

Since the 1970s, a third approach of political ecology has emerged named the « authoritarian ecology » (Ibid. 2017). The authoritarian ecologists stress the need of a strong hierarchical and centralized government, empowered with the purpose to manage the environmental crisis with an iron hand. Starting from the observation that individual behaviors are motivated only by their private interests, the eco-authoritarians assumes that liberal democracy deeply misunderstands the human-nature relationship and fails to manage the tragedy of the commons. Consequently, while in liberal democracy the individuals are free to consume and overexploit natural resources, an eco-authoritarian regime, constituted by an ecological and scientific elite, would ensure drastic rules for the community' will. As emphasized by Bourg and Whiteside (2017), even the authoritarian ecological though is not considered as a proper school of thought and the approach is recurrently used by the right-wing parties to qualified the greens as undemocratic. This approach permits us to consider if green parties are adhering or rather opposing to liberal democracy as a fertile floor for the implementation and for the development of resilience or if they eventually rather advocate for more authoritarian form of government.

The fourth school of thought presented by Bourg and Whiteside (2017) is the « Institutional ecology ». Largely diffused today among stakeholders, this school tends to see institutions, procedures, and reforms as effective tools to answer to the current environmental challenges. As the authors distinguish, there are different types of institutional strategies and tools. The first institutional strategies to protect natural resources and their use consist in giving fundamental rights to the environment. A new type of human-nature relationship would be to give to the ecosystems' components, such as for instance the ocean water or a forest, a legal status which would be inspired by the rights accorded to individuals. Limit and reverse the negative effects of human activity on the ecosystem, some institutional ecologists stress indeed the need to recognize nature as an object of law. The authors illustrate that this could be achieved in three different ways. On the one hand, the environment obtains a special place within the constitutional order which would enable to make its protection increasingly important in legal terms (Hayward 2005). Another strategy is to develop an international recognition of environmental rights in order to trigger the legal responsibility of the states and the companies in the environmental field thanks to judicial procedures (Mason 2005). Then, another institutional tool is to implement an Ombudsman, defenders of the next generation and controlling that sustainability is enforced (Ibid, 2017). A new form of ecological representation in parliament represents another type of institutional change which enables new type of representation, new rule of functioning toward the constitution of an ecological deliberative democracy favoring dialogue between citizens (Ibid, 2017). We will examine later if the green parties have rather proposed the implementation of institutional tools such as those described or if they advocated changes of the whole institutional order.

The fifth and last type of ecological thought analyzed by Bourg and Whiteside (2017) and which we will examine is the so-called « Grassroots ecology ». Emerging during the 1970s, this bottom-up approach underlines the need of behavioral transformation and lifestyle change of the individuals at the local scale. This school of thought distinguishes itself from the others as it considers that ecology must start from small scales while waiting radical top-down wide transformations. The authors emphasize indeed that the grassroots ecologists advocate for deep societal changes which should rather first focus on communal or regional levels. Today, we can observe a large number of local initiatives for the environment that can be considered as manifestation of the grassroots ecology. For instance, at the cities level, many urban gardening has been built in the French cities. As we will examine, the emergence of the ecological movements during the 1960s will revindicate deep societal changes in behavior and social practices firstly outside the political institutions and the national level of power. Disillusioned by the capacity of the political elite to radically shift the way to address environmental issues and the management of natural resources, the new social movements will rather favor political activism at the local layers.

Indeed, political ecology as it is currently apprehended by the green parties draw its inspiration from all these types of ecological thought emerging within history. The modern thoughts of political ecology, as listed by Bourg and Whiteside (2017), have thus part of the current corpus of the European green parties who

reappropriated and combined them in the elaboration of their political project. The political ecology ideology is founded on a large range of political traditions and divers societal projects which evolved with times making the theoretical corpus of the greens without apparent limits (Villalba 2016, 107).

Hence, the political ecology appears as a protean concept which is difficult to understand in its entirety. Flipo (2016) identifies two challenges for political ecology. The first one is its conceptual closeness with many other terms and the second is the plurality of the issues the discipline attempts to cover (Ibid., 2016). The author demonstrates that in public discourses, political ecology is recurrently assimilated to other notions such as « sustainable development »; « environmental ethic »; or also « policy of nature ».

Furthermore, the difficulty of conceptualization of political ecology resides also in its thin border with a political ideology. According to Freedon (1998), who theorized the concepts of the green discourse and of the green ideology, political ecology embodied a change of mindset, of attitude, and of life-style. First, political ecology represents a shift of paradigm as it advocates that the nature should be the guiding factor of human conduct and not the opposite. The author highlights that reducing the environmental pressure goes necessary through the desacralization of the human presence on Earth and the necessity to « decentering » the human actions. This eco-centric viewpoint of the human-environment relationship is the first constituting element of the green ideology (Ibid., 1998). The second element of the green ideology, or « conceptual cluster » as the authors called, is the central value of protection of all forms of life, including the fauna; the flora; but also the human life. With the goal to preserve biodiversity, laws and restrictions must be implemented on the « purposive » human behaviors and actions. Consequently, more than a shift in approaching nature, the human societies must design and perform economic and social transformations to safeguard this relationship in a sustainable way. Thirdly, the ideology of political ecology also promotes holism (Ibid., 1998). As the authors defines, holism refers to the consideration of all the interdependencies and of the harmony between the forms of life. The accomplishment of human and societal flourishing and self-realization is another important component of the green thought as well as the goal of a healthy equilibrium among the inhabitants of the Earth. The fourth and last core concept of the green ideology is the prescription of new social practices and human lifestyle (Ibid., 1998). Political ecology believes in the fact that immediate actions and behavioral transformations are decisive even at small scales, such as the one of the cities.

We will now demonstrate that political ecology and the resilience framework are closely connected. Both tend to rethink the human-nature relationships and advocate for deep social, economic, and political changes. These two trans-disciplinary approaches make their understanding a difficult task but also crucial tools to tackle and address environmental challenges. Furthermore, we can also assume that the plurality of issues covered both by the political ecology and the resilience thinking enables their perennity and success in public discourses.

ii. Understand the concept of ecological resilience and of socio-ecological resilience

In a context of increasing uncertainty and uncontrollable biophysical and environmental conditions, the concept of resilience has an increasing success in public policies for climate change adaptation (Turner 2014; Rudolf 2013). Where during the 1980s, « risks » and « vulnerability » were the leading concepts when considering climate change, Rudolf (2013) explains that since the following decades ecological and climate « resilience » start to be increasingly used and famous in environmental public policies. Other scholars even argue that the resilience approach is replacing the well-know « sustainable development » (Davoudi et al. 2012). As new conceptual tool to fight climate change and its impacts, resilience become always more the object of international policy programs as for instance the United Nations (UN) Paris Agreement of 2016 or either the European Union (EU) Biodiversity Strategy to 2020 (Sterk, van de Leemput, and Peeters 2017). In addition, the term has gain a significant attention in diverse academic fields which lead to an explosion of studies, scientific publications and the creation of new institutions such as networks, alliances and journals on this thematic (Wardekker et al. 2020).

Parallelly to its actual popularity, the multiplicity of the definitions featured in literature shows resilience as an ambiguous, vague and plural concept. Nevertheless, we will see that, in its ecological and social sense, the « umbrella » concept is well-defining in literature.

Firstly, we will thus examine the existing literature on the concepts of ecological and social resilience and then socio-ecological resilience, their historical roots, and evolutions. Secondly, analyzing resilience necessarily implies to be careful and to consider the current reality of the term and its use in political discourse. We will indeed emphasize that the term has different significations and refers to several mode of governance due to the speaker' political orientation, as for instance the neoliberal interpretation of resilience (Bourbeau 2015).

▪ Resilience between the ecosystem and society, toward the socio-ecological resilience

As Tisseron (2017) highlights, the term resilience comes from the Latin *resilire*, which means rebound and that is composed of *salire*, meaning jump and of the prefix *-re* indicating a backward movement. The original modern meaning of resilience comes from the Physics field and refers to « the capacity of an object to return to its prior state after a shock or a continuous pression ». It is only during the 1970s that the term is transferred to social sciences and particularly in the field of Ecology to describe a state of an ecosystem.

The first scholar who theorized and defined resilience in its ecological dimension is the Canadian Crawford Stanley Holling in 1973 in its article *Resilience and Stability of Ecological Systems*. Ecological resilience refers indeed to « a measure of the persistence of systems and of their ability to absorb change and disturbance and still maintain the same relationships between populations or states variables » (Holling 1973, 14). To

understand this definition, we first need to define the « systems » mentioned. They refer to the ecosystems also called ecological systems or natural systems and can be defined as « systems composed by an environment (biotope) and an ensemble of species (biocenosis) in which they live, feed and breed » thus in constant interaction with each other (Larousse Dictionary, free translation). The tropical forests, coral reefs and the tundra are specific examples of ecosystems. A resilient ecosystem is thus a system able to resist to an external change or disturbance, such as an oil spill in the sea, and that can rapidly return to its previous equilibrium, for instance a quick recovery of fish species and their aquatic environment affected by the oil spill. Ecological resilience seems to be indeed a two-part process composed first of the resistance to the shock and secondly of its recovery from it (Mcclanahan et al. 2012). An example widely used in literature was the case of the ecosystem of the Chernobyl contaminated zone after the nuclear disaster of the 26th of April 1986. Indeed, after the nuclear incident, the absence of human activities in the radioactive zone of Chernobyl allowed the biodiversity to flourish again as animals and plants progressively habited again the zone (Baker and Chesser 2000). The example of the Chernobyl zone as resilient ecosystem is therefore to be nuanced as the zone is highly radioactive and the apparent rehabilitation of the ecosystem do not ensure its health. Another example of external shock which alter the equilibrium of an ecosystem is the massive exploitation of natural resources. One key element in the definition of Holling is thus the internal capacity of the ecosystem to face an exogenous perturbation. Human activities can trigger alterations and internal changes within an ecosystem leading it to behave in an unexpected and surprising manner and often leading to a resource crisis (Gunderson 2000). In that sense, the ability to tolerate, to cope and recover from a crisis without shifting to another state, such as resources scarcity for instance, make an ecosystem resilient.

The ecological resilience is thus a type of ecosystem behavior after an external shock. Holling (1973) distinguishes indeed two types of ecosystem behavior: one is resilient, and one is stable. While he conceives the stability of the ecosystem as its rapid ability « to return to an equilibrium state after a temporary disturbance » (Holling 1973, 17), a resistant ecosystem both considers the measure of the speediness of return to the equilibrium and the resistance capacity to the disturbance. Thus, ecological resilience is a wider concept than stability and both imply two different approaches of natural resources management (Ibid. 1973). On the one hand, stability implies a predictable world with the necessity to maintain as little fluctuation as possible in the ecosystem's natural life. On the other hand, resilience assumes the world uncertainty and the persistence of successive external disturbances to ecological community. Ecosystems are in that sense constantly in a transient state.

Ecological resilience theory represents a shift of perspective among the ecologists of the 1970s. It nuances the statement of the self-repairing and natural balance of ecosystems and assessing the ecological limits of growth. A crucial notion that goes along with ecological resilience is indeed the ecosystem state of equilibrium. In its state of equilibrium, the interactions between the communities of organism and their environments are self-

organized as a harmonious natural unit. The destabilization of the natural equilibrium by human activities could be fatal to the ecosystem self-organization, processes, and structures if the amount of disturbance is too massive to be handled (Ibid. 1973). Consequently, there are non-turning points to the natural equilibrium proving that ecosystem resilience capacity is necessarily limited, we will examine later these thresholds. The critical framework of ecological resilience notably denounces the intensive and industrial agriculture and the overexploitation of natural resources (Walker and Cooper 2011). It advocates a shift in natural resources management and thus the necessary adaptation of human behavior, activities, and relationship with the ecosystems.

Since the 1990s, new researches on ecological resilience tend to go beyond the ecological systems examination and expand it to the Socio-Ecological Systems (SESs) (Berkes and Folke 1998), also called the human-environment systems (Liu et al. 2007). The concept of ecosystem has showed limitations and deficiencies to properly analyse human-nature relationships, socio-ecological systems indeed better consider the complexity of the world. In addition, SESs resilience also goes beyond the social resilience defined as the capacity of social entities, such as citizens; communities and societies, to « tolerate, absorb, cope with and adjust to environmental and social threats of various kind » (Keck and Sakdapolrak 2013, 8).

While ecological or social resiliencies encounter separately the capacities of ecosystems or societies to face and recover external shock, SESs, as new object of resilience are defined as « complex, integrated systems in which humans are part of nature » (Berkes, Folke, and Colding 1998). Indeed, the concept deeper considers the interdependences between humans and their environments as core of the planet well-functioning, and particularly the human dependence on environmental resource. Socio-ecological resilience incorporates human community ability to act for the recovery of the ecosystem and of population to this perturbation and for deep societal transformations. Just like ecosystems, SESs are thus characterized by their non-linear behaviors due to the world uncertainty (Sterk, van de Leemput, and Peeters 2017). Closer to Political Ecology, socio-ecological resilience research area is a multi-disciplinary field and further assess natural resources management and environmental governance policies. This framework is in that extent more adequate for our work as it integrates societal, economical, and political implications of the concept of resilience.

Socio-ecological resilience has been defined as « the capacity of a social-ecological system to deal with change and meanwhile continue to develop » (Folke et al., 2010). Three composing features of this resilience have been identified which are: the amount of change and shock the system can support without altering its state of stability; its capacity to learn and adapt on the base of previous experiences; its ability to continually self-organized (Ibid. 2010).

The first component of this definition is the persistence of the SESs, that is to say their ability to keep their states and identities while facing change and shock. As we previously saw, the capacity of the ecosystem to recover from an external shock and to return to its pre-disturbance state has inerrant limits and necessarily depends on the amount of change and shock this system can support without be alerted. Proposed by the Stockholm Resilience Center in 2009, the Safe Operating Space (SOS) is a crucial framework for the development of global socio-ecological resilience governance. The safe operating space for humanity refers to « the situation where the capacity of the planet Earth to provide life-support systems for humanity is not endangered, and the adaptive capacities of human societies might not be overburdened. » (Rockström et al. 2009)³. The challenge of the resilient ecosystem is thus to remain in its SOS despite change (Sterk et al, 2017). With the purpose to measure the persistency of the ecosystems, we assume that societies necessarily have to self-study and self-learn from the previous experience.

The second feature of a resilient SESs is their adaptability. It has been defined as « the capacity to [...] adjust its responses to changing external drivers and internal processes and thereby allow for development » (Folke et al. 2010). To adapt to external shock refers indeed to the ability to constantly re-organize itself in order to face and recover from it and consequently reduce the vulnerability of the system. In literature, adaptability is linked to defensive risk management practices to react to environmental hazards and uncertainties (Dauphiné and Provitolo 2007). The idea of adaptability does not imply deep social changes but rather simply innovates and acts in order to deal with current change (Sterk, van de Leemput, and Peeters 2017). There are two types of ecological resilience approach: the reactive resilience and the proactive resilience (Berkes, Folke, and Colding 1998). Adaptability represents the reactive type and covers the measure targeting the recovery of the ecosystem. It gathers indeed a set of short-term policies and actions implementing *ex post* the disturbance for the purpose of the degraded ecosystem restoration. The strength of this approach of resilience resides in the ability to manage catastrophe and risk such as floods or fires for instance.

Thirdly, resilient SESs have also the capacity to profoundly transform their structures and to face risks in an offensive way. Transformability has been defined as the ability of a system to constantly rethink and shift its developmental model into new pathway (Folke et al. 2010). It is based on the observation that the current environmental governance is failing and thus to foresee needed structural changes (de Bruijn et al. 2017). Transformability thus includes proactive resilient measures which are implemented *a priori* the potential future shock with a long-term and systemic view (Gunderson 2000). This approach enables societies to learn from their previous mistake and to anticipate upcoming possible ones and reduce the likelihood of future ecological degradation. In that sense, transformability is the most complex component of resilience and

³ Rockström et al (2009) identify indeed nine planetary boundaries that socio-ecological system must not cross to not endangered humanity development on earth. These nine thematic boundaries or « biophysical thresholds » are: Climate change; Ocean acidification; Stratospheric ozone; Biogeochemical nitrogen and phosphorous cycles; Global freshwater use; Biodiversity loss rate; Chemical pollution and Atmospheric aerosol loading. The three planetary boundary of climate change, rate of biodiversity loss and change of global nitrogen cycle have already been overstepped.

emphasizes the fact that humans are a singular component of the SESs as they alone can shape future changes (Gunderson 2000).

Taking into consideration of the socio-economical resilience into agenda setting goes necessarily through, as Davoudi et al. (2012) explain, a more « radical and transformational agenda » which profoundly challenged the current neoliberal order and political thought. The authors contest the understanding of resilience as a « step back » but rather claim that it represents a crucial dynamic tool and radical agenda to re-invent societies. As suggested by Maclean, Cuthill, and Ross (2014), implementing resilience can be operationalized toward some thematical categories of policies which are:

- « Knowledge, skills and learning »: these categories gather all the policies targeting the improvement of skills and knowledge (toward research programs, partnership) as well as educational measures to raise awareness and stimulate innovations.
- « Community Networks »: this category is linked to the multi-scale approach of resilience and tend to increase interconnection between citizens.
- « People-place connections »: it refers to the consideration of the human-environment interdependencies and connections and develop a new type of sustainable relationship.
- « Diverse and innovative economy »: enhanced resilience goes necessarily through the implementation of an alternative economical model.
- « Engaged governance »: a resilient political agenda must have as its purpose to increase public involvement in policy decisions with a model of participatory and deliberative democracy.

More complex than the single social resilience, socio-ecological resilience appears therefore hardly transplantable into specific plan of action for sustainable development as it integrates cross-scales, cross-timelines, and cross-fields public policies (Spears et al. 2015). Indeed, socio-ecological resilience attempts to integrate all the complexity of the reality, the wide range of human-nature interactions. To be operationalized, socio-ecological resilience thus needs to be multi-level and interlinked local, regional, national, and global scales within the adaptive governance of climate change. Secondly, resilience of SESs must be thought as a transdisciplinary object taking in consideration all the disciplinary fields enabled to increase our understanding of socio-ecological changes such as for instance economy, finance, social organization, and sociology but also ethical concerns. Thirdly, implementing socio-ecological resilience is also designing a political program which considers the past, the present situation and the future state of ecosystems and social organization. Finally, socio-ecological resilience is *per se* cross-systems as it attempts to exhaustively analyze the diversity of ecosystems existing on Earth together with the multiple social systems to elaborate sustainable plan of action for the climate.

The review on the literature about resilience has highlighted the existing gap between several attempts of scientific definitions of the term and its practical operation into public policy. Many scholars stress the impossibility to measure and consequently enhance socio-ecological resilience into concrete policy recommendation (Barroca, DiNardo, and Mboumoua 2013; Quenault 2013; Ingalls and Stedman 2016). Here resides the challenge and the difficulty of our thesis research that we will address in the second part of this thesis.

- Resilience in public and political discourse: a senseless concept?

The concept of resilience is characterized in the literature to be transdisciplinary, polysemic and even possessor of « nebulous meaning » (Duit 2016). Kane and Vanderlinden examine exhaustively all the diverse meanings of resilience according to their thematic fields: the term is thus used across nine different disciplines and among three diverse historical contexts. The multiple significations of resilience lead to the current confusion around the notion, that is highly criticized for being meaningless. The technicity and complexity of the resilience thinking as we examined it, make its instrumentalization easy by political actors (Barroca, DiNardo, and Mboumoua 2013). Currently, the term resilience is contested for being rather a communication tool to attract the audience rather than a meaningful concept for the elaboration of ecosystem management policies (Davoudi et al. 2012). However, the different interpretations of resilience considerably impact the decision-making and the plans developed by politicians (Wardekker et al. 2020). That is why it is important to examine some elements of the discourse analysis in order to understand how political actors think and consider resilience.

With the purpose to reduce the confusion and the misunderstanding of the concept, Ferguson (2019) distinguishes different « discourses of resilience » within the current climate security debate. The neoliberal discourse of climate resilience aims to transmit to vulnerable states and citizens the necessary requisites to face and survive to global climate uncertainties. This neoliberal interpretation rather favored rhetoric such as « risk management » and « individual responsibility » (Ferguson 2019). The author argues that the purpose of this resilience discourse is thus to secure states and citizens without questioning the neoliberal socio-economical order. This neoliberal interpretation of resilience refers to the previously seen capacity of adaptability of the socio-ecological system and to reactive measures but does not include the third feature of resilience which is the transformability. Whereas the ecological resilience discourse aims to avoid the disturbance of the equilibrium between human societies and ecosystem. This second interpretation of resilience includes indeed the capacity of transformation of the system and thus corresponds to the definition of the socio-ecological resilience that we examine before. While the ecological resilience discourse thus revendicates deep political renovations, the neo-liberal resilience discourse rather targets to maintain the socio-economic status-quo (Ferguson 2019). We assume indeed that the green parties must consider the concept of

resilience through this second type of discourse and make a different use of the term than mainstream parties which rather interpretate resilience in its neoliberal sense.

This protean character of resilience appears to be both the cause and the consequence of its use in various public policy fields and political parties' discourses belonging either to the left or to right side of the spectrum. However, the neoliberal use of the term does not consider all the complexity of socio-ecological resilience and seems rather to be a mean of communication of neoliberal ideological project (Bourbeau 2015). While the rhetoric of resilience is today recurrent in the liberal emergency management of environmental crisis, the « ecological » use of the term seems to be rooted in a more long-term perspective. Even if this distinction within the term of resilience appears to be subtle, it is a crucial one as the way to conceive and address the environmental and climate emergency is a distinctive aspect of the green political thought.

After considering the two crucial conceptual frameworks of political ecology and the socio-ecological resilience, we need to go back to the history to understand the emergence of environmental issue in Western European societies.

b) At the origins of the western European greens: from social movements to political party formations

Analyzing and comparing green political parties in Western Europe requires necessarily to go back to their historical, ideological, and social roots. The decades of the 1960s and the 1970s are the genesis of rising awareness on natural resources degradation and on the planet unsustainable pollution. The cross-border contestation of May 1968 represents a crucial moment for the emergence of environmentalism in politics and led to the formation of the so-called « new social movements » (Delwit and De Waele 1996). The review of the literature on the new social movements will highlight the causes of their emergence during this peculiar period. Firstly, the new social movements have been interpreted in terms of post-materialistic value shift (Inglehart 1977). Secondly, they have been explained by the rise of *new politics* ideals and policy agenda (Kaelberer 1993). The presentation of this historical frame is significant for our thesis as the European green parties belong to this common background of emergence. This part will thus enable to understand when and how the green ideas first entered the western European political sphere and progressively became crucial objects of agenda setting.

As Delwit and De Waele (1996) explain, the succession of environmental hazards significantly impacted the western European societies at the end of the 1960s. The two tanker shipwrecks on the coast of Brittany in France in 1967 and 1978; the herbicide tank explosion in Milan in 1976; and particularly the Chernobyl nuclear incident on the 26th of April 1986 are crucial historical moments contributing to the general raising concern for environmental degradation across the old continent (Ibid., 1996). Indeed, in the path of the decades of the

1960s and the 1970s, the impacts of these environmental incidents are directly measurable and observable on the surrounding populations. Toxic smog, oil spills, and massive deaths of flora and fauna have had a lasting impact on the ecosystems, the air, and water quality. In addition, the circumstances in which the Soviet Union hid during several days the nuclear reactor explosion, and the discovery of abnormal radioactivity levels by the adjacent countries contributed to the widespread discontent (Ibid., 1996). The increasing visibility and mediatization of these environmental accidents triggered abundant movements of contestation across Europe (Eckersley 1992). The obvious contradictions of the liberal-capitalist economic model of development together with the apparent incapacity to manage the socio-environmental problems contributed to the generalization of a feeling of loss of control over environment (Ibid., 1992).

The rising awareness on environmental issues during these decades is also observable at the international level. Eckersley (1992) speaks about an international recognition of environmental issues, as water pollution; scarcity of natural resources; or ozone pollution, since the 1960. Other scholars rather prefer speak about a renewed interest (Delwit and Waele 1999). The first Earth Day is celebrated in 1970, and two years later, the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment is held in Stockholm. In Western Europe, new environmental laws and trans-disciplinary study programs on environmental issues multiplied during this period (Eckersley 1992). On the 6th of April 1968, the Club of Rome is created and gathered scientists, industrials, and intellectuals with the purpose to sensitize populations and decision-makers on the negative impacts of economic activities on the ecosystems health (Eckersley 1992). The Club of Rome published in 1976 a crucial work entitled « The Limit of Growth » denouncing the contradictions of the capitalist economic model. Also called the « Meadows Report », it highlighted the impacts of the race for economic growth and the demographic increase on the environment and advocated for production slowdown and demographic reduction measures. This report had a resounding effect in western European countries and was recurrently mentioned during demonstrations for the environment defense. As highlighted Eckersley (1992), the 1972 United Nations Conference on the environment is another important international meeting for the politization of environmental issues. Held in Stockholm in June, the conference, entitled « Only one Earth », provided recommendations and established common principles for the States in view of their environmental crisis management (Ibid., 1992). This international gathering has been the starting point of the United Nations Program for the Environment. Entered in the era of post-prosperity, the western European societies widely questioned the post-world war consensus on growth and experienced a wide of ecological consciousness (Corduener 2016).

In this context of European and international recognition of environmental issues, a new social demand for political ecology emerged. As Müller-Rommel (1994) demonstrates, the Green parties in Western Europe have started with a similar pathway: they are the products of alliances and networks triggered by citizens at the local level focusing on socio-environmental issues, which have been neglected by the mainstream parties in power.

Indeed, by the end of the 1960s, many local and regional environmental groups spontaneously emerged across European countries. At their birth, these ecological movements were rather focusing on a single or a limited number of issues, such as the fight against nuclear power, the defense of the air or water quality, their progressively enlarge their areas of actions (Müller-Rommel 1994). These citizens' initiatives have been largely studied by the literature toward the new social movements' theory explaining the reasons of their emergence in western Europe at this peculiar period. A social movements had been defined in the literature as a network of individuals, groups, and organizations developing informal interactions and based on a political and cultural conflicts opposing two groups of divergent identities (Diani 1992). Coglianese (2001) adds to this definition that the new social movements share the common purpose of social changes. Three major new social movements raised during the 1960s, called in the literature as: the ecological and anti-nuclear movements; the peace movements and lastly the feminist movements. In line with our object of research, we will rather focus on the analyze of the firsts as they represent a breeding ground for the green ideas and are considered to be the ancestors of the green parties (Lowe and Rudig 1986). However, it is important to recall that all three type of movements maintained close relations, shared of ideas, and developed solidarities that will enable intersectionality of their fights (Müller-Rommel 1994).

We will not exhaustively examine the large diversity of citizens' initiatives emerging at the end of the 1960s. However, we can briefly present a crucial example of new social movement that diffused among the European countries after May 1968. Originated from the United States, the ecological movement « Friend of the Earth » was created in 1968 by David Brower and has widely diffused across Europe. The original purpose of this ecologist group was to fight against the nuclear power and its dangerous repercussions both for the environment and for citizens⁴. As Müller-Rommel (1994) underlines, in the aftermath of the first Oil crisis in 1973, many European countries decided to expand their nuclear energy plans. This decision considerably contributed to the rise of anti-nuclear movements and facilitated the development of international solidarity among them. In 1970, the organization was transplanted in France entitled « Amis de la Terre » and became famous for its activism against the construction of the new nuclear reactor at Fessenheim and against the nuclear tests in the French Polynesia⁵. In 1976, the same association created a branch in Belgium and extended its field of action to federalism and autogestion (Delwit 1999). This environmental movement, like the other ecological organizations, was originally preferred activist action methods as for instance the organization of local council consultations and public hearings (Müller-Rommel 1994). Then, some environmental movements ambitioned to participate to their national political life by developing electoral campaigns (Boy

⁴ For further information on this ecological movement see its official website: 'Histoire'. n.d. Accessed 23 September 2021. <https://www.amisdelaterre.org/nous-connaitre/une-histoire-des-victoires/>.

⁵ For further information on the organization see their official website: Pisvin, Daniel, and Jean-Philippe Body. 2021. '1970s : un terreau contestataire'. Les Amis de la Terre Belgique. 23 September 2021. <https://www.amisdelaterre.be/1970s-un-terreau-contestataire>.

1999; Delwit 1999). As we will examine later, the future green parties will draw their support on the new social movement and will often maintain close relationships with them (Boy 1999; Delwit 1999).

With the purpose to understand both why environmental issues became a central at this period, and the deep causes of the massive popular discontent, we need to review the theories of the new social movements.

One largely recognized approach interpreting the rise of the green ideas during the 1960s is the theory of the post-materialistic values change. This theory is accountable to the scholar Ronald Inglehart (1977) who speaks about a « silent revolution » occurring at these times. He argues that western European societies experienced a secular change in values and behavioral attitudes which enabled the emergence of new social movements. Indeed, he observes a widespread shift away from the unquestioned dominance of economic and security values toward higher considerations for issues as: freedom; health; quality of life; liberty of expression; self-determination and democracy. He assumes that this shift from materialistic values to post-materialistic values is accountable for a generational and living standard cleavage which divides European societies in two groups with different political priorities. The authors hypothesis of scarcity hypothesis can be explained as followed. On the one hand, the older generations, grew up during world wars and economic depressions, share values of safety and material needs and make as first priorities the national security, the protection of private property, the importance of tradition and authority within states and the family (Inglehart 1977). On the other hand, younger generations, also called in the literature as « baby boomers »; « generation X »; or « soixante-huitards », who grew up during the post-war prosperity and security of the Golden Sixties are rather concerned by physiological needs and qualitative revendications. This new generation also prioritized political issues for fair trade, peace, and solidarity with the low-income countries, together with the protection of the environment. As explained by Inglehart (1977), the emergence of post-materialistic values has constituted an ideological base and support for the new social movements which all revendicate liberalism of morals, tolerance, anti-clericalism, refusal of authority, against militarism and nuclear and support to feminism and natural equilibrium. Lowe and Rudig (1986) argue that the adhesion to these new values is, in many western European countries, a predictable factor to the participation to the new ecological movements and to their militantism activist form. The author highlights that the shift in value have considerably enhance new environmental attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs toward a « post-acquisitive » nature. The Maslow's hierarchy of need had been re-used to explain this shift. As Inglehart (1977) underlines, the « higher order » needs such as intellectual recognition, affective concerns, and other non-material needs became predominant instead of the post-war needs of economic stability and prosperity. Hence, the value shift and the new political priorities has enabled the development of a green « sensibility » in Western Europe during the decades of the 1960s and 1970s (Ibid., 1977).

In addition, the socio-political cleavage theory is another approach contributing to explain the emergence of environmental movements in western Europe. As Seiler (1999) defines, a political cleavage is as social phenomenon triggered by a deep and brutal historical change, such as for instance a political or cultural revolution, and which involved two confronting groups. The author explains that the classical version of the theory, developed by Lipset and Rokkan in 1967, classified four historical socio-political cleavages in western European politics which are: the church-state cleavage; the center-periphery cleavage; the owner-worker cleavage; and the urban-rural cleavage. The new political parties were structured based on this classical cleavage paradigm, which represents indeed a fundamental classificatory tool for political scientists. However, many authors argue that the political parties' systems in Europe had been « defrizzed » since the beginning of the 20th century due to the emergence of new cleavages (Inglehart 1977; Lowe and Rudig 1986; Seiler 1999). Hardly classifiable among the four cleavages, the anti-nuclear and ecological movements, raised in the aftermath of May 1968, have thus questioned the traditional cleavage theory. As Lowe and Rudig (1986) highlight, the emergence of the ecologists is the manifestation of a fifth cleavage appearing at the beginning of the 1970s and characterized by two sub-clashes. The first opposition is the one among materialists and post-materialistic values that we examined previously. The second refers, as demonstrated Seiler (1999), to the clash between the *old politic* embodied in the mainstream parties, to the so-called *new politics* which tend to describe the anti-establishment movements of the New Left and the New Right. While the New Rights movements reconnect with regionalism, autonomism, and xenophobia, the new left are the defenders of the post-materialistic values (Seiler 1999). The greens are indeed more easily classified as post-materialists and new politic activists among this fifth emerging cleavage. As supporters of the new political ideals, the green movements advocate for alternative political organization characterized by a non-partisan structure and without a professionalized political elite and generally claiming to be « anti-parti parti ». As we will see latter, the green movement also emerged as an « amateur-activist » party type in reaction to the representative democratic system (Lucardie and Frankland 2016). According to Kaelberer (1993), these environmental movements are the promoters of a new left policy program: more libertarian than the traditional left they have developed a comprehensive and alternative agenda focusing of the environmental protection but also a large range of concerns such as women's rights or civil liberties. Kaelberer (1993) defines the green project as a new left agenda different from the old left agenda. As the other new left parties, the ecologists extend further the notion of exploitation to gender relations and to international relations, they defend women's and civil right and peace. In the path of the Cold War, the greens incorporate the concern on the inequalities between the northern-industrialized and the southern-developing countries as another global pattern to think exploitation and thus advocate for solidarity with the Third World. Kaelberer (1993) describes thus the new left agenda and project as « a set of interconnected critiques of the dominant pattern of policymaking in social, economic and international affairs in western Europe ». In many western European countries, green parties are adopting these new left programmatic profile during the 1970s (Müller-Rommel 1994).

As Kaelberer (1993) explained, another approach had been elaborated to explain the multiplications of the social movements at the end of the 1960s. Developed by Karl Werner Brand, this theory argues that social and political movements have a lifespan and thus follow a proper cycle of life. What have been considered as the « new » movements, such as anti-nuclear and ecological movements; feminist; and peace movements, would not be the manifestation of a novel contestations and discontents. The Brand's approach of new social movement thus considered that social and political protests are constantly repeating, as they rise and fall. Nevertheless, even if the « new » social movements seem to follow this pattern of development, we will examine that the May 1968's ideas will therefore endure, notably with the creation of the European green parties.

As Delwit and De Waele (1996) explain, the progressive weakening and breathlessness of the new social movements will convinced the ecologists to constitute a proper partisan formations influencing on the decision-making processes. At their early years, the new social movements and the recurrent demonstrations have impacted some important political debates, as the talks on nuclear issues. Nevertheless, the mobilization progressively decreased in some countries, and the political appetite of the ecologists raised (Ibid., 1996). They will thus transition toward a more traditional party lifestyle and structure (Ibid., 1996). The authors argue that during the 1970s, the European ecologists started to participate in elections by creating lists at the local and regional levels, they have thus entered the electoral game. By contrast, the 1980s is the period of their formal constitution as green parties, with the will to compete to the executive or federal level of power. The progressive advancement of the green parties into their national political system and institutions would be the object of another part of this work of research.

To conclude, at the end of the 1960s the green ideas have experienced an increasing politization in western Europe and worldwide. The ecologists were first organized in networks of citizens' initiative, associations, and other forms of contestation movements. Part of the so-called new social movements, the popular mobilizations for the defense of the environment and natural resources flourished and developed close relations across the European continent. These environmental struggles will constitute the common roots of the future European green parties.

c) The green ideology and the constitution of a proper political family

The emergence of the new environmental movements during the 1960s and 1970s decades led to the increasing visibility of political ecology across the European political scenes. As we examined, political ecology is the theoretical basis for the constitution of a proper green identity. The focus of this part is thus to interrogate the existence of a homogeneous and singular political family which would gather the western European green parties. To do so, we will first distinguish the conservative ecology from the new left green as distinct modes of thinking which are not part of the same political family. This distinction made, we will

then examine the peculiar identity of the green political family and claim that it differs from the other new left political thoughts of Socialism and Marxism. We argue that green parties share common characteristics that enable to highlight the distinctiveness of this political grouping. The specificity of the green ideology notably resides in the plural composition of political ecology and its multiple corpus of theories. The green internal party' organization, the peculiar socio-economic profile of the adherents and voters together with the original political style are other defining features of this green political family.

As Delwit and De Waele (1996) demonstrate, at the emergence of the new social movements the ecologists comprised two different forms of criticism against the industrial and consumerist capitalistic society. On the one hand, the new left ecologists, supported by new social movements networks, have developed a radical position and will then constitute an alternative type of party characterized by a comprehensive ideological agenda (Kaelberer 1993). The new left ecologists tend to rethink the society in the post-industrial era and are calling for radical socio-economic transformations. On the other hand, the conservative or reactionary ecologists, rather avoid connections with the new left, they refute progress and are nostalgic of the pre-industrial society with its simple lifestyle (Delwit and De Waele 1996). As the authors underline, these two radically different ecological positions were initially coexisting during the resurgence of environmental concerns during the 1960s. Then these two tendencies of the ecology will considerably move away from each other which make them member of different political families (Ibid. 1996). Indeed, as Lucardie (2016) highlights, the conservative ecologists are rather located on the center-right of the political spectrum and privileged the conservators and the Christian democrats as political partners. To some extent, these right-wing green parties have been less electorally successful than the new left greens and cannot be identified as member of the green political family (Ibid. 2016). This distinction made, it permits to understand that the « green identity » can cover completely different political projects and ideological orientations. We will now study the green political family as a space of restructuration of the left and we will thus not further examine the conservative ecologists as they do not compose the political grouping.

According to Müller-Rommel (1994), the green political family can be described through three common features that make the green parties sharing the same political identity. The new left green parties can thus be recognized as they shared a common ideology and a new left programmatic agenda; they have a specific organizational structure and political style; and lastly the profile of their electorate is similar.

i. The green family: a distinct ideology, and a singular agenda

As Inglehart (1977) defines, an ideology has two different purposes. First, it has a cognitive function as it aims to guide the individual in the interpretation and understanding of political information and societal events. Secondly, an ideology also gives tools to the individuals to build judgments and to position itself in a debate. In light of this definition, we will demonstrate that the green political thought constitutes a proper ideology as

fulfill these two functions. As we previously examined with the review of political ecology, the green ideology positions in its core a full commitment to nature. This environmental concern is the reading key of the social and political actions proposed by the greens and the basis on which a situation can be considered as in adequation or not with the stability of the socio-ecological system.

Firstly, the green parties formed a proper political family which both belongs to the left wing but also differ from the other left parties in many aspects. As argued Müller-Rommel (1994), the green parties belong to the left as they, together with the socialists, critic capitalist system and advocate for radical social reforms. However, the author points out that the greens distinguished themselves from socialism as they reject its reasoning and develop their proper ideology. As highlighted Kaelberer (1993), the green parties think diversely than the socialists as they are going further in their critic of capitalism and thus also consider the exploitation between the diversity of form of life within liberal market economies. The greens deeply regard the exploitation of the earth and its natural resources by human beings. They denounce socialism as the defender of the capitalist economies by applying utilitarianism to environmental resources.

Michael Freeden (1998) is one of the crucial scholars who works on the green ideology. He argues that the green political family emerged during the 20th century and have tend to detach from the older well-constituted ideologies of Socialism and Marxism. For Freeden (1998), the two Marxist and green ideologies diverge as the first defined the human being as *homo faber* who necessary need to act, while for the second the human action is only crucial to sustain a balanced and equal relationship with nature. The greens have also attempted to avoid being assimilated with an unequivocal intellectual corpus limited to several thinkers as it as be the case for the Marxism for instance (Ibid. 1998). In addition, the greens differ also from the Marxists as the latter do not advocate for a shift in human-nature relationship (Delwit and De Waele 1996). In this respect, Deléage (2010) argues that the ecological ideology updates and complexifies the concept of revolution as developed by Marx to integrate within it the environment as a proper actor.

The political ecologists are thus part of the new left group characterized by a specific alternative agenda as we defined previously thanks to the work of Kaelberer (1993). However, the greens are also different from the other new left parties as they integrate nature and Earth as an actor and a central element of its paradigm.

Price-Thomas (2016) questions the possibility to identify the greens as a single party family in ideological term. The author emphasizes that the study of the green ideology has been neglected in the research field which make difficult to distinguish the different sub-types of the green thought. Therefore, the concept of party family is relevant to classify the greens formations according to their peculiar ideological features (Ibid. 2016, 280). The green party family has been defined by Mair and Muddle (1998) as the ensemble of political formations sharing the same liberal positioning on cultural concerns and advocating for radical transformations

on economic and social issues (Ibid. 2016, 280). While the greens are present in very diverse political context in Europe, they shared a relatively common and homogeneous line of thinking which make them different from the other political parties' ideologies studied previously. The author highlights that the term developed by Poguntke (1993) of « new political ideology » better describe the green ideology than other concepts as the « ecological ideology » or also the « left-libertarian ideology ». Indeed, as we will examine later, the green ideology represents more than just a common interest for the ecosystem and environment making « ecological ideology » thus a restrictive denomination. Then, the left-libertarianism as theorized by Kitschelt in 1988 is too broad and include much more political formations than just the green ones. From this point of view, the concept of « new politics » better considered the specificity of the green thought as it include both its commitment for the natural world and its original political culture (Ibid. 2016, 280). In its comparative study, the scholar has identified three composing themes of the green ideology which are the ecology, the radical democracy, and the egalitarianism. The combination of the three permit to define the new green politics (Ibid. 2016, 280).

The author also interrogates the lack of consensus among scholar regarding the green ideology and explained it for several reasons (Ibid. 2016, 280). Conversely to Conservative, Liberal, Socialist and Marxist ideologies, the green one is much younger and do not have a homogeneous theoretical corpus. In effect, the green parties are only 30 years old and thus represent a relatively new political phenomenon comparing with long-lasting political formations based on the classical cleavages as examined before. Even if the greens have maintaining their presence in the European political scenes, their relatively short life time have not permitted to provided them the same political experience than the other political family mentioned earlier (Ibid. 2016, 280). As we examined the theoretical corpus of the green is also disparate and plural making some scholars rather speaking about a green « thought » than a proper ideology. Nevertheless, in the light of our analysis, we can consider the existence of a real ideological family among the western European greens.

ii. The green family: a specific organizational structure and political style

Secondly, the member of the green political family can also be recognized by their internal structure and their peculiar political style (Müller-Rommel 1994). As Lucardie and Frankland (2016) emphasize, the greens firstly structured themselves as an activist party type with a distinct from the classical partisan organization. The authors claim that their original non-professionalized characteristic represents both the core of their political project and their identity. Indeed, the greens also distinguished themselves from the socialists as they reject the traditional left style of policymaking. The distrust of the greens for the intellectual and political class is another feature helping to recognized the green family as homogeneous grouping (Price-Thomas 2016).

Together with the pacifists, the feminists, the students and the civil rights activists, the environmentalists are disillusioned and disappointed from the traditional political parties and are claiming a new way to do politics.

Similarly to these other amateur-activists type of movements, the environmentalists are characterized at their beginning to be the fervent defenders of the participatory and deliberative practices. Lucardie and Frankland (2016) demonstrate that the greens originally reject personal leadership and the professionalization of mandate, and rather favor collective leadership and decision-making process at local levels. They advocate grass-root democracy with a wider distribution of power and a decentralized internal decision-making process characterized by a high autonomy given to localities and regions. Green politic must be open and participative with open access meetings in order to create meaningful opportunity while including citizens. In addition, the authors show that the green parties revendicate a more transparent decision-making process to be both intelligible and fully democratic.

Thus, the Greens political family rejects the traditional left bureaucracy, hierarchy, and reject the secret-corporatist style of decision-making. They favor a non-hierarchical party structure and organization, favor collective party leadership rather than personal one and practice unorthodox protest behavior (Lucardie and Frankland 2016). Gender parity and open access to meeting is a core of their internal organization. Nevertheless, we will see later that this internal organization of green parties, making them actors of new politics, will shift toward their progressive professionalization and evolution toward more mainstream type of party to answer to the practical necessity of their national electoral systems (Lucardie 2016).

iii. The green family: a common profile of the western European green electorate

Thirdly, the green parties constitute a distinct political family given to the similar socio-economical profile of their adherents and electorate (Müller-Rommel 1994). Indeed, the environmental movements also distinguished themselves from the traditional old politic parties by this element.

While the Old Left as for subject of social reconfiguration the working class, the New Left parties have incorporated the emergence of the new social class among the post-industrial western European societies. As Kaelberer (1993) demonstrates, the green voting base and party' members are young and highly educated and part of the new middle class. This « new intelligentsia » is a new generation of well-educated activists that share a materially secure lifestyle (Gassert 2008). According to Lowe and Rudig (1986), the militants of May 1968 are better politicized and favor non-conventional form of political actions such as boycott, strikes and public demonstrations. The authors claim that most of the green electorate share this « left-wing post-materialistic profile » and thus adhere to the new value orientations examine previously. The new middle class mostly from the cities and occupy white-collar professions is thus more favorable to vote for greens (Müller-Rommel 1994).

The study of the green electorate represents a large proportion of the literature on the green parties. We argue that the common original profile of the green electorate is a crucial defining feature of the party family.

However, as we will examine with our three case studies, the different evolutions experienced by the green parties have contributed to a new type of green voters. Notably, we will later explore that the existing gap between the northern and the southern green European parties is also to be viewed by their different electoral basis and voter's profile.

The green ideological family thus share the common locus of political ideology and a distinct party's identity with a peculiar internal structure, a new left programmatic profile and a peculiar socio-economic background of its adherents and voters. The political ecology have been considered as a shift of paradigm among the two traditional schools of thought dominating at the time that are the liberalism and its Marxist critic (Flipo 2016). Looking at the characteristics of the green political ideology together with the study of the green party common origins are relevant to identify the green party family. Despite these ideological similarities, the European green parties will evolve in different paths.

2) The green political parties in Western Europe

The new social movements emerging at the end of the 1960s have been, as we saw, the foundations in which green political parties have built themselves. Having now a certain understanding of the green ideology and the political ecological project we will analyze in the following part the development of green parties during time. We will first see how green parties progressively enter national institutions and participate to the conquest of the executive power (a). Then, we will examine the diverse typology of green parties developed by the scholars and argue that they are crucial tools to understand the how the European green parties experienced such different pathways of implantations in their national scenes (b). Lastly, we will justify and present our three cases study as well as examine their evolution in their national political scenes (c).

a) The evolution of the Green Parties in the Western Europe: from political marginalization to a seat in the executive power

As we examined, the green parties in western Europe originate from the new social movements emerging at the end of the 1960s. They are now forming a distinct type of political party with specific characteristics and members of a common ideological political family. Since their party creation during the 1970s, the greens have gain electoral successes and political influence among their national political arenas. We will thus examine how green parties gradually took roots and stabilized themselves as member of the political party system toward their entries into parliament, and their entries into government. We will thus follow the expansion of these parties within the institutional electoral hierarchy. Apparently incompatible with their original identity, the professionalization of the greens has been explained both in the literature by the practical

need to compete and evolved in their political systems but also by a general acceptance of the representative democracy. In the path of the 1990s, the greens are no longer only present at the local and regional levels but also start obtaining a seat into national or federal governments.

Emerging in the European political scenes during the 1970 and 1980 decades, the green parties are relatively new actors in comparison with to the other party formations. However, they anchored into their national political system until today. One crucial moment for the emergence of green parties in the European political scenes is their entries in national parliaments in the path of the 1970s. The progressive institutionalization and professionalization of the green parties has been explained in the literature by several structural and internal factors that we will examine below.

As Corduwener (2016) explains, during the 1970s decade the green political parties progressively shifted from the extra-parliamentary left to a parliamentary left party. Originally characterized by their rejection of representative democracy, its party system structure and its parliament, green parties gradually endorsed these principles and acquired deputies across national parliaments. As highlighted by the author, the representative democracy principles with representative elected politicians in parliament have been recognized as a legitimate way to do politics by diverse European green parties. These years marked indeed the entry of many green parties into the traditional party systems. It is in the 1970s that Les Verts started to participate in the French political institutional life and that *Lotta Continua* enter successfully into the parliamentary Italian politics. The author explains these parties' behavioral shifts through the progressive acceptance of representative democracy across European political elite classes. For the green parties, parliaments and political parties are no longer conceived as undemocratic but rather become adequate tools to control representatives and institutions with the purpose to introduce more transparency, accountability, and direct democratic participation practices (Corduwener 2016). This rhetorical shift is therefore not to be considered as an alignment to mainstream political culture as the author argues that green parties attempted to introduce the new social movements agenda and practices into parliamentary politics. Indeed, green parties have distinguished themselves through the principle of grass-root democracy presented as a crucial tool to revigorated representative form of government and are still maintaining close links with social movement activists. Henceforth seated in parliaments, green parties are describing themselves no longer as « anti-party party » but rather as « social movement party » as it is the case of the German green party. In addition, by their presence in parliament, they also tend to further raise awareness on environmental issues within institutions and advocating democratic renewal. This stance shift on the principle of representation, which could be interpreted as a shift away from their original identity as defined previously, has been triggered notably by the bigger success of the 1968 ideas among the public sphere with the Cold War advent (Corduwener 2016).

In addition, this change can also be captured in the observation that even grassroots democracy need a real and structured organization and coordination. As Lucardie and Frankland (2016) explain, the ecological movements of the 1960s, characterized by their amateur-activist type of political parties progressively shifted toward the more traditional form of parties which is the professional-electoral party type. As we examined previously, the amateur-activist party type, is prevailing direct form of participation at the local levels and found its origins within new social movements. Progressively, these amateur-activists political parties operate a shift in their organizational structure, their sizes, the membership profile of their electorate and their balance of power. As highlighted by the authors, these changes make the green profile less close to alternative politics but rather to mainstream party' type of organization. The change of internal party' structure is accountable for new internal needs which are: the arrival of new generation of activist; the need of a strong leadership to stabilize the party; and the will to increase in electoral term (Lucardie and Frankland 2016). While the original collective leadership of green were making the party weak and unstable, some ecologists advocated for shifting towards a more unified and personalized form of leadership necessary in order to persist in their electoral systems. The authors emphasize that the party' organizational structure is a major source of debate and divisions among the adherents. It highlights the secular challenge of the green parties to reconcile their 1968' ideals of social movements and original identity together with the attempt to survive on the electoral political scene. However, similarly to Corduwener (2016), Lucardie and Frankland (2016) argue that the green parties continue, even within institutions, to fight against the oligarchizing of political class and elite by stressing their grass-root democracy principles.

Green parties, thus appear as a new and exciting political force in the path of political party game (Lucardie and Frankland 2016). Together with the extreme right-wing parties, green formations are experiencing major electoral ascension during the 1970s which is at the expense of mainstream post-war hegemonic parties. As Corduwener (2016) explains, conversely to the acceptance of the representative democracy by the New Left and New Right parties, these political formations have been recognized as legitimate democratic actors both by the electorate and the other parties. Thus, as we will further examine the presentation of our case studies, the years following their first entrance in national assemblies are generally successful for the green parties, seeing the number of their adherents and electorate rise.

Then, the decade of the 1980 is generally presented in the literature as a period of electoral breakthrough for the green parties (Müller-Rommel 1994; Delwit and Waele 1999; Lucardie and Frankland 2016). Delwit and Waele (1999) retrace the chronology of the institutional entrance of the green parties across the European national institutions. The authors evoke the first green member of parliament in history with the election of an ecological deputy in 1979 at the national assemble of a Swiss canton. At the beginning of the 1980s, many green parties improved their electoral results following their entrance in national parliament such as the Belgian Ecolo and Agalev in 1981 and the Verdi in Italy in 1989. In France, Germany, Italy, Belgium and in

many other countries, green parties expanded their electoral bases and thus had the means to have a larger impact on the political agendas in the Western democracies. This first « green wave » must be set back in the context of the popular contestations and mass protests across Western Europe during the 1980s.

The popular dissatisfaction and discontent lead to frequent mass protests on a large range of issue such as environment, nuclear disarmament, and peace. After the so-called « Euromissile Crisis », the members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) decided in December 1979 to deploy new nuclear missiles in Europe by 1983 with the purpose to reinforce their Theater Nuclear Forces (TNF). Kaldor (1999) explains, this decision triggered a culmination of mass protests and the organization of social movements which lunched call for the organization of a transcontinental movement of citizens which ignored the Cold War' Iron wall divisions. The public demonstrations denounce the danger created by the proliferation of nuclear weapons across the continent and considered the nuclear power issue as deep democratic concern (Kaldor 1999). The political elite is accused of controlling the lives of European citizens without including them into the decision-making process. Parallely, Kaldor (1999) shows that green parties hold close relations with these peace movements and are often even member of them as for instance the European Nuclear Disarmament (END). Indeed, many of these social movements developed close contact and relationships with left-wing parties and notably the social-democrat parties, green parties and other extreme left-wing parties (Müller-Rommel 1994). The green parties and the peace movements both shared a full commitment against the capitalistic mode of economic growth and its repercussions, such as environmental degradations and nuclear power stationing. In addition, Müller-Rommel (1994) argues that the lack of responsiveness to environmental and nuclear revendications by the political party in power make the green parties the favored interlocutor of these movements. The fast electoral development of the green parties during the decade is indeed accountable for their activism against nuclear powers together with their ability to catalyzed the popular discontent of this period (Delwit and Waele 1999). On the 26 April 1986, the nuclear incident of Chernobyl and the progressive measurement of its environmental consequences stimulated large and diffuse anti-nuclear contestations and environmental mobilizations across Europe. Succession of environmental accidents in the Northern Sea and the raising mediatization about the ozone layer reduction worldwide caused by the greenhouse gas emissions contributed to extend the movement contestations across Europe. The Club of Rome and the international community multiply the publications of scientific reports investigating environmental degradation and thus contributed to the increasing awareness on environmental issues during the 1980s (Delwit and Waele 1999).

Meanwhile, the Congress held in Liège in 1984 gathered for the first time many European green parties representing an important step in the coordination of political ecology at the European scale (Delwit, Waele, and Walle 1999). The green parties present in the conference, notably the Belgian Ecolo and Agalev and the French Les Verts adopted in November 1985 a status for their coordination in view of the next European

election. Delwit and Waele (1999) underline that the 1989 European election has been seen as a crucial moment for the transnational expansion of the greens across Europe. They obtain high electoral results and thus uniformly strengthened their electoral basis.

Another reasons of the green success during the 1980 decade has been interpreted by Gassert (2008) as a manifestation of the green parties adaptative capacity towards pragmatism and opportunism. Indeed, as explained by the author, western European societies experience a democratic revolution during the 1989-1990 years which allowed a sustainable strengthening of the liberal democracies across the continent. Consequently, the New Left parties from the 1960s, such as the greens, have operated a further detachment from the principles of grass-roots democracy and its rejection of parliamentary representation and professionalization. While the 1960 decade was the one of an outspoken political debate about the real way to practice democracy, the 1980s years was thus rather marked by a wide acceptance of the liberal democratic project by the political class.

In the path of the 1990s, while ecological issues reach irreversibly a planetary dimension (Deléage 2010), the green parties enter for the first time into their national governments. As Little (2016) explains, the 1995 year marked the beginning of the participation of the greens in government. Effectively, in nine countries the ecologists succeeded to enter executive positions. In Italy, the greens reached governing position in 1996 thanks to the victory of the « Ulivo » coalition. One year later, the French green party Les Verts also took part to governmental responsibility as part of the « Gauche Plurielle » left-wing party alliance. Later, the Belgian Ecolo acceded to the federal power in 1999 with an established presence within the federal parliament. The author argues that this governmental participation was usually as part of coalitions with centre-left parties. However, as we will later see with the presentation of our three case studies, the presence of the greens in the executive offices did not always increase their political influence and had often rather limited results. Indeed, while the decision to choose political allies can trigger deep divisions among the green members (Muller-Rommel 2019), the political effectiveness of this governmental participation have been highly questioned as it is the case for the French greens. Often in the shadow of the leading party coalition, which is often the socialist party, the greens have obtain usually the same type of portfolio, the ministers of the Environment, and even have limited capacity of decision and actions (Faucher 2012; Delwit and Close 2016). The political strategy of the green parties to choose and to compete as a real party government is thus a recurrent challenge for these new political formations (Muller-Rommel 2019; Faucher 2012; Little 2016).

The 1990s decade, is also characterized by the emergence of a new generation of ecologists with a different social background (Lucardie and Frankland 2016; Facchini and Michallet 2017). As Facchini and Michallet (2017) explain, new militants joined green parties during these years which contributed to internal debate and division among the party' objectives and strategies. On the one hand, the first generation of green militants originated from the first ecological movement of the 1960s tend to maintain their activist political style and

still to privilege a the « social movement » culture for the party rather than ambition of entering in the executive. On the other hand, the new generation of activists, grown after May 1968, advocates for a party' evolution toward more internal hierarchisation and prefer the classic partisan political style. The authors highlight that these emerging divergences among the green members created a generation gap during the 1990s. These debates on the political mobilization and the party' project, make the green parties particularly divided during these periods and can even lead to scissions. In France, the greens were indeed deeply divided on the party' scope during the 1990. As we will see later, the new generation of militants, supporters of the strong leadership of the general secretary of Cécile Duflot, share the purpose to make the party a real party-government. The new generation, in majority, will indeed develop the communication and the party' mediatic image. Inversely, the older 1968' generation of activist are opposed to such evolution that they characterized as a path toward a mainstream party and are highly sceptical to constitute a proper government party. The « soixante-huitards » are often leaving the green party to constitute a new concurrent one.

Thus, the 1990s are often for the green party the years of their ascension to national governments and of a greater visibility on the political and mediatic scenes. Nevertheless, this position of power has triggered profound contentious and tensions among the European greens. Period of necessary party' refoundation or shift in political style, the green parties often decided to assume the conquest of the executive and formed a proper party-government (Faucher 2012). We can thus underline and question the resilience of green parties to reinvent and adapt to their political context and structure. The acclimatation of the green parties in their national political scene can also be seen as a weakening of the 1968' ideals during the 1990s. Nevertheless, the green parties do not follow the Karl-Werner Brand's hypothesis of cycle of life of social and political movement which rise and fall, they rather reuse to durably anchor themselves into the European political scenes (Kaelberer 1993). Progressively, the green parties had been legitimate and recognized as a member like another of the western European party systems. As explains Seiler (1999), this gradual « banalization » of green parties can be manifested by their ability to durably stay within the political landscape despite facing eventual electoral fails.

Then the increased international activism on environmental concerns have contributed during the 2000s decade to further institutional offer for the green parties in Western Europe (Villalba 2016, 107). It allowed a greater inclusion of environmental issues into the national agenda setting and the emergence of the actual « green » political vocabulary at the European scale.

This brief historical review of the green party's evolution within their national institutions can be interpreted as a « success story » of the ecologists that necessary must be nuanced. As explained by Facchini and Michallet (2017), the historical evolution of green parties is often a non-linear process characterized by the creation of a large variety of little political movements, lists and coalitions established for the purpose of an electoral

campaign and which struggle to survive after the election passed. The authors emphasize the difficulties of the green parties in Europe both to position themselves on the political spectrum and to constitute homogeneous political formations enabling them to last over time. The green parties are still today small size party in terms of memberships and electorate compared and often considered as the last ones of the political class (Lucardie and Frankland 2016). In addition, the European greens do not follow similar pattern of development since the last decade. As highlighted by the review of the literature, the actual comparative studies on the green parties increasingly focus on the existing gap between the northern European parties and the southern ones (Biorcio 2016; Delwit and Close 2016; Franjou 2019; Gaabour 2020). Since the 1990s, the « green wave » have impacted differently the European countries. The differences between the green parties in term of electoral results and political influence will be further studied in the following part of our work.

Our attempt to retrace the common and general political evolution of green parties has highlighted their capacity to build their roots within the political scenes in few decades. However, the electoral progression of green party is a non-linear process which diverge considering a large diversity of national peculiarities such as the historical and political contexts and or also the existence of institutional constraints.

b) Diversity and typology of green parties

As we saw, political ecology represents a distinct political party group in Western Europe. Nevertheless, the composition of this « green European family » highlights a large diversity of political parties that differ in terms of organizational structures, number of adherents, electoral capacities, and ideological orientations. The focus of this part is thus to explore the different green party typologies developed by the scholars. We argue that the label of the « green » thus refers to different realities across the old continent. The party' capacity to participate to elections, its presence in parliament and in the executive are deeply connected to the historical, political and environmental context and differ from one country to another.

Robyn Eckersley (1992) has classified green parties according to their ideological tendencies and their peculiar projects (Lucardie 1999). The author distinguishes different sub-ideological orientations among the ecologists which are: the « eco-centrism », the « eco-anarchism », the « eco-feminism », the « eco-liberalism » and the « eco-conservatism ». The eco-centric viewpoint, considered as the « pure » ideological ecological concern, look at human being as one element among others constituting the natural world and appreciate the earth solely for its intrinsic value without any utilitarian concerns. In that sense, this ideological orientation asserts the primacy of the natural world well-being on the human interests. Eco-centrists' ecologists would indeed necessarily reject economic growth since it is the cause of the Earth and human being deterioration. However, as demonstrates the author, the eco-centric perspective hardly fits into the traditional left-right divide spectrum. Consequently, the green parties can be the emanation of one or several ideological affiliations or also composed by members belonging to these different orientations. As Lucardie (1999) highlights, the green

ideological orientation can also evolve in time according to the historical contexts. This approach allows us to emphasize the different ideological positions on environmental issues. In light of our previous section, we can also question the impact of the intersectionality of issues that the green parties experience on their members' privileged ideological projects.

Then, Müller-Rommel (1994) developed another typology of green parties according to their age and political maturity. Based on the assumption that political parties have a life cycle, Müller-Rommel distinguishes « childish », « teenager », « young adult » and « adult » green parties (Lucardie 1999). The « young » or « childish » green parties are regrouping political movements which need first to be authorized and registered as proper party to compete for election and obtain parliamentary seats. While « teenager » green parties are already participating in elections at different levels, either at the national or European stage, and are thus ready to enter in assembly. Lastly, the author distinguishes the « young adult » parties that have by now taken some seats in national parliaments, from the well-established « adult » parties, formerly highly professionalized and anchoring into institutions. For Müller-Rommel (1994) green parties also developed diverse political strategies. On the one hand, the « green reformists » do not reject the mainstreams parties and thus favor a coalition with the social democrats rather than with the left radicals. On the other hand, the « alternative radical greens » favor alliances with the radical left and advocate for social and political reforms within the institutions.

The third typology, developed by Lucardie (1999), classify green parties on the basis of their inclusion in their respective national political arenas. The author argues that the previous two typologies do not enable us to understand the evolution of green parties, they have indeed a limited analytical capacity and are foremost descriptive. Lucardie (1999) argues that the development and the success of a green party depends on its peculiar position in the national political system. The party's position is conditioned by its own political project and culture; its ideological orientation; the dominating cleavage of the political scene; the electoral system itself; and lastly the strategical positions of the other parties. This typology incorporates a larger number of variables to analyze the diversity of green parties in Western Europe. The author identifies five types of party' postures which are: the position of « marginality », « quasi-marginality », « isolation posture », « moderate and alliance » posture, and « radical ».

The green parties in a position of marginality within their political systems are more likely to exist in less-developed countries where materialist values are still the dominant way of thought (Ibid. 1999). The environmental issues and other post-materialistic values appear as « secondary » on the scale of political priorities since classic cleavages such as class or ethnic conflicts are still prevailing in these countries (Ibid. 1999). The author takes the example of greens present more in southern and central European countries where they either are in position of marginality or a better situation as part of a large left-wing coalition. Similarly,

the author points out that in countries with a two-party electoral system, such as the United-States or Canada, the green parties are in the same marginal position. Even if these countries are well developed and possess strong post-materialist roots, their electoral systems do not provide sufficient political space and weight to allow to green parties to remain alive.

Then, there are green parties in situation of quasi-marginality in their political systems. The author takes for example the greens formations of Denmark, Spain, Greece, Norway, and Iceland. In these countries, the plural party system, which allowed the existence of a wide diversity of party formations, places the political ecologists in the shadow of other more important establishments such as the classical left. Born in the 1980s which opened political space for New Left, the green parties are still small and are more eco-centrist oriented (Ibid. 1999).

The third type of green parties occupy a position of isolation according to the other partisan formations (Ibid. 1999). With the traditional rhetoric of « neither left, neither right », these green parties are opposed to taking position among the left-right divide and thus voluntarily decide to not have political allies or become part of a coalition. This attitude and culture of isolation must therefore be nuanced. The author argues that in practice, they fit into the center-left with a moderate position on socio-economic issues, adhesion to the socialist statism and planification, and opposition to market neoliberalism. More importantly, the voluntary « isolated » greens do not stay in this position forever, they necessarily shift toward either a marginal or quasi-marginal position, or either adopt a moderate posture and form a coalition with social-democrats to gain political influence (Ibid. 1999). This isolation posture is the one occupied by the French Les Verts and Italian greens before the 1980s.

The green formations which develop strategies of alliances with the center-left or also the social-democrat parties are considered by the author as maintaining a moderate or intermediate posture. Generally, these greens are part of a relatively polarized political system between left and right, of which the center is weak. Thus, the left leader party turns to the greens with the purpose to form a wide left-wing coalition that pushes the ecologists to moderate their original project and culture to progressively transform into a professionalized and a more mainstream formation (Ibid. 1999). It is the case of Les Verts in 1996 and 1997 as member of the coalition entitled « Gauche Plurielle » and of the Italian greens in 1994 in alliance with the social democrats.

The fifth and last category of green parties gathers formations occupying a radical left position profoundly opposed to mainstream parties. As the author explains, these alternative greens are the direct opponent of the governing social-democrats who are characterized by their moderation. These radical green parties, which are highly integrated into their national political landscapes, can be found in consociational democratic systems which usually permit them to obtain a certain political influence. This is the case of the two Belgian ecologist

parties Aglaev and Ecolo which represent a big threat for the social democrats by advocating political and social system' transformations (Ibid. 1999).

We assume that these classifications should be updated to include the evolutions experienced by the green parties during the 2000 decade. However, these comparative analyses represent useful tools to understand the actual differences among our three case studies.

c) Presentation of the case studies and case selection

i. Justification of case study selection

With the purpose to analyze and compare political programs, we must select case studies that have been classified among the different categories of green parties previously examined. Thus, we selected three different cases of green party which occupy today different positions in their national party systems. The case studies presentation seeks to start explaining the causes of the different political inclusions experienced by the European greens. As we will study, the Belgian Ecolo is presented in the literature as an archetype of successful ecological party. The French greens, Les Verts then reorganized as Europe Écologie – Les Verts, has experienced some political successes and has still today a certain influence, that seems therefore dependent from their alliance with the socialist party. In Italy, similarly to the other southern European greens, the Federazione dei Verdi remains at the margin of the national political scene. We will thus present our three case studies in view to understand the reasons of their rise, their political priorities, and their privileged political allies.

Moreover, the case studies selection has also been conditioned by personal interests and by linguistical competencies, crucial to provide an easier access to data in English, Italian or French. The choice of a small number of case studies answers to methodological and pragmatic concerns. The analysis of three parties is indeed more practicable to deepen the comparison of the parties' manifesto profiles rather than a large-case approach.

ii. Les Ecolo, the bigger European green party

On the 23th of March 1980, the movement Écologistes Confédérés pour l'Organisation de Luttes Originales (Ecolo) is officially created and is organized among three principles : the autogestion, the organization in autonomous and federated groups and the permanent control of the elected (Rihoux 1993). As pointed out by Rihoux (1993), the original representation of political ecology in the Belgian political scene corresponds to the country's organization in linguistical communities, the francophone and the Flemish communities have different green parties. Nevertheless, the author argues that the presence of two green parties is not the symbol

of a scission of political ecology, as it can be the case in other European countries, but rather the manifestation of two distinct historical communities thus it does not prevent these parties to maintain close relationships (Rihoux 1993). The party Ecolo is active in the francophone and Dutch communities and the Flemish community as its own green party called Agalev then transformed in Groen in 2003.

As Delwit (1999) explains, directly during the three years that followed its creation, Ecolo obtains national, municipal, and European elected and thus enter rapidly the institutions. During its first elections, the legislative of November 1981, Ecolo gets two deputies and three senators and become one of the first green party entering a national parliament. With the communal elections of 1982, Ecolo accedes to the administration of a major city of Wallonia, Liège. Until 1984, the year in which Ecolo gained one elected official at European elections, the party remarkably entered the Belgian political scene and transitioned from extra-parliamentary activities to institutional ones (Ibid. 1999). Unlike certain other green European parties, rapidly after its creation the Belgian party integrated the national institutions. Delwit (1999) demonstrates that the participation to power through institutions is a recurrent topic of debate and cause of tensions within green parties in western Europe. In this respect, he underlines that for Ecolo the divisions are less about the idea of participation itself as the entrance into federal executive and regional government have been a consensual objective among its members since its creation. Instead, the party's internal tensions are rather concerning the form of participation to power and consequently the choice of political alliances.

Then from 1985 until 1989, the party experiences what Delwit (1999) calls its « teenager crisis ». Both its fulgurant electoral success and the adhesion of a new generation of ecologist will contribute to the emergence of tensions and plunged the party into paralysis. The author identifies three internal crises which significantly weakened the party in this period. First, the negotiations of alliance with the ex-governing liberal and social-Christian coalition triggered deep contestations among the adherents especially those from the Brussel federation located in the left-wing. For Delwit (1999), the choice of a green party to privileged one political family as partner is deeply linked to the reality of the national political context and its specific cleavage structure. While green parties generally have a dominant partner among the left-right divide to accede to power, as it is the case with the socialists for the French Les Verts and the Christian-democrats for I Verdi, the Belgian Ecolo do not have such kind of privileged ally. The author stresses that the consociational democratic nature of Belgium makes its political system uncharacterized by a dominance of the left-right divide but rather by an interlacing of historically rooted cleavages. The peculiarity and complexity of the Belgian political system resides thus in the combination of three cleavages which are: the socio-economic divide; the religious opposition between catholic and laic; and lastly the community cleavage between the Flemish north and the francophone Wallonia of the south (Rihoux 1993). Delwit (1999) entitles these same cleavages respectively as owner-worker cleavage; the philosophical one and the linguistical division. These three structuring divisions added to the fact that Belgium is a federal state without federal parties that make

political alliance strategies diverse. He asserts that the nature and the type of political alliances chosen by Ecolo depend on which cleavage is predominant at a certain period.

The second crisis affecting Ecolo during the mid-1980s deals with the objectives and the means of the party and opposed those in favor to transition toward a party government such as Paul Lannoye, to those advocating to remain a contestation movement. As the second group wins the debate, the party's left-wing members break away from the original party and create in 1986 a new one entitled *Les Verts pour une Gauche Alternative*. Thus, such as many other European greens, Ecolo experiences tensions between the defenders of the « neither left, neither right » rhetoric rejecting the partisan organization with its bureaucracy and professional elites, and the ecologists advocating for a professional party to answer to practical necessity of the political system reality. Thirdly, the party also experiences a financial crisis caused by the departure of members and its insufficient revenue which frizz the party (Ibid. 1999).

The unprecedented success of Ecolo at the European elections of 1989 and at the nationals of 1991 marked officially the end of the party paralysis and a shift toward a new historical period. As showed Delwit (1999), the governmental majority composed of socialist and social-Christian was not large enough to modify the Belgian constitution in view to pass institutional reform for the creation of the Belgian federal union. The coalition in power has thus invited the Belgian ecologist and notably Ecolo to participate to the reform of the Belgian state as the only political actor which would permit the government to obtain the majority needed. The author emphasizes that the involvement of Ecolo in the process of federalization of the country together with its success at the 1991 elections are crucial moments for the party' history as Ecolo obtained elected at all the levels (federal, regional and community) and considerably increases its political influence in the country.

After a period of crisis characterized by electoral setbacks, financial difficulties and a declining image, the party experienced a « relative stabilization » from the late 1990 to the 2000s (Delwit and Close 2016). Ecolo, together with its Flemish Agalev peer, obtain unprecedented electoral score at the national election of 1999 with 14.4 per cent of the votes which allow the party to participate in the government of the « Rainbow coalition » until 2003. Delwit and Close (2016) explain that the party reached a peak of its votes in 1999 and then stagnated around 8 to 9.5 per cent in the election of 2007, 2010 and 2014.

The legislative, regional, and European elections all held on the 26th of May 2019 permit Ecolo to increase the number of their elected in every parliament. After a long governmental crisis, the party also re-integrate the federal executive power on the 1st of October 2020 as part of the « Vivaldi » coalition. Ecolo is also present in the regional governments of Wallonia and Brussel as well as in the French community government.

Since its beginning, Ecolo is considered as one of the major green party in western Europe due to its electoral results and its strong parliamentary representation according to its place action, the Belgium Francophone community (Delwit 1999). Even before the coalition of 1999 which empowered the Belgian ecologists, Ecolo has experienced a relatively stable evolution with a well-established presence in institutions when compared to other European homologs (Lucardie 1999). Nowadays, the party is still deeply anchor into the Belgian political scene and is favored both by the polarization of the country between the Flemish-north voting at the right and the southern-francophone part voting at the extreme left and to the discredit of the traditional left party⁶.

iii. One representant of political ecology in France: the case of Les Verts (EELV)

On the 28th and 29th of January 1984, the Clichy Congress marked the foundation of the French green party Les Verts (Delwit 1999). The general assembly officializes the fusion of two previous ecological movements: *Mouvement d'Ecologie Politique* which became *Les Verts- Parti écologiste* in 1982 and the *Confédération écologiste* which became *Les Verts* in 1983.

As Repaire (2016) explains, the complete official name of the party, *Les Verts Parti écologiste- Confédération écologiste*, is emblematic of its original plural composition. The author highlights the existence of two groups among Les Verts, the « social pole » embodied for instance in the figure of Yves Cochet and composed by liberal-libertarian ecologists, and the « environmental pole » constituted rather by environmentalist ecologists and incarnate by the biologist Antoine Waechter. While the first rather prioritize social and economic transformations in line with the left-libertarian 1968 ideals, the second put the emphasize on natural resources issues and other pure environmental questions as prevalent. Nevertheless, the authors stresses that these two tendencies composing Les Verts as being nuanced as both group members are interconnected and involved in common activist groups. Another analysis of the party adherents, realized by Jérôme (2021), classifies the members among three groups: the « altruists » sensibilized concerning alter-globalists and Third world issues; the « specialists » occupying professions related to environmental issues; and the « draft evaders » engaged in multiple political, intellectuals and artistic struggles.

According to Faucher (2012), the heterogeneous membership of Les Verts makes the party attached to terms like « rainbow », « open » or also « plural » to describe themselves. In addition, for Repaire (2016), this diversity makes it difficult to recognize a proper and specific ideology to the party which rather shared an accumulation of common principles. This « ideological patchwork », as the authors called, is composed of the rejection of productivism and consumerism, the opposition to nuclear and authoritarian state and the advocacy of

⁶ For more information, see the press article: *Le Temps*. 2019. 'En Belgique, les écologistes progressent dans un pays toujours plus polarisé', 26 May 2019. <https://www.letemps.ch/monde/belgique-ecologistes-progressent-un-pays-toujours-plus-polarise>.

decentralization and environmental protection. Les Verts, situated at the alternative left of the French political spectrum, have a heteroclite ideological orientation but commonly distrust the traditional left and the state institutions and claim another way to do politics (Jérôme 2021).

As Jérôme (2021) demonstrates, the party's historical evolution can be organized in different periods. The first one from its creation until 1993 is characterized by the « neither right, neither left » rhetoric diffused by the direction of Antoine Waechter. As an environmentalist ecologist, he intends to keep the fundamental identity of the party and thus reject political alliances. For Repaire (2016), this tension between openness and independence of Les Verts is a recurrent debate among the two-constituting group of members and is still today object of contention among the French greens. The left-libertarian ecologists mostly support the strategy of alliances with other alternative left parties while the environmental ecologists rather advocate for the party self-reliance and support the Waechter slogan « L'écologie n'est pas à marier »⁷. Parallely to its political strategy, another highly controversial topic within the party since its creation is its internal organizational structure. As Faucher (2012) explains, the French greens discredited the partisan parti structure and were still attached to the « social movement » references. Even after 1984 Les Verts preferred appellations such as « association », « mouvement » or « federation » (Ibid. 2012). Nevertheless, the refusal to be assimilated to a partisan professionalized party and the original « anti-party party » stance, will be progressively nuanced by practical needs of electoral and organizational efficiency. The French greens will finally legitimize the partisan structure and accept to transition toward a formal party organization.

Then from 1993 to 2001, the leadership of Dominique Voynet and her successors marked the party shift toward the left, the so-called party « gauchisation », together with the development of a new alliance strategy and the ambition of further professionalization (Jérôme 2021). Indeed, Les Verts develop strategic proximities with left parties and even accede to the executive power from 1997 to 2002 as members of a coalition. Entitled « Gauche plurielle », this alliance includes the communists, the socialists, the left radical parti and the *Mouvement des Citoyens*. However, even if Dominique Voynet and other important figures of the party obtain executive seats or even the direction of ministers, the green politicians struggled to make their voices heard in front of the socialist majority and were highly limited by insufficient financial resources (Boy 1999). The greens' participation in government is indeed highly controversial among the party members: many contest the utility and the effectiveness of this governmental experience and others aspire to grow into a real party government (Faucher 2012). Boy (1999) considers that this entry in a government coalition represents the shift from a posture of isolation to a moderate position of the greens within the French political system. In addition, after the Jacques Chirac dissolution of the National Assembly, the alliance with the socialists also permit to Les Verts to obtain parliamentary seats for the first time in history (Ibid. 1999). The author underlines that

⁷ « Ecology is not to be married » (Free translation)

even among the members in favor of strategic alliances, some favor the development of an agreement with the socialists while other rather preferred alliances with more left-extreme parties (Ibid. 1999).

Then, Jérôme (2021) distinguishes another historical period from 2001 to 2006 in which the party faces deep internal divisions and externally conquers the French territory through local and regional electoral successes. The author explains that the election of Cecile Duflot in 2006 as national secretary marked the beginning of a new era of reform and transformation for Les Verts. On the 13th and 14th of November 2010, the assembly held in Lyon answers to diffuse desire of party renewal with its refoundation into Europe Écologie - Les Verts (EELV). As part of the Duflot's strategy to give credibility to the party, the green's remodeling permits an electoral and marketing success as well as a mediatization of EELV (Ibid. 2021). However, as the author explains, the Duflot's leadership is a period of intense internal tension and division among the members who are opposed concerning the strengthening of the party executive and on the personalization of the national secretary post. Under the Duflot direction, the French greens develop their managerial abilities along with their skills of communication and negotiation (Ibid. 2021). However, they also undergone recurrent scissions of its left-alternative branch members contesting the increasingly mainstream character of the party.

Since 2017, EELV is entered in a new phase that the author entitles the « green intersectionality » (Ibid. 2021). In fact, the growing number of militantism expressions with the social movements of Nuit Debout; #MeToo; the climate movements; the Gilets jaunes; the Black Lives Matter movement and finally the Covid-19 crisis has favored the increasing connections among the activists involved. The author argues that most of the green party members have participated actively in these movements which permit intersectionality of issues and have thus converged positions on gender, race, and territory with the other activists. Conversely, these citizens' initiatives improved the environmental sensibility at the bottom of the French civil society (Ibid. 2021). Additionally, in a context of high mediatization of climate deregulations and other environmental hazards, EELV successful in the European elections of 2019 and at the municipal of 2020, appears as a pivot of political reconfiguration (Ibid. 2021). Indeed, the party obtained elected in major big cities, such as Lyon; Bordeaux; Poitiers; Strasbourg, which grant their durable territorial anchoring and that has been interpreted as an historical national « green wave ». Then, this fulgurant electoral success of the green is also partly accountable for the weakening of the socialist party and the large popular discredit of the actual French president.

Regarding the programmatic profile of Les Verts and then EELV, Repaire (2016) argues that the party manifestos represent an attempt to include all the composing tendencies and is thus a systematic exercise of unification of the movement. Nevertheless, the author claims that the direction's political orientation is an influencing feature of the party programmatic orientation either toward more social concerns or rather toward environmental issues. Since 2019, elected as the new national secretary of EELV, Julien Bayou belongs to the

new generation of the ecologists and seems to fit with the left-wing side of the party⁸, also called the « social pole » (Ibid. 2016).

Nowadays, there are a multitude of green parties in the French political scene which represent electoral competitors for EELV. As Vignes (2014) genuinely underlines, from its creation until 1990, Les Verts was the only party representing political ecology in France. The author adds that the progressive slip of the French greens and the multiplication of green formations are accountable for their divergences of positioning on the left-right axe. In Mai 1990, the creation of a new green party called Génération Ecologie (GE) by Brice Lalonde initiates the fragmentation of the French green electorate in a long-lasting way. As Faucher (2012) explains, Les Verts split into several factions that will then constitute new concurrent green parties. It is the case in 2015 with the creation of the new green party *Union des démocrates et des écologistes* born notably from scission. Les Verts and EELV failed indeed to maintain their monopoly on political ecology in France (Ibid. 2012). In addition, Boy (1999) argues that the fragmentation of the green votes in France undermines the progress of political ecology within the national agenda setting. In the aftermath of the 2020 successful municipal elections, EELV initiated in August 2020 the project of a green coalition entitles the « Pôle écologiste » and composed of several other ecologists' parties. In view of the next presidential elections of 2022, this coalition launched a public participative platform *Les Ecologistes 2022*⁹ to prepare their common program.

Finally, we can thus consider that the plural composition of the French greens parties Les Verts and then EELV is a crucial element of explication of their difficulty to stay united. However, we may wonder is the party' diversity is also the reason of its actual success which can be related to a capacity to gather a large and protean public. More than the positioning among the left-right divide, we can also suppose that the fragmentation of political ecology in France should be seen as the increasing distance between the ecologists who still fight for the ideals of 1968 and those who rather succumb to the political practical necessities.

iv. The Federazione dei Verdi and the marginalization of the greens in Italy

As demonstrated by Biorcio (1999), the creation of a green party in Italy took place relatively belatedly comparing to the other western European countries. The author underlines that the political mobilization of the Italian ecologists has emerged during the mid-1980s with the constitution of « green lists » in reply to the success of other European green parties and within a context of rising awareness on environmental

⁸ For further information about the election of Julien Bayou and its political position see the article: Mestre, Abdel. n.d. 'Pour Julien Bayou, nouveau patron d'EELV : « Nous n'avons plus le temps d'être médiocres »'. Accessed 21 September 2021. https://www.lemonde.fr/politique/article/2019/11/30/congres-d-eelv-julien-bayou-futur-patron-des-ecologistes_6021186_823448.html.

⁹ For further information about the project see the following website: 'Contribuez à la plateforme du projet écologiste !' n.d. Accessed 23 September 2021. <https://projet.lesecologistes.fr/>.

degradation. It is in November 1986 that a proper political organization entitled the « Federazione delle Liste Verdi » is created, gathering the green lists of the national territory, and considered as the ancestor of the actual Italian green party. The institutionalization of the Federation toward a proper classical partisan party was originally not an objective *per se* but rather only a political tool to fight against environmental degradation (Ibid. 1999).

In the second half of 1980s, the green party experience increasing electoral support with a context favorable. Biorcio (2016) argues that this success is attributed to the rising awareness regarding environmental issues and the ecological problems triggered by nuclear power in the aftermath of the Chernobyl disaster of 1986. The author also underlines that during this period, the Italian green party, together with environmental associations, consolidated its influence thanks on the promotion of three referendums against the national nuclear program. Nevertheless, parallelly to their progressive electoral success and to their institutional entrance the party starts to split. In 1989, a fraction of the Federation, composed by left-wing members in favor of a rapprochement with the extreme-left parties of Partito Radicale (PR) and the Democrazia Proletaria (DP) constituted a new political movement (Ibid. 1999). In May, the *Verdi Arcobaleno* movement is created and gathered extreme-leftists and environmentalists. Like many other green parties in Europe, the two competing formations obtain great scores at the European election of 1989 with a total of 6.2 per cent of the Italian votes (Ibid. 1999).

In December 1990, the *Verdi Arcobaleno* merged with the Federation and the two form the Federazione dei Verdi (FdV). As Biorcio (1999) explains, this unification is accompanied by the redefinition of the party's objectives, but which is hardly operationalizable within the context of the First Republic crisis. In this respect, the 1990 decade is characterized by a general popular contestation of the party system which considerably affects and hinders the progression that the party experienced in the early years following its creation. Briquet (2010) indicate that between the years 1992-1994, the First Italian Republic faced a crisis of moral and political legitimacy caused by a succession of scandals among the elite class in power. The popular mistrust of the mainstream parties, notably the *Democrazia Christiana* (DC), and the increasing contestations of the « partitocrazia » leads to an erosion of the Italian electorate. Despite the revendications of FdV to practice diverse politics, Biorcio (1999) demonstrates that the Italian greens fails to make an electoral profit from this general discontent. Conversely, the more extreme-right wing parties, such as the Lega Nord (LN) established in 1991, reuse to instrumentalized this wave of protestation and experienced electoral progression. In addition, the author argues that the First Republic crisis has contributed to the popular and institutional disinterest in environmental issues. While thematic such as nuclear power, agricultural pesticide or the hunt succeeded to integrate the national agenda-setting during the 1980s, other issues emerged and become the new national political priorities such as the fight against corruption, the public debt, the unemployment, the increase of fiscal pressure and the immigration (Ibid. 1999). Another structural element which contributed to the electoral

setback of the FdV during this decade is the new electoral system implemented during the transition to the Second Republic. Biorcio (1999) underlines that this new system, which is much more majoritarian than the previous one, pushed the FdV to no longer ran alone but rather as member of center-left coalitions.

From 1996 to 2004, the FdV enters for the first time in national government as member of the « Ulivo » coalition gathering center-left and leftist parties. Thanks to its membership into the coalition, the Italian greens increase their deputies and thus accede to the executive power with obtention of the ministry of Environment. As Biorcio (1999) argues, on the one hand the governmental participation of the FdV considerably increase the greens visibility and significantly contribute to their insertion within the political system. On the other hand, this coalition affected the political autonomy of the Italian green in a sustainable way. To some extent, the green presence in the executive anchors their image of environmental defenders and experts without providing them political autonomy on these issues (Biorcio 2016).

The retrogression of FdV during the 1990s has also been caused by the green difficulty to create its own and stable electoral base. Biorcio (2016) demonstrates that while in its early stages the party' electorate has a similar profile¹⁰ than its European peers, since the 1990s the party fails to penetrate different social categories and its electorate is highly volatile. Furthermore, conversely to other European green parties, the FdV do not maintain closer relations with the environmental movements. As evidenced the authors, the member of ecologist associations, citizens' initiatives or also environmental protests were not voting for the Green Federation in 1996 but rather for the Partito Democratico della Sinistra (PDS) and other left parties. With the purpose to increase their electoral result and their political autonomy, the Italians greens expanded their thematic to the fight against racism, corruption and promote civil rights and solidarity (Ibid. 2016). The party transformation also goes through an organizational reform devoted to strengthened and professionalized its structure. To break away from its organizational instability, the green formation transitions toward a more traditional partisan structure with the creation of an executive office and the definition of precise programmatic objectives (Ibid. 1999).

At the European elections of June 1999, the green registered their lowest electoral score since their creation: 1.8 per cent of suffrage total. According to Biorcio (2016), this defeat is to be analyzed through the increasing competition FdV faced with the PR and the other new green-oriented formations such as the Democratici created by Romano Prodi. In July, an extraordinary assembly is held among the adherents with the will to organize the foundation of the party, and a new national secretary is elected.

¹⁰ As previously examined, the green electorate of the 1970 and 1980 decades was originally from the new educated middle classes, the students, and the highly educated professions.

Delwit and Close (2016) highlight the struggle that the party experienced during the elections of the 2000 decades and its incapacity to electorally performed either as an autonomous political formation than as member of a broad alliance. The Federation accumulates participations into lists and coalitions composed of more or less the same left-wing parties: in 2008, they are part of the « Sinistra-Arcobaleno » coalition¹¹; in 2009 they are member of the « Sinistra e Libertà » list, and finally in 2013 they joined « Rivoluzione civile ». For the three elections, their coalitions do not get more than 3.1 per cent of the total of Italian vote and thus do not obtain elected representatives in the national parliament (Biorcio 2016). In 2014, the FdV ran independently to the other left-wing parties as part of a green list together with Green Italia but they got only 0.91 per cent of the suffrages and still did not acquire a seat at the parliament. Accumulating electoral defeats, the Federation returns to strategy of broadening coalition with the center-left (Gaabour 2020). Since 2008, the Italian green party have practically left the national political scene and other parties, such as the Movimento Cinque Stelle (M5S) and the Partito Democratico, appropriate environmental issues and thematic (Ibid. 2020).

On the constituent assembly of the 10th and 11th of July 2021, the Federation is dissolved after 34 years of activity, and a new ecological formation entitled Europa Verde is created (Genovese 2021). The new party elected two spokespersons, Angelo Bonelli, ex-president of the VdF from 2009 to 2018, and Eleonora Evi, from the M5S¹². The party' perspective for future is to bring to Italy the so-called « green wave - onda verde » through translate the rising Italian interest on environmental issues into an electoral vote for political ecology (Ibid. 2021). With the purpose to not repeat the same mistake effectuated by the FdV, Europa Verde tends to re-connect with the ecological movements and citizens' initiatives existing currently in Italy.

The electoral stagnation of the political ecology in Italy since the beginning of the 2000s has been interpreted as a deep paradox within a European context in which the national and international struggles against climate change and their mediatization have seriously intensified (Cotugno 2020). The review of the literature highlights the increasing number of research examining the reasons of this paradoxes and especially the gap of the green electoral success and political influence between the northern European countries and the southern ones (Biorcio 2016; Delwit and Close 2016; Franjou 2019; Gaabour 2020). As in Spain, Greece, Portugal, the green failed to durably stabilized themselves into the political party system due to a stronger left-right political polarization (Franjou 2019). After 1994, the Italian political spectrum polarized between the center-right coalitions and the center-left coalitions. This political scene did not favor the Italian greens as they rather advocate for a new type of cleavage as we previously examined (Biorcio 2016). Delwit and Close (2016) consider that the disparities in term of green success across the old continent is also explaining by the differences in terms of in per capita income which make environmental issues lower pressing concerns into the southern European political agenda.

¹¹ They formed this coalition with the Communist Refoundation Party, the Party of Italian Communists and the Democratic Left.

¹² More information on the two spokespersons at the official website of Europa Verde: 'I DUE PORTAVOCE'. n.d. Europa Verde (blog). Accessed 21 September 2021. <https://europaverde.it/i-due-portavoce/>.

As reflected Pascal Delwit in a recent interview, the COVID-19 crisis could lead to two different situations for the marginalized southern European green parties. On the one hand, the pandemic can be viewed as a manifestation of the current problematic relationship between the human societies and their environment and thus trigger an increasing support for the parties belonging to the political ecology family. On the other hand, the author rather believes that the social repercussions of the sanitary crisis will partly undermine the elaboration of the green agenda to prevail another diffuse political attempt to revigorated social democracy in southern Europe.

Thus, the FdV then transformed in Europa Verde struggled to stabilize and fully established themself into the Italian political system. The party has little executive experience and their presence in parliament is fluctuating and even sometime missing. In difficulty to make them see at the national level, the Italian greens have focus on the regional and local levels to participate in the political debate (Lucardie 1999).

3) Conclusion of the first part

The review of the literature on political ecology and resilience has enabled to reduce the confusion and misunderstanding on these two concepts and has also highlighted their close links. Moreover, we examined that the green parties shared common historical roots and have experienced diverse evolutionary paths, making the green family heterogeneous in terms of party size and electoral successes. This first part has also further orientated the problematic of this thesis and has specified the questions of our current research.

Our three case studies, even though they are members of the same party' family and they share a same ideology, have experienced radically different integrations into their respective political scenes. While the Belgian Ecolo has deeply anchored the Belgian consociational system, the French EELV has experienced less successful pathway, and the FdV is today quasi-marginalized from the Italian electoral competition.

We examined that resilience has various understandings among the political classes, and in its socio-ecological sense, it refers to a complex framework to fight against climate change and environmental degradation. As we emphasized, the concept embodies itself in a wide range of public policies (political; economic; social and ethic) and sub-sectors (education and research; innovative economy; cross-scale and deliberative governance; reconfiguration of human-nature relationship; etc.). Thus, the technicity of the resilience framework has yet suggested its difficult operationalization into party political manifestos.

Question of research: We thus question if our three case studies address resilience in their programs as an object of agenda setting, and which social; ecological; and political transformations they advocate for fighting against climate changes.

With the purpose to analyze the differences in terms of programmatic profile, it is necessary to defined an empirical protocol. The choice of a party manifesto analysis has been conditioned both by methodological and analytical benefits that it represents for a first work of research.

First, the content analysis usually permits to get a relatively easy access to data present online. The issue of data availability is not negligible especially in a context of Covid-19 that considerably complicates the grounded surveys and investigations. The parties' programs and manifestos are indeed normally registered by the parties on their own websites or by online databases such as the Manifesto Project Database platform. The later provides to researchers, manifestos from over 1000 parties from the 1945 liberation period until today. This website considerably facilitates data research as it also permits to precise through thematic the desired object research such as the ecologist parties. Secondly, the comparative manifesto analysis is particularly interesting in the case of our three green parties as have been rather have been examined in view of their political influences and sizes rather than in light of their program proposals. Moreover, the thematic categorization of the corpus, realized *a priori* the data exploration, enabled to clearly answer to research question as it implied to delimitate empirically the multi-disciplinal concept of resilience.

We will realize a content analysis which will be qualitative and thematical. More adapted to our research object, this method will permit to systematically spot and select text passages referring to our categorization on the issues of resilience within the different manifestos. Thus, we will not quantitatively analyze the discourses of our three cases studies, that would consist in measuring the frequencies and the peculiarity of the lexicon and vocabulary present in their political programs.

Thus, based on the methodological manual of Paillé and Mucchielli (2016), we will proceed in three steps:

- First, we will elaborate different sub-categories of themes which will permit to classify the political proposals in which the issue of resilience appears to be addressed.
- Secondly, we will identify within the manifesto corpus, the text passages related to the predefined sub-categories and understand the party' singular approach.
- Thirdly, we will distinguish the differences and comparisons between our cases study.

Based on our exploration of the literature, we will answer to our research question by an inductive approach. We formulate a hypothesis on the pragmatic profile of our case studies which is the following:

H1: *Impact of the national context*: As we examined, our three case studies are anchor in national political context that significantly differ from each other. That is why, we can presume that the national ecological

awareness, the electoral institutional design, and the existing environmental legislations can influence and determine their proposals and political projects.

The second part of this thesis will thus focus on the presentation of my research method and the verification of our hypothesis.

Comparative analysis of party manifesto and programmatic profile

1) Presentation of the research method

The review of the literature on socio-ecological resilience has embraced the difficulty to operationalize the concept. For that reason, the term is highly criticized for been complex, fuzzy, and thus disconnected from the public policies reality. Many authors underline the quasi-impossibility to quantify resilience through specific indicators, as well as the difficulty to empirically implement this framework (Barroca, DiNardo, and Mboumoua 2013; Quenault 2013; Ingalls and Stedman 2016). Consequently, here resides the whole difficulty of our search object, and at the same time all the interest and originality of this thesis work. We will thus necessarily take positions in this scientific debate.

As we examined, other authors proposed complex guidelines to set resilience in political agenda (Davoudi et al. 2012; Maclean, Cuthill, and Ross 2014; Spears et al. 2015). In the framework of this research work, we selected three thematical categories, that we considered as giving a first picture of resiliency in agenda setting. We acknowledge that these themes are necessarily restrictive to consider socio-ecological resilience in its entirety. However, a manifesto analysis requires to analyze pragmatically case studies and thus implies scientific choices. Moreover, we assume that our three themes provide a relevant insight on the programmatic profile of our green parties and constitute a first attempt to translate resilience into political agenda.

Based both on the coding scheme developed by the Manifesto Project Database, and on the state of literature, our analysis will be structured on three keys political themes:

- **Engage the citizens in a deliberative and decentralized democracy:** The political ecology and the resilience framework share the common objective to better involve citizens in a decentralized decision-making process, that is considered as fundamental for effective and equitable decisions. We will thus examine how our three green parties propose to enhance this alternative democratic project into their manifestos.

- **Alternative and sustainable economic model:** As we examined, the green critic of the capitalist model is based on the observation and believe that it tend to fail. The neo-liberal market economy is considered as the underlying cause of climate deregulation and ecosystem degradation in the green ideology. We will thus compare which type of alternative economic model our case studies privileged.
- **Environmental protection measures targeting a shift in human-nature relationship:** The essence of the green party ideology and socio-ecological resilience lies in the human-nature relationship redefinition. We will thus look at the green political proposals targeting a shift in values and moral regarding the natural world.

The corpus analyzed contains three texts, more precisely the three actual manifestos of our case studies which are:

- The green Italians are a more specific case. As we will examine, the FdV manifestos are missing, we will thus interpret this data unavailability and expose the causes of the Italian greens lack of programmatic profile. Then as we will see, Europa Verde recently recomposed, has not developed yet a detailed manifesto but rather a broad political guideline document available on its official website.
- The actual program of EELV has been elaborated in view of the next presidential election of April 2022 and can be founded on the party online portal.
- The manifesto of Ecolo is presented on its website in the section dedicated to the Belgian political project, it has been elaborated for the next federal elections.

Each party programs will be analyzed singularly, according to the three thematical categories, including elements of comparison. Then, we will verify our hypothesis and answer to our research question in conclusion.

2) The Italian greens' lack of programmatic profile: the difficult anchoring of political ecology in Italy

- The lack of data in a political and historical perspective

Despite our observations on the advantages that represents a party program analysis, the unavailability of data of the Italian ecological party has represented a real challenge in the framework of this research.

Indeed, whether for the case of the FdV or for the newly constituted Europa Verde, the Italian greens' political programs and manifestos have not been systematically recorded in the path of each election they competed. On the one hand, the official archive website of the FdV registered only some of their political leaflets for the regional and administrative elections, and for national referendums campaigns on environmental issues. On

the other hand, recently created on the 10th of June 2021, Europa Verde did not yet formulate detailed political proposals to compete to elections but rather a very light manifesto that, as we will see, is only a general overview of their broad political positioning. This lack of transparency, or the only absence of elaborated political programs and manifestos, is also observable on the Manifesto Project Database in which no proper data can be founded for the Italian green parties since their emergence¹³.

Nonetheless, even though the lack of data does constitute a challenge for researchers, the non-existence or the non-accessibility to information is meaningful and pertinent to analyze. We will examine that the absence of programmatic data for the Italian greens must be interpreted both as a manifestation of their unstable internal structure, and in a wider prospect, as an expression of the difficult anchorage of political ecology in the country.

The lack or unavailability of the Italian green party' own political program has first to be examined by the party struggle to compete for elections as autonomous political organization. As highlighted by Delwit and Close (2016), in the path of the 2000s, the FdV competed to local elections as member of different coalitions gathering a wide diversity of left-wing parties. For the 2008 elections, the greens were part of the « Sinistra-Arcobaleno » coalition; in 2009 of the « Sinistra e Libertà » list, and in 2013 they joined the « Rivoluzione civile ». Thus, the greens' political proposals have been elaborated in the framework of these large alliances and plural electoral lists. These manifestos are indeed rather the manifestation of the negotiations between the left-wing parties and do not represent a proper body of the Italian green ideas on the agenda setting of environmental issue.

The struggle of the Italian greens to compete independently to elections and to build a stable internal party' structure, just as the one of their northern European counterparts, had been examined by Biorcio (2016). As explained by the author, the factors that contributed to the emergence of green political formations in southern Europe were therefore the same than for the rest of the continent. Indeed, these countries also experienced the accentuation of the environmental crisis and its mediatization at the end of the 1960s. The multiplication of environmental hazards has also marked the southern European society of Italy, Spain, Greece, and Portugal. Then, the author highlights that the similar shift of values towards more « post-materialistic » concerns, as it has been theorized by Inglehart (1977), also took place in the southern European societies. In addition, the Italian party' system has also been deeply affected by a crisis of legitimation triggered by the incapacity of the elite classes in power to answer the popular demand for social changes. In the path of the First Italian Republic, the country encounters a succession of political scandals which significantly affected the popular support for the mainstream parties (Briquet 2010). Parallely, the new wave of social movements and citizen' initiatives

¹³ One program for government is available for the year 2006, however as we will examine later, programs constituted in the framework of a wide coalition of center-left parties cannot constituted a basis for our analysis.

have prompted growing awareness on environmental and climate issues henceforth enjoying more political attention (Biorcio 2016). These ecological movements have also allowed the structuration of environmental activism as basis for the development of the southern European green parties. However, despite this common pattern of emergence of the European green parties, the Italian formation, and its other southern counterparts, have followed a different evolution maintaining them in position of marginality within their national political landscapes. Comparing to their northern peers, the Italian green party has obtained very low electoral results at the European elections covering the period from 1984 to 2009 (Biorcio 2016).

The political marginality and the electoral unsuccess of the FdV can be explained by structural factors that the country share with the other southern European countries. First, the author observes a lower importance accorded to ecological and climate questions in the southern societies. Based on the Eurobarometer dataset, he compares the importance given to environmental protection by the European citizens according to their nationality and highlights that during the 2000s, the Italians have attached a decreasing importance to this issue. The advent of the 2008 economic crisis have triggered other political priorities such as inflation, unemployment, or insecurity. By 2013, the survey shows that ecological concerns have almost fade away the list of the priorities of the Italian agenda setting. Similarly, the adhesion to environmental or peace associations have been significantly low in Italy. While in 2002, the 5.8 per cent of the Belgium citizens and the 3.3 per cent of the French population participated to environmental protection activities, only the 2.7 per cent of the Italian took part to such actions. Consequently, in a context in which environmental issues are not an actual prior concern neither an object of major popular mobilization, the green parties better struggle to anchor into the political system and obtain lower electoral results. Thirdly, as Biorcio (2016) pointed out, the southern countries have been more severely impacted by the financial crisis of 2008 and its socio-political consequences. Started in the United States, the crisis has inevitably rapidly impacted the old continent, and the EU has developed a set of austerity measures that the member states have had to commonly implemented. The author notes that the EU's policies have led to an increase of the unemployment and a decrease of the salary particularly in the south of Europe which further push ecological concerns out from the Italian political agenda priorities. For Delwit and Close (2016), the gap in per capita income between the North and the South of the continent is contributing to make environmental degradation a less pressing issues for the Mediterranean countries and allows to explain the weak « green wave » in these societies.

Moreover, the difficulty of the FdV to build a solid internal structure thanks to a stable electoral basis has also been explained by specific political choices made by the member of the party. According to Biorcio (2016), unlike the northern European green parties, the FdV did not maintain close relations with ecological associations and rather develop a divergent programmatic profile.

At the creation of the *Federazione delle Liste Verdi*, the lists' political revendications were in line with the ecological movements and associations. They were both advocating for environmental protections, for an alternative political style and actions, and for an internal structure different from the classic party organizations. As Biorcio (2016) explains, the green political formation was attempting to a difficult but successful task in term of adhesion and electoral result. The federation of green list combine the maintain of a non-partisan traditional hierarchy, refuse to get confined to the local level of power and try to differentiate itself from the other small size parties of the extreme left wing. From 1986 to 1989, the ecological associative landscape was merged with the political mobilization toward green list, and they shared the similar political objectives. As observed the author, around two-third of the party members have been involved in the ecological activities of movement, groups or association (Biorcio 2016). Since its creation in December 1990 until 1995, the FdV still maintains certain links with environmental activism even through it rise in size and in political autonomy.

However, the definition of party' new political objectives contributed to start the process of erosion of the support accorded from the associative world. Indeed, especially from 1996, the author argues that the motivations and the revendications of environmental associations and the one of the Italian green politicians significantly diverged to became independent from each other. On the one hand, the FdV attempt to properly structured itself as a traditional party and to enlarge its programmatic profile. The green party extend its program to a large range of policy issues such as peace, social disparities and right of minorities (Biorcio 2016). In addition, the desire to create a proper party' government with a strong political structure led progressively to a higher importance accorded to the hierarchical status and to economic revenue. Thus, the party moved away from the original ecologist ideals of non-partisan structure, collective leadership, and transparent decision-making process. As noticed the author, even if the number of adherents globally increased during this period, the party losses its grassroots electoral basis.

The loss of activist militants has made the party' electoral basis increasingly unstable and its new electorate is much more volatile. The FdV is criticized for been moved away from the original ecologist identity and ideals of the environmental associative world. Parallely, the party did not build reuse to build a stable structure, it struggles to institutionalize a strong leadership and a transparent decision-making process. From 1999, the new mandate of Grazia Francescato at the general secretary have represented an attempt to reconcile the party with its roots of activism and thus reconcile with ecological movements. However, this new strategy was encountered difficulties as the formation has a weak power of decision within their electoral coalitions and was highly dependent from this center-left alliances. In addition, the author demonstrates that the ambitions of power of the new green elites present in local and regional authority level was not permit such evolution possible.

Thus, during the 2000s, the internal divisions and scissions make the party lack of its historical leaders and supporters opposed to the electoral coalitions and the wider party' project and orientation. Hence, distanced itself from the prior « neither right, neither left » rhetoric and political style, the FdV failed to constitute a peculiar political profile differentiating from the mainstream parties' political style but also from the more alternative left organizations. The green dilemma in Italy is thus encounter to their incapacity to define an original political project and their lack of political autonomy on their national electoral scene.

The lack of internal structure and distinct programmatic profile make the ecologist electorate rather vote for the extreme left-wing formations. While for the 2014 European elections the Five Star Movement obtain an electoral score higher than 21 per cent, the Italians greens only got 0.8 per cent of the total vote (Biorcio 2016). The author claims that the movement led by Beppe Grillo better succeeded to meet the revendications of environmental movements and their critics against the European Union policies.

The green challenge to maintain loyal voters can be observed in the significant decrease of their electorate results and their quasi capacity to obtain seats in the national lower chamber. When from 1987 until the mid of the 1990, the Italian greens acquires between ten and fifteen seats, since 2008 they do not enter parliament event part of broaden left-wing coalitions (Ibid. 2016, 181). Except at the general election of 2006, for which a mixed proportional system was implement for the general elections, the Italian greens to obtain 16 deputies and place one minister in the government office (Ibid. 2016). As highlight the author, the green struggle to extend their electoral base is observable in their little electoral result which do not permit them to obtain seats in parliament as the minimum threshold is 4 per cent of the total votes.

For (Franjou 2019), the difficulty of the Italian greens to electorally success and to defined a proper political project also come from the fact that the country left the nuclear power early at the end of the 1980s. In the aftermath of the Chernobyl accident, the Italian greens and the environmental movement mobilizations led to the achievement of the Constitutional Court acceptance of three national referendums on the abrogation of nuclear power (Op. cit. 2016, 181; 1999, 184). Held on November 1987, the referendums enjoyed a high level of participation and have all been approved by the Italian citizens exceeding each the 70 per cent of the total votes. These referendums have led to the nuclear reactors closure in Italy and had thus been considered as the culmination of the political influence of the Italian greens (Ibid. 1999, 184). In 2008, the Italian government have tried to relaunched debate on nuclear power program arguing this decision have had a high cost for the national economy. Whereas a new nuclear plan was projected, this attempt to restore nuclear power were stopped in the aftermath of the Fukushima accident. On the 12th of June 2011, the referendum on the « Repeal of the new rules allowing the production in the territory of nuclear electricity » had been approved by the

94,05 per cent of the total votes¹⁴. Even if a part of the national consumption of electricity comes from imported nuclear power, Italy is one of the few countries which abolished nuclear power for its production of electricity (World Nuclear Association 2021a). Consequently, where in France and in Belgium anti-nuclear power revendications were crucial component of green parties' political programs even after 1990's, the nuclear issues have represented a lower driving force for the Italian greens after their ban referendums (Franjou 2019). Conversely to their European counterparts, the Italian green party could not take advantage of the popular criticism on nuclear issues and were thus necessary limited in their field of national actions.

Thus, we examined the socio-historical causes which make the FdV facing difficulties to be visible and to persist in its national political landscape. The lack of internal structure and transparency, the impossible formation and definition of a stable and faithful electoral and membership basis, the electoral drawback of party' coalition and the lower attentions of environmental issues can explain the actual absence of party program and manifestos for the Italian greens. In light of this analysis, we can thus assume that the FdV oscillates between a marginal and an intermediate type of green party formation (Lucardie 1999). The evolution of the Italian green highlights periods in which they participate to the national power with a moderate programmatic and political alliance strategy with the center-left coalition. We can question the position of the newly Europa Verde to pursue a political strategy of intermediate position or rather choose to break with it by developing another political project.

- Which programmatic profile of Europa Verde? Reflections for future perspectives

Recently created on the 10th of June 2021, Europa Verde has presented itself as environmentalist, progressist, ecofeminist and Europeanist. The party has posted a provisory manifesto entitled « Taking care of Italy and Europe to fight climate change and inequalities » (Europa Verde 2021, Free Translation), nevertheless this document of few pages cannot represent an exploitable database as it only presents an overview of the party' intentions. This provisory manifesto does not gather a list of detailed political proposals which can be examined in light of our three categories. The document rather presents the party' future lines of action which do not permit an analysis of its programmatical profile.

Therefore, our examination of the provisory manifesto has permit to distinguish two broad party' orientations.

First, the party tend to differentiate itself from its party' ancestor, the FdV. As Genovese (2021) demonstrates, Europa Verde plan to import the so-called « green wave » within the Italian political scene and to get closer to the Northern European green experience. In its draft program, the first objective of Europa Verde is to

¹⁴For more information on the referendums results, see the official archives of the government: 'Eligendo Archivio - Ministero dell'Interno DAIT'. n.d. Eligendo. Accessed 21 September 2021. <https://elezionistorico.interno.gov.it>.

position Italy and Europe in the « forefront » of the fight against climate change (Europa Verde 2021, 3 Objective 1, Free translation). We can assume that the challenge of the party is indeed to stimulate political ecology in Italy and to convert the citizen's interests on environmental issues into votes during the election times. With the purpose to not repeat the same mistake effectuated by the FdV, Europa Verde tends to re-connect with the socio-ecological movements and citizens' initiatives existing currently in Italy (Ibid. 2021, 2).

Secondly, we can observe that Europa Verde displays a strong pro-European ideological positioning. Effectively, the promises and the objectives of the party speaks about the constant coordination of the European level of actions with the national one in the management of the climate and environmental crisis (Ibid. 2021, 3 Objective 7). In addition, the party advocates for a deeper integrated and a federal Europe (Ibid. 2021, 3 Objective 8). However, the Italian greens advocate for an Europe which do not « compromise the local economies », refuse the European austerity measures and rather promote a fiscal union with a common public debt among its member states (Ibid. 2021, 3 Objective 8). As we examine previously, the Italian electorate part of ecological movements and ideologically close to political ecology have preferably voted for Eurosceptic political formations such as the Five Star Movement than for the green parties (Biorcio 2016). In its provisory manifesto, Europa Verde targets a pro-European electorate, and which share ecological concerns. The second challenge of the new party will indeed to constitute a stable and loyal electorate and to find its place in the national political scene.

Finally, even if the programmatic profile of the Italian greens cannot be depicted due to the lack of data, we highlighted the root causes of this challenge. We argued that the absence of data is accountable for the multiple difficulties the green party experience within its political system.

3) EELV, a pragmatic program of political ecology.

As Villalba (2016) highlights, the French political scene is an aggregation of small green formations which do not share the same political priorities and which are rooted in diverse ecological schools of thought, such as the ones examined in the state of the literature. The author claims that the large diversity of ecological theories makes the French green parties distinct in their programmatic profiles. This factor could explain the lack of a unique and regular green political project in the country (Ibid. 2016, 107). French ecologists' fragmentation of the highlights their infinite debates and disputes and shows their incapacity to converge toward common political priorities.

As mentioned previously, there are numerous representatives of political ecology in France who compete against each other in the path of the elections. From 1990 to 1995, Les Verts have often split into a multitude of smaller political formations (Ibid. 2016). This period considerably contributed to the fragmentation of

political ecology in the country. In addition, in the path of 1990s, the reform legislation on the public financing of the parties facilitated the creation of smaller political groups (Ibid. 2016, 93). Alongside the larger green party, Les Verts, other groupings were formed during the mid-1990' such as Génération Ecologie of Brice Lalonde with a center-right orientation; the Mouvement Écologiste Independent (MEI) created by Antoine Waechter; the Cap 21 formed by Corinne Lepage and located in the center of the spectrum; and finally, the emergence of the figure of Nicolas Hulot with its Ecological pact for the presidential elections.

This constellation of green party highlights the deep divisions across the political ecological class in France and produces a fragmentation also of the green electorate. As the author demonstrates, the electoral competition between the French greens has a negative impact on their public image, their political influence, and their internal stability. Aware of these obstacles, the French greens always attempts to merge. For Villalba (2016), the specificity of political ecology in France resides in the long lasting and recurrent attempt of the greens to unify and reconcile themselves toward a single political formation. For that reason, unlike other European green parties, the history of the French greens is marked by the rise and fall of green formations seeking to go beyond their traditional disagreements (Ibid. 2016). In comparison, the Italian and Belgian political scenes do not have as much green parties. This enables the principal green formation to have the monopoly on ecological concerns. We do not argue that the Italian and Belgium greens have not faced internal dissents and ideological disputes. However, the representation of political ecology in these countries is not fragmented and crumbled as it is the case in France. Furthermore, the ownership of environmental issues is not in the hand of one political party in France, since it is rather shared by all the existing green formations. By contrast, we will later examine part that the two Belgian green parties focus also own environmental and climate issues.

While Les Verts managed to rise as the principal actor among the green political constellation, Villalba (2016) argues that the party fails to accomplish the convergence of the French ecological tendencies. On the one hand, the degrowth ecologists advocating for more radical transformations of the political and economic system have always been firmly opposed in joining the party (Ibid. 2016, 93). On the other hand, the alter-globalists ecologists, who integrated later the concern of environmental protection, did not share the same political culture and preferred staying outside the political competition (Ibid. 2016, 93).

The *Europe Écologie* coalition of 2008, which will be the basis on which EELV will emerge, was yet a tentative to transform and renovate political ecology in the country (Ibid. 2016, 93). Created for the European elections of 2009 at the initiative of Les Verts, this alliance gathered the member of the party, other regionalists, and autonomous organizations toward the federation of Régions et Peuples Solidaires, members of ecological associations and personalities such as Nicolas Hulot, Eva Joly and Daniel Cohn-Bendit. The coalition has held an explicit strategy of collaboration and unification of the multiple « green » actors of the

French political scene. Political parties, trade unions, associations, and ecological movements from the left to the center-right came together with the purpose to reinvigorate the ideal of doing politics in a different manner. The main target was to move toward open relationships with the electorate and to improve the environmentalists electoral performances (Ibid. 2016, 95). The coalitions with the progressists left parties have effectively allowed the greens to obtain greater electoral results, as it avoids the ballot scattering and creates an image of unity (Ibid. 2016, 100). Nevertheless, the author also argues that this strategy put the green into a position of dependence on electoral alliances, which made them less autonomous.

This context is crucial to examine our topic, as it helps to understand the current programmatic profile of the EELV, and it significantly influenced it. The new party is part of the lineage of attempt to unify ecological fractions toward a unique and central formation while at the same time it preserves the specificities of each member (Ibid. 2016). In this respect, the challenge of the ecologists in France is, on the one hand, to balance between the will of each small formations to keep their independence and their peculiar theoretical affiliations. On the other hand, the goal is also to find a point of agreement to progress electorally. The author argues that in its manifesto, EELV adopts a pragmatic profile which tends to make everyone agree and thus depict this tentative of wider collaboration of political ecologists.

Since its foundation on the 13th of November 2010, the initial will of EELV was to create a strong and influent green party independent from the major left formation, the Socialist Party, and with a clear and distinct ideological profile (Ibid. 2016, 92). In addition, the new formation ambitioned to transit toward a more « adult » stage type of party, previously defined thanks to the typology of Müller-Rommel (1994). EELV furthered its professionalization and institutionalization through a strategical framework, with a view to not face the same electoral difficulties of its ancestor, Les Verts.

Price-Thomas (2016), explains the adoption of a pragmatic profile in light of the EELV ambition to participate to executive power together with its rapprochement with the classical left. On November 15th 2011, EELV signed an agreement with the socialist party and developed a national manifesto for 2012-2017. The author stresses that in the elaboration of the common political program, the green's commitments were significantly reduced. For instance, the green party did not obtain the phase-out of nuclear power but the potential closing of 24 centrals by 2025 and the non-construction of new nuclear plan during their term in office (Ibid. 2016, 287). EELV has transitioned toward a less alternative party profile and does no longer question the lack of deep reflection to address energetic issues of the classical leftist project.

In addition, this moderate political positioning can be examined toward the controversy of the airport project of Notre-Dame-des-Landes in the West of France. Relaunched in 2000, the project has triggered massive popular and political dissent, as it was planned to build the new airport in natural protected areas. The

ecological and social movements opposed to the project occupied the lands and have created the so-called « Zone À Défendre » (ZAD, namely zone to be defended). As social experimentation, the ZAD was a self-ruled and auto-sufficient village which developed its own agricultural activities and shops based on non-commodified relations. The residents of the ZAD, the « zadistes », organized an alternative society for the defense of ecosystem and have tried to realize the green ideals of grassroots and deep ecology. As Villalba (2016) demonstrates, EELV, in coalition with the socialists, did not explicitly support the ZAD project and rather adopted a cautious and ambiguous political positioning.

Since its coalition with the classical left, EELV has adopted a moderate ideological positioning. It results from the challenge of the French greens to both perform as a real party' government, and to maintain a sufficiently distinct political project from the socialist party (Villalba 2016, 107). The adoption of a more pragmatic profile has indeed permitted to EELV to increase its political influence and to obtain a minister in the government. Nevertheless, as Price-Thomas (2016, 296) argues, that the EELV's political project appears to go further away from the pure eco-centrist ideological tendency, as previously defined thanks to the crucial work of Eckersley (1992). The author highlights that the party programs advocate fewer and fewer for deep socio-economic transformations and has distanced itself from the original ideals and utopias of the political ecology ideology.

Considering these observations on the programmatic profile of EELV, we will now examine the current political proposals of the party in the framework of our three topics of analysis.

- Engage the citizen in a deliberative and decentralized democracy

As Price-Thomas (2016) underlines, the radical conception of democracy is a distinctive feature of the green ideology. The greens advocate for a democratic renewal usually through the decentralization of power and other tools, with a view to better engage public participation into institutional decision-making process. As we previously examined, the green parties are also characterized by the application of deliberative and grassroots practices within their own organizational structure. In its manifesto of 2012, EELV advocates for radical democracy both in the way to conceive the Fifth Republic and its internal party' structure (Ibid. 2016, 284). For that reason, EELV originally identified itself as a « radical democratic movement » and preferred this denomination to the « party » one to qualify the nature of its political activities (Ibid. 2016, 284). As the author points out, EELV has promoted the citizen-initiated referendum as a crucial tool to better engage popular participation.

In its current manifesto, EELV proposes the establishment of the so-called « 49.3 Citoyen » (EELV 2021, 64). It is a citizen initiative which permits to sign a petition gathering at least 1% of the electorate, so 400 000 French voters, to propose a draft law to the National Assembly that will review the legislative proposal. It also

enables this petition to submit a bill to a vote by referendum. In the case in which the referendum obtains a majority of vote, the enactment of the law would be suspended or canceled. In 2016, the « Loi travail » has highlighted the controversies around the article 49 paragraph 3 of the Fifth French constitution. This article establishes that the prime minister, after deliberation of the Council of ministers, can execute the promulgation of a law without going through the parliament vote. The draft labor bill, supported by the prime minister Manuel Valls, has triggered large social contestations across the country and has not been approved by the Assembly majority. The article 49.3 of the constitution has thus been invoked multiple times to pass the bill¹⁵. Allowing citizen to take part in the legislative procedure and have their say is the tool put forward by the French green. The party also proposes to lower the voting age to 16 years old and to enlarge the right to vote to all the regularly residents (EELV 2021, 64).

More importantly, the party advocates for the creation of the Sixth Republic (EELV 2021, 64) which would tend more towards a parliamentary system. The new institutional design promoted by EELV would have a reenforced parliament at its center (Ibid. 2021, 64), a new senate representing territorial and local collectivities (Ibid. 2021, 64), and a government responsible in front of the parliament with greater competencies given to the prime minister (Ibid. 2021, 64). We can underline the will of the French greens to end the semi-presidential system and to create a parliamentary republic based on the German model. The role of the president, mentioned after the other institutions in the manifesto, would have rather a simple role of guardian of the institutions, the constitution and the common will of the republic (Ibid. 2021, 64). Especially, their project of new republic provides for the creation of a Chamber of the Future and of the Citizenship (Ibid. 2021, 64). This new institution will give advice and detain a right to veto on several topics concerning the future, such as climate, energy plans, waste management, mobility, etc. This project is analogous to the institutional ecological thought that we mentioned, which conceives procedures and institutions as effective tools to manage environmental issues. We can compare this new chamber with an Ombudsman, defender of the future generations and controlling the sustainability and the long-term view of the decisions. Similarly, the chamber proposed by EELV aims to establish a form of ecological representation into the French institutional design.

For Price-Thomas (2016), unlike the German and the British green parties, EELV does not advocate for grassroots democracy. In its national manifesto of 2012, the French greens advocated for power decentralization but rather as a new mode to organize the state level of power. EELV supported higher autonomy given to the French regions and thus promoted a federal system, based on the German institutional framework. The author thus highlights that the French greens do not encourage localism, as he defined as the will to grant more power to « smaller units of political organization, geographically decentralized and therefore closer to those who are on the receiving end of political decisions » (Ibid. 2016, 286). As explained the author, despite that this position

¹⁵ For more information on the bill: 'Loi Travail : Le Gouvernement a Une Troisième Fois Recours Au 49.3'. n.d. Accessed 21 September 2021. https://www.lemonde.fr/politique/article/2016/07/20/loi-travail-le-gouvernement-a-une-troisieme-fois-recours-au-49-3_4972394_823448.html.

appears less radical on democracy comparing with the other green formations, it can therefore be explained by the high centralization of the French political system. Indeed, France is highly centralized with respect to the administration, the decision-making process, allocation of financial resources, etc. The author argues that the green promotion of regionalism, and not localism, is yet alternative for the centralized national design of the country.

In its current manifesto, EELV still advocates for regional autonomy through the principle of « differentiated federalism » (EELV 2021, 64). It prevails greater fiscal and legislative competencies for regional entities together with their participation into the EU institutional decisions regarding the topics of their competencies. The French regions, as a new unit of power, are thus conceived as the benchmark of democratic renewal through decentralization.

We can argue that EELV has maintained a radical democratic profile. The party advocates for deep institutional and structural changes of the French Republic toward a shift of political regime in which the parliament and the citizens would occupy a predominant position.

- Alternative and sustainable economic model

As Price-Thomas (2016) notices, the issue of growth covers both of the party' positioning on economic and environmental concerns. In the framework of this thesis, we choose to examine the question of growth as addressed in the party manifesto, thus in the frame of the innovative and sustainable economy. As examined before, the « pure » eco-centric orientation rejects the liberal market economy and necessarily advocates for anti-growth measures. In its 2012 manifesto, EELV rarely mentioned the concept of anti-growth and did not express much skepticism upon the economic growth (Ibid. 2016, 288). Even if the party has rejected the notion of « green growth », firstly put forward by the right-wing party in power led by Nicolas Sarkozy, EELV never adopted an explicit anti-growth position (Ibid. 2016, 288). The author states that while the criticism of growth is a distinctive feature of the greens, they have softened their original radical antigrowth sentiment. In the 2021 EELV manifesto, we can notice that the liberal market economy is criticized for its model of endless growth which caused occupational diseases (Ibid. 2021, 8); unequal wealth redistribution (Ibid. 2021, 30, 36); greenhouse gas emission (Ibid. 2021, 17); and which is accused to not solve unemployment problems (Ibid. 2021, 30). However, we can effectively highlight that no mention of anti-growth or degrowth concepts, the co-called « décroissance », is made in their manifesto. We can assume that the French greens tend to avoid the concept as it is still negatively connoted and assimilated to « non-progress » or « regression ».

The EELV current manifesto addresses the work value and criticizes the flexible labor market developed by liberal economy as the cause of national unemployment, and social precarity (Ibid. 2021, 30). The first proposal for the work field is to re-orientate and convert jobs into ecological transition activities such as the

energetical renovation (Ibid. 2021, 30). The party also tends to question the position of the work value in the society and highlights its negative consequence on human being such as the physical diseases and burn-out (Ibid. 2021, 30). However, it is interesting to highlight that while EELV proposes work reforms to higher the salaries and to increase the workplace health, the party do not advocate for a reduction of the working time. Indeed, no shortening of the work week is proposed by the French greens while as we will see in the latter part, it is a central revendication of the Belgian Ecolo to shift economic model. It is possible to explain this omission as in line with the party profile which does not promote de-growth stance.

To fight against climate change, EELV tends to condition at 100 per cent the public financing of enterprises for the respect of climate (Ibid. 2021, 30). In addition, the party proposes the implementation of a « product identity card » exposing the commodities carbon footprint and life expectancy together with information about the salary cost of production (Ibid. 2021, 30). EELV also suggests to lower the « Taxe sur la Valeur Ajoutée » (TVA) for eco-friendly products and to increase it for imported commodities (Ibid. 2021, 30). These financial instruments develop environmental taxation in accordance with the « polluter-pays » principle, even though the party does not explicitly mention the concept within its manifesto.

Moreover, EELV proposes to establish a « Revenu Universel d'Existence » (RUE) (Ibid. 2021, 30). This universal income would not follow criteria of attribution and will be created step by step. The first stage of the RUE, as proposed by EELV, is to create a minimum allocation for each adult without job or with low revenues (Ibid. 2021, 30).

Regarding energetic production, EELV strives to phase out the nuclear power at the latest by 2025 (Ibid. 2021, 30). As we mentioned in the analysis of the Italian green case, the fight against nuclear power still represents a key element of the programmatic profile of the French green as the country have maintained its nuclear centrals. EELV aspires to considerably reduce the national energetic consumption by the renovation and insulation of public and private buildings (Ibid. 2021, 30). In addition, the party did not present a ready-made energetic plan, but rather encourages the creation of a Citizen Energy Convention which would open a citizen debate on energy issues and that will have the duty to establish the new plan of the energetic mix. (EELV 2021).

- Environmental protection measures targeting a shift in human-nature relationship

The conception of nature of EELV is characterized as many other European green party by a level of new politics radicalism and a certain eco-centric orientation (Ibid. 2016, 284). The French green refused the anthropocentric conception of environmental issues and its utilitarian approach of natural resources. In their first manifesto of 2012, the party called for a redefinition of the human-nature relationship and considered the natural world as a self-regulated mechanism toward an equilibrium (EELV, 2012 in Ibid. 2016, 284) However,

the author demonstrates that EELV therefore transmitted some utilitarian valuation of nature as an apparatus for the accomplishment of socio-economic policies. The nature provides crucial « services » for the humanity and notably the regulation of the economy (EELV, 2012 in Ibid. 2016). The author interprets this political positioning not as a detachment from the eco-centric orientation but rather as a need to answer the practical necessity to depict an ideological position to the audience, that does not necessarily share this pure eco-centric positioning. While at their emergence green political parties advanced more radical ambitions and the eco-centrism, they evolved, and notably EELV, toward a more « pragmatic environmentalism » (Ibid. 2016, 285).

In its current manifesto, the French greens emphasize the need to « rethink the relations between all the species of the planet to preserve the humanity » (EELV 2021, 11 Free translation). The first proposal to realize this broad goal is to incorporate the climate, the biodiversity and the planetary limits, previously mentioned within the constitution (Ibid. 2021, 12). This institutional tool permits to preserve the environment and to avoid its degradation by recognizing a legal responsibility of the users of natural resources. We can also underline that socio-ecological resilience is addressed, since EELV includes the ecosystem persistency into the constitutional order thanks to the SOS international framework.

Furthermore, the party advocates for the recognition of the ecocide crime and environmental justice as crucial tools to stop utilitarian use of natural resources (Ibid. 2021, 12). It also proposes to include into the constitutional order the right of the ecosystems to regenerate, to be defended in justice and to participate in democracy (Ibid. 2021, 12). We can emphasize here that the party favored institutional tools to enforce ecological resilience and demonstrated its eco-centric orientation. In addition, the party strives to recognize water as a natural common good and implement judicial constraints to avoid its mechanization and its speculation (Ibid. 2021, 12).

The French greens dedicate many proposals to the animal condition protection. They ask for the creation of a legal status for animal and other non-human beings and the possibility to defend their right in justice (Ibid. 2021, 12).

Lastly, we can argue that EELV has maintained its radical democratic profile and advocate for a deep transformation of the human-nature relationship. However, the party seems to have a more moderate positioning on economic issues and notably a certain reticence toward anti-growth and degrowth policies.

4) Ecolo, the more radical left programmatic profile?

We will study the actual programmatic profile of the Belgian Ecolo green party. First, we will analyze its political proposals for the Belgian federation presented in its actual manifesto, available on its website.

Secondly, we will focus our attention on the existing literature on the party' ideological and political positioning.

Wavreille and Pilet (2016) notice that programmatic profile of Ecolo has been relatively stable since the party' creation, even though the Belgian ecologists operated some changes in their political priorities as we will see. The authors study the ideological and political positions of the two Belgians green parties toward three different approaches. First, a programmatic profile can be examined thanks to the predominant political issue constancy of the party's manifesto during time. Then, the authors also examine the Ecolo's political programs in the light of the party issue ownership, which permits to distinguish itself from the other Belgian parties. Lastly, the Ecolo programmatic profile has been analyzed by its specific position on the main national political debates.

First, the « saliency issue » approach permit to identify which topic has received more attention in the party manifesto during time. For Wavreille and Pilet (2016), Ecolo has been characterized by multiple-issue programmatic profile since its creation. Not only focusing on pure environmental concerns, the francophone Belgian greens have also extended their proposals to cover a large range of political issues, such as democratic representation and participation, economic activities, education, transports and mobilities. As Rihoux (1993) examines, the diversity of issues has been addressed through the prism of the concept of sustainable development which is a driving force of their programs. In its actual manifesto, pure environmental issues of ecosystem resources and biodiversity preservation represent only one sub-section of the entire political program. The section entitled « Environment and Biodiversity » is part of the six sub-themes of the manifesto chapter on the protection of the climate and life quality.

As Wavreille and Pilet (2016) demonstrate, the manifesto profile of Ecolo has been characterized by its larger attention on economic issues, rather than to pure environmental issues. Based on a manifesto analysis realized by Dandoy, the Ecolo political project has, in a larger extent, covered themes as economic growth, welfare state management, and economic crisis recovery etc., rather than environmental issues, which has never represented more than 15 per cent of their program proposals (Dandoy 2011, as cited in Wavreille and Pilet 2016). While for the Flemish green party, Groens, environmental concerns have constantly represented the dominant issues of their manifestos, by contrast, the francophone Ecolo enlarges its programmatic profile to emphasize economic and social issues. The authors argue that this capacity to move away from a single-issue party considerably contributed to the electoral success of the party in the Belgium political scene. The saliency issue permits to identify Ecolo not as pure eco-centric party, but rather as a party significantly influenced by left ideologies. As we can observe in its actual manifesto, socio-economic topics still represent the more salient issues and covered most of their political proposals. Ecolo consecrates a larger part of its Belgian federal project to economic themes, such as the sub-sections entitled « SMEs and entrepreneurship »; « Economy and

fiscality »; «Employment, work and income »; and « Digital Transition» which totalized fifty political proposals.

Wavreille and Pilet (2016) also explore the programmatic profile of Ecolo in view of the party' issue ownership. This approach allows to identify the central theme thanks to which the party distinguished itself from the other political formations of the Belgian scene. While from 1981 to 2007, the environmental issues occupied 10 to 15 per cent of the Ecolo's manifestos, the other Belgian parties never devoted more than 5 per cent of their programs to these themes (Dandoy 2011, as cited in Wavreille and Pilet 2016). According to the authors, this gap permits to Ecolo and Groen to be the « owners » of the environmental issues in the eyes of the Belgian electorate. Today, we can assume that Ecolo and its Flemish peer are still the representatives of political ecology in Belgium in view of the review of the literature.

The positioning of the green parties into the main Belgian political debates is also crucial to understand their programmatic profile. As examined previously, the Belgian political scene is characterized by three cleavages: the socio-economic or owner-worker cleavage; the community or linguistical divide; and the religious opposition between the catholic-laic (Rihoux 1993; Delwit 1999).

Among the first Belgian cleavage on socio-economic issues, Wavreille and Pilet (2016) argue that Ecolo originally positioned itself with a radical alternative left profile by advocating for deep economic transformations. However, the party progressively softened its programmatic position toward more moderate left wing revendications (Ibid. 2016). Nevertheless, the authors argue that Ecolo is undoubtedly located on the left side on the socio-economic divide and is even one of the more left-wing oriented party at the federal parliament. The party defends a more inclusive immigration policy by advocating a softening of the legal requirement for irregular migrants, also promoting the extension of the right to vote of non-EU nationals. It also has a progressive positioning on gender issues and has fight in favor same-sex marriage.

Regarding the second national cleavage dealing with the linguistic community relationships, Ecolo has changed its position since its creation during the 1980s. At its start, the party was in favor of a stronger autonomy for the regions, associated to their revendication of grassroot democratic practices. However, since the 1990s, Ecolo became progressively promotor of the Belgian federalism. The authors explained this shift of stance by the structure of political ecology in Belgium. Indeed, even if the Belgian greens are separated in two parties corresponding to the Belgian linguistical communities, Ecolo and Groen are present in the federal parliament as one political group. In terms of party organization, the two green party maintain close relations and, as examined previously, increasingly work together in the path of elections. This factor has contributed to the Ecolo shift on the federalism issue. Indeed, the party developed a more « balanced approach » on the Belgian federalism by supporting the distribution of competencies both in the hand of the regions and of the

federal state. For Delwit and De Waele (1996), this shift of position on the Belgian federalism can be explained by a change of belief within the party. While the initial preference to give more power to the regions was the sign of the party' mistrust of the federal level of power, the progressive defense of federal prerogatives emerged parallelly to the privatization of the economy (Ibid. 1996, 176). Indeed, Ecolo gradually contested the backset of the federal state into the economy and advocates for the empowerment of public services.

We are now examining the peculiar programmatic position of Ecolo on our three thematic of analysis.

- Engage the citizen in a deliberative and decentralized democracy

As Delwit and De Waele (1996) explain, the will to better engaged the civil society into political decision-making process is one central axes of the programmatic profile of Ecolo since its creation. Advocating for another way to do politics has always been a strong theme of the green manifesto. However, green parties differed from each other in the strategies to accomplish this democratic renewal. As the authors point out, citizen-initiated measures such as popular referendums or citizens' rights of interpellation within communal councils have been the privileged proposal of Ecolo to better engage Belgian citizens (Idib. 1996, 164). The referendum is perceived by the Belgian ecologists as a crucial tool to dynamize the representative democracy and to include citizens in the political debate.

In its current manifesto, Ecolo proposes to create a « right to citizen legislative initiative and decisional referendum » (Proposal 1, Section « Democracy, Governance and Public services »). Presented as a crucial tool to revigorate democracy, referendum and citizen legislative initiatives are seen as tools to increase the citizen political responsibility and to weaken the general feeling of powerlessness on the political decision-making. The citizen legislative initiative would give the chance to each citizen to submit its legislative proposal, at the condition it has gathered a sufficient number of signatures (the precise number is therefore not mentioned), to communal municipalities or regional parliaments for being debated and eventually adopted. In case of a popular initiative rejection, the request of a decisional referendum can be made.

In addition, Ecolo proposes to create new democratic institutions at the federal level of power. It suggests suppressing the actual senate and to constitute an « inter-federal assembly composed by citizen chosen by lot » (Proposal 5, Section « Democracy, Governance and Public services ») together with the creation of an inspection for « Climate and sustainable development » in charge of dealing with the concerns of the future generations (Proposal 6, Section « Democracy, Governance and Public services »). On the same scheme than a Financial Inspection, the latter institution would verify and control the decision-making. Ecolo proposes also to lower the right to vote at 16 years old (Proposal 13, Section « Democracy, Governance and Public services ») to engage the young generations in the political debate.

This political proposal refers to the institutional ecological thought as we defined previously (Bourg and Whiteside 2017). Ecolo favors institutions and procedures reforms as a tool to enhance a sustainable management of the environment. Changing and creating new institutions for democracy appear thus to be the privileged policy to implement the political ecology ideology. The Ecolo proposal of an Inspection for Climate and sustainable development to deal with the environmental challenge is comparable to the implementation of an Ombudsman defenders of the next generation' interests and controlling the well-enforcement of sustainability. The inter-federal assembly, replacing the senate, is another institutional tool which might enforce a new form of ecological representation. The Ecolo's strategy for the federal level of power appears thus the implementation of an ecological representative democracy more than a grass roots democracy.

With the purpose to fight against the increasing delegitimization of the political class and to change representative democratic practices, Ecolo proposes to avoid accumulation of mandate together with the successive exercise of political mandate (Proposal 12 and 2, Section « Democracy, Governance and Public services »). These measures are presented as an efficient tool to secure the general interest among the political class and thus to enhance a good governance, far from the peculiar individual interests of politicians in power. The importance of the decumulation of mandate, to increase the popular confidence toward the federal institutions, is also emphasized.

- Alternative and sustainable economic model

As explained by Delwit and De Waele (1996), a distinctive characteristic of Ecolo from the other main parties of Belgium (which are the socialists, the social-Christians, and the liberals), is its criticism of the liberal market economy, accused of submitting the decisions to public administrations. The party thus advocates a shift of balance between economy and politic, to re-focusing the economy on the will of politics and not the opposite. One of the main tool to shift toward a diverse economic model, advanced by Ecolo, is the reorientation and the decentralization of public investments toward specific fields such as public mobility, housing rehabilitations and renewable energies (Ibid. 1996). As noticed by the authors, the party manifestos have systematically underlined the major benefits of such investments as the creation of many jobs in sustainable fields.

In its actual federal program, Ecolo emphasizes the energy transition as a crucial way to achieve resiliency and economic renewal. In the « Climate and Energy » section, the party manifesto refers to the example of countries as Denmark, Paraguay, and Island where the proportion of clean energy stand for, on average, 100 per cent of their total energetic productions. These countries are perceived as resilient as they « pollute little, consume energy with sobriety and are independent of oil-producing countries »¹⁶. In that sense, resilience is

¹⁶ For more information see : 'Climat et énergie'. n.d. Ecolo (blog). Accessed 21 September 2021. <https://ecolo.be/engagement/proteger-le-climat-et-la-qualite-de-vie/climat-et-energie/>.

perceived as the capacity of a country to produce its own energy, to consume moderately, and to pollute in a limited amount.

The party' energetic strategy to converge toward this goal of resilience is constituted around three axes: the insulation of buildings, the individual and communitarian energetic production, and the exit from the nuclear power. The improvement of the housing insulation would be implemented thanks to the adoption of constraints for energetic capacity (Proposal 2, Section « Climate and Energy »); the creation of an alliance for Employment Environment Insulation which would create jobs (Proposal 3, Section « Climate and Energy »). Insulation of building is indeed perceived as the first step to optimize the national consumption of energy.

Then, the development of renewal energies would be pursued notably through the diminution of the TVA for energetic saving investments from 21 to 6 per cent (Proposal 6, Section « Climate and Energy »), the creation of a new wind turbine offshore zones (Proposal 8, Section « Climate and Energy »), the installation of solar panel on public buildings (Proposal 7, Section « Climate and Energy »), the promotion of investment in citizen' transitional projects which would be financed by the taxes on the polluters (Proposal 10, Section « Climate and Energy »). Ecolo targets the reorientation of the energy production toward clean energies by developing a set of financial incitation measures for citizens but also by the development of new public projects. We can notice the centrality of the polluter-pays principle in this manifesto as an economic tool to change the human-nature relationship. The logic of this principle is to make pay the cost of the environmental degradation and all other preventives or pollution reduction policies by the citizens or companies that have caused them.

Regarding the nuclear power in Belgium, Ecolo advocates for the closure of its nuclear power stations for 2025 at the latest (Proposal 11, Section « Climate and Energy ») and prevails the deinstallation of the central and of nuclear waste management at the producer's expense rather than to the public sector (Proposal 12, Section « Climate and Energy »). In contrast to the Italian greens, nuclear issues are still a crucial component of the Belgian ecologists' manifestos. As we examined previously, since the new social movements of the 1960's, the request to phase out nuclear energy has been a constituting issue of the green parties in Belgium. Today, Belgium has seven operational nuclear reactors located at Doel and Tihange which produce around the half of the country electricity (World Nuclear Association 2021b). The proportion of the nuclear power in the national electricity consumption is thus much higher than in Italy and still constitutes one of the main political revendication of the party.

Lastly, as pointed out by Delwit and De Waele (1996) the last privileged area of investment reorientation for Ecolo has been the public mobility. In the current manifesto, a large section is indeed reserved to public transport services and the party plans to invest 7 billion euros in this sector (Proposal 1, Section « Mobility »). Ecolo promote the development of sustainable transports such as creating new cyclist ride way (Proposal 8,

Section « Mobility ») and significantly increase the offer, the frequency of public transports such as bus, tram, metro and train (Proposal 4 to 7, Section « Mobility »). Indeed, the party seems to show consistency in its political proposals regarding the sector of investment of public funds. The housing insulation and rehabilitations, the renewable energy and the sustainable mobilities are still today the three programmatic axes of the Belgian francophone green to converge toward climate resiliency.

Moreover, another crucial element to consider for the rethinking of the economic model is the place accorded to work within the society. As the authors underline, the topic of the work and the time dedicated to it is a central element of the Ecolo's manifestos since the party's creation. The ideology of political ecology is structured upon the rejection of the work value and the working time as predominant and central components of social organization (Ibid. 1996, 167). The work values as it is conceived in the modern societies, is intrinsically associated by the ecologists to productivism and consumerism. In addition, the « green » notion of progress is rather assimilated to non-material issues and post-materialistic values as we defined previously. Consequently, more than creating economic growth, work must be transformed to be rather producer of the human well-being. It is the reasons why, Ecolo advocated the end of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) as index to measure a country development and rather promotes new index based on well-being (Ibid. 1996, 167).

The rejection of the work predominance has been conceived through diverse political measures in the party's manifestos. At its beginnings, the party proposed to create a universal allowance of 12 000 francs for one adult according to its age and its physical work capacity along with the progressive deregulation of the labor market (Ibid. 1996, 170). However, as highlighted by the authors, the dissensions and debates that this proposition created among the party's members lead to its abandonment. Then, from 1986, Ecolo started to promote the three-quarters times of work which became the central proposition to change the labor value. It foresees a bonus for the workers which voluntarily accept to work three-quarter less of their work time and plan to generalize the sabbatical leave. Today, the party wants particularly to introduce a basic income for the young generations from 18 to 26 years old (Proposal 1, Section « Employment, Work and Income ») and to implement the four-days week work on voluntary basis (Proposal 2, Section « Employment, Work and Income »). We can observe that the party proposals to make work more sustainable and healthier for the citizen always go through a global reduction of the work time but with different tools according to time.

- Environmental protection measures targeting a shift in human-nature relationship

The proposals advanced by Ecolo to shift the current human-nature relationship are closely linked to the ensemble of measures analyzed previously. However, we can notice, in light of the examination of the current party's manifesto other crucial tools that the party promote to trigger a shift in mentalities and an awareness on the environmental challenge. Indeed, the party privileged tools to re-balance this relationship is the internalization of the external costs of environmental damages. As nature and the ecosystems are considered

by the liberal market economy as free stock to exploit, the « real » cost of its use is currently externalized: no one pays for the environmental damages done. The environmental economic policy approach aims to measure and to quantify the financial costs of environmental degradations and also the time needed for the ecosystem' to recover in the long term (Sabran-Pontevès 2015).

This environmental policy focuses on economic instruments, such as fiscal incentives or taxes to orientate the consumers and producer's behaviors. As we saw, one instrument put forward by Ecolo to end the free natural resources is to apply the polluter-pays principle. Another target is to enforce the polluter-pays logic to a large range of public policy sectors, such as mobility; energy; and private investments; etc. Ecolo also focuses on the necessity to raise the citizen and the company awareness on the costs associated with the use and the deterioration of natural resources. It thus contributes to prevent ecosystem degradation as it considerably conditioned the choices and the way to consume and apprehend natural resources.

A second tool is highlighted in the party's manifesto to internalize the cost of environmental degradation and pollution. Ecolo proposes to diffuse the principle of « price signal » (Proposal 5, Section « Climate and Energy ») to better consider the social cost of the pollution. Effectively, as the establishment of taxes on non-eco-friendly behaviors would never depict the real social repercussion of the natural degradation, the idea here is to address to citizens signals to expose the social costs of environmental damages. For instance, as the party plans for the transport sector, the elaboration of a price signal on kerosene would permit to decrease the price of trains at the expense of air travels. We can thus notice that environmental protections measures are here a political strategy to orientate the behaviors in a sustainable and eco-friendly way.

In addition, Ecolo proposes institutional tool to recondition the human-nature relationship. With a focus on the animal welfare, the party plans to incorporate the animal dignity into the Belgian constitution as sensitive well-beings (Proposal 12, Section « Environment and Biodiversity »). As we analyzed in the review of the literature on political ecological thoughts, according a place in the constitutional order to environment is an institutional tool for nature protection. The presence of the animal dignity into the constitution would give a new legal status to animals, henceforth an object of law, and would thus enable to engage the legal responsibility of the people who are not respecting the new animal's rights.

Finally, we can argue that the evolution of the programmatic profile and political strategies of Ecolo permit to nuance the Lucardie's assumption that the francophone greens occupy a radical left position. Less opposed to the mainstream party and especially to the socialists, the Belgian francophone greens still advocate for radical economic changes while they choose to deal with the social democrats. We can observe that they smoothen their programmatic profile and mitigate their socio-political system transformations. Nevertheless, the manifesto analysis has highlighted the party' attempt to shift from the utilitarian approach to ecosystem

resources to converge toward a socio-ecological resilience management framework which would permit an improvement of ecosystem capacity to recover.

Conclusion and search results presentation

This final thesis highlights the emergence and the evolution of green political parties in western Europe. The European greens share a common ideology, a similar internal organization, and an original political culture which enable recognize them as members of proper political family. We studied the emergence of the green political family through the growing politization and mediatization of environmental issues within western European societies as a crucial element contributing to the entrance of the green parties into the different layers of power. The presentation of our three case studies, Ecolo; EELV and the FdV; yet puts light on some of their similarities and differences in terms of electoral successes, participation to power and their stability over time. We argued based on the diverse typologies of green parties developed by scholars that our three green parties experienced diverse evolution paths. The Belgian greens have been recognized as a radical left and highly influence green political formation comparing to other western European similar political organizations. The French EELV, after having been isolated into the French political scene, have evolved into a moderate and intermediate type of green party since the 1980s characterized as being regular allies of the center-left socialist party. The Italian greens have also faced a phase of political marginalization before 1980s and progressively adopted an intermediate posture in coalition with the social democrats in 1994. The presentation of our three case studies permitted to affirm this evolutionary path except for the FdV that is increasingly marginalized and less influence since 2008.

The abundant literature on the concept of political ecology and the resilience framework highlighted their common purpose to redefine the human-nature relationship, to radically change political practices and mode of decisions together with a necessity to shift toward an alternative economic model. These elements, part of the green party essence, have been the basis on which our comparative analysis has been built on.

The second part of our thesis work demonstrates first of all that a green party manifesto analysis is a difficult empirical task for several reasons. First, the green proposals are often in the shadow of large left-wing coalition list making difficult to both clearly identify their political proposals and to understand their peculiar political positioning as it is especially the case for the Italian formation. Secondly, in relation with the previous assessment, the data accessibility still represents a problematic issue for the green parties. We argued that the existence and the access to green manifestos is significantly indexed on the party' influence and its ability to compete within its national political context. While the French and the Belgians green formations are stabilized in their national political competition as secure contenders, the Italian greens still struggle to exceed the local scene and particularly wrestling to develop proper political programs. Thirdly, as we examined, political

ecology and the green ideology are multifaced. Distinct from the other ideologies, the green thought is also based on a plural theoretical corpus and refers to very diverse schools of thought making a comparative analysis on programmatic profile a seriously complex task. Moreover, as we highlighted, the green parties are recent and young political formations comparing to the other well-established parties of the left-right division. As a minority party, the greens thus had to adapt their initial programmatic profile to the national electoral reality and thus change their political priorities in order to compete. Their political coalitions, their internal organizational evolution, and the complexity of the physical functioning of the ecosystem are some elements that have conditioned the greens to necessarily transform their manifesto and their political projects. As we examined, the FdV had hence been analyzed under the light of this context and not toward precise political proposals as they were inexistent.

Despite these difficulties, our party manifesto analysis has therefore highlighted some ideological convergences and divergences between the French and the Belgian greens. Indeed, we demonstrates that the parties maintain some of their original political revendications and ideas such as the fight against the nuclear power and their will to practice democracy rather toward lower levels of power such as the regional and local scales. However, we have also noticed a certain softening of their programmatic positioning which have led to distinguish their actual program from their initial new left alternative agenda of their early years. Indeed, Ecolo and EELV, previously Les Verts, progressively accept the state as principal actor of social change and thus have partly abandoned their radical stances to gradually integrate political mainstream. The green parties have pursued in the trajectory of deradicalization and ideological moderation. We have thus confirmed our hypothesis of the national context impact, as we examined that the national ecological awareness; the electoral institutional design and party system; and the existing environmental legislations are feature influencing the green party's programmatic profiles.

Regarding our first comparative thematic, which targets the democratic changes proposals toward more deliberation, decentralization, and a greater popular engagement into the decision-making process, the two green formations have a different positioning. EELV has maintained a radical democratic profile by advocating for a new type of institutional regime, the Sixth Republic, giving less competencies to the central figure of the president and more to the parliament and to federated regional units. Conversely, Ecolo appears less extreme and prevails rather changes of democratic practices rather than a deep transformation of the Belgian regime. Effectively, the central revendication of the Belgian greens is the deaccumulation of political mandates and the replacement of the actual senate by an inter-federal assemble defender of the future generation's interests. The French green occupy a more radical positioning on democratic issues as they recognize the failure of the Fifth Republic in the management of environmental concern and prevails the creation of a parliamentary regime with its set of new institutions such as a Chamber of the Future and of the Citizenship. However, both the Belgian and the French greens encourage the lowering of the vote age to 16

years old and citizen-initiated measures, such as the popular referendums and citizens legislative constraints, as a crucial tools to enhance democratic deliberation and to better integrated population into political debates.

Then, we have also pointed out variances in the way the parties address the theme of alternative and sustainable economy. The Belgian greens seems to have a more radically oriented profile on economic issues, or also a more eco-centric orientation, as they encourage the diminution of weekly work time which is a central element of the degrowth stance. Conversely, EELV does not promote such kind of degrowth measures but rather focus only on the simple strengthening of the work quality and the worker health. Even if the French greens contest the notion of growth, their ambiguous stand on the economic slowdown and the work decay make their ideological positioning moderate on economic issues comparing to their Belgian counterparts. Nevertheless, both parties advocate for a reorientation of public investments from the nuclear to the renewals and buildings insulation; toward public mobilities; and corporate eco-friendly behaviors which are considered as essential pillars for the establishment of the economic sustainability.

Thirdly, the two parties share a similar ideological profile on the human-nature relationship reshaping. As we highlighted, both EELV and Ecolo encourage institutional tools to protect environmental resources and prevent climate changes. While the French greens propose to integrate in the constitution, the animal welfare; the right of the ecosystems to regenerate and to participate to democracy; together with the legal recognition of water as a common good, the Belgians greens rather focus only on constitutionalizing the animal dignity. In addition, both green parties prevail to enhance environmental justice notably with the recognition of the ecocide crime which represents a legal constraint to natural resources exploitation and degradation. As we examined, the implementation of the polluter-pays principle in environmental taxation and management is another favored tool of the two green parties. However, Ecolo seems to put an emphasis on the polluter-pays principle as an economic constraining tool to change the human-nature relationship while EELV rather approach it as a framework for environmental justice.

The socio-ecological resilience defined in the literature to be a cross-scale; a cross-field; and a cross-time framework is, as we studied, too technical to be entirely translatable into concrete manifesto proposals. We argued that the concept plurality has permitted its political instrumentalization notably by the neo-liberals and other establishment parties which contributed to make resilience rather a tool of political communication. In this regard, we argue that this manipulated use of resilience both contributed to less understanding on the real sense of the concept and even impact the green parties use of the socio-ecological resilience. Our comparative manifesto analysis emphasized that the two green parties rarely use the term in their political programs. Despite that Ecolo speaks about the energetical resilience of Belgium toward the self-sufficiency of the country to produce its own energy, and that EELV mentioned the ecosystem capacity to regenerate, the socio-ecological framework is not explicitly mentioned. The two parties thus refer rather to ecological resilience, so

the ecosystem capacity to regenerate to its initial state of equilibrium, rather than the social resilience which prevail the human capacity to face environmental hazards. However, the socio-ecological resilience, as interaction between the human and natural systems, is not directly mentioned by the two parties even if their manifestos tend to encounter the complexity of their interactions. Thus, socio-ecological resiliency does not appear to be a manifest privileged policy model for climate change and environmental management for the green parties. Moreover, we can argue that the limited use of resilience by green party is also accountable to the intellectual complexity of the concept which makes it not adequate with the political need of clarity and straightforward of programmatic proposals. Then, the original ideological positioning of the greens, as radical alternative left, do not permit them to use a term nowadays highly criticized to be another neoliberal attempt to deal with the environmental challenge without changing the profound structures of the socio-economical order.

Nevertheless, this analysis highlighted that the socio-ecological resilience framework is much more comprehensive and holistic to a simple social adaptation to environmental changes. Resilience comprises and advocates for deep transformations and appears thus to be, despite its technicity and inaccessibility, a relevant framework to deal with the current environmental crisis in a long-term approach. The intellectual and cross-disciplinary enthusiasm on the socio-ecological resilience framework conveys the promising nature it can represent for the re-definition of a sustainable human-nature relationship and the fight against climate changes notably by the green parties.

The whole challenge that this first research work highlighted is how the European green parties, the political owners of environmental issues, will deal with the emerging interest about the resilience framework. In this regard, we can suppose two different future evolutions. On the one hand, the term resilience can still be used in its actual limited neoliberal sense of human adaptation and resignation to environmental hazard without social behavioral shift regarding environment. In this scenario, we can assume that green parties will still attempt to avoid the use of the term as it will still be connoted to another political ideology which is not their own. On the other hand, the development of research on resilience could contribute to a better general understanding of the term in its entirety. In this second scenario, we can make the assumption that the resilience framework would enjoy a greater attention and thus be deeply exploited in the frame of the green manifestos as a crucial conceptual tool and scheme to address environmental and climate crisis. Nevertheless, as a good tool to manage the actual environmental and climate crisis, we can question socio-ecological resilience as a good framework for politics. More than its non-operationalization, the term complexity makes it difficult to be vulgarized and explained to citizens. The lack of intellectual accessibility of the resilience framework considerably limits its range and questioned it as a good object of agenda setting and thus as tool of governance.

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Summary

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1. Introduction

The topic of this final thesis had been largely influenced by the current events which both put lights on the green European parties and on the term “resilience”. The Covid-19 pandemic started in Europe in March 2020 and it triggered mediatic and political debates on the rise of the ecological awareness across the continent. The current debate on an eventual post-pandemic electoral downturn positioned the European green parties at the center of political attention. Parallely, the term resilience is widely use in political and scientific discourses calling populations for resilience when facing environmental hazards. With the purpose of understanding the green political phenomenon and to clarify the term “resilience”, this thesis focused on the examination and comparison of three green parties which are: the Belgian francophone party of Ecolo, the French greens Les Verts then transformed into Europe Écologie – Les Verts, and the Italian Federazione dei Verdi recently reconstituted as Europa Verde. Our research question had been the following: Do our three case studies address resilience in their programs as an object of agenda setting and which social, ecological, and political transformations do they put forward in fighting against climate change? We hypothesized that the national political contexts in which these three green parties are anchored significantly impact and influence their proposals and political project. To answer our research question, we first defined in the state of the art our main concepts and we provided an overview of the historical context in which green parties have emerged and evolved in Western Europe. Then, we realized a qualitative content analysis of the parties’ manifestos. Despite the obstacle of data availability and the challenge to operationalizing resilience into public policy, we have developed comparative themes on the basis of the review of literature. The comparative analysis of manifestos has thus been organized upon three thematic indicators which are: to engage the citizen in a deliberative and decentralized democracy; an alternative and sustainable economic model, environmental protection measures targeting a shift in human-nature relationship. We have targeted and selected in the manifestoes text passages in which policy proposals are made on these three themes. Moreover, we argued that our three themes provide a relevant insight on the programmatic profile of our green parties and constitute a first attempt at translating resilience into the political agenda.

2. The green theoretical framework: political ecology, resilience, and the green ideology

As a scientific field, political ecology was born in the aftermath of the Second World War and has experienced a significant rise during the 1960s and 1970s (Bourg and Whiteside 2017). The purpose of political ecology is to understand the human-ecosystem relationships and interactions, it is thus necessarily a trans-disciplinary academic field merging natural and social sciences (Peterson 2000, 2). While scientific ecology provides precise descriptions about the current state of the planet, it is the will of the political ecology to be prescriptive and normative on the socio-political actions that need to be undertaken for the preservation of the Earth. It is the distinction made by Robbins (2012) between political and apolitical ecology. Political ecology is a critical discipline which reveals and analyzes the evolving tensions between the ecosystem and humans, and which

provides socio-political actions to solve them. It tends to find direct correlations between the histories of industrial capitalism and the ecosystem evolution (Deléage 2010). In that sense, political ecology invites us to rethink and change our relationship with the environment and no longer base it on utilitarianism which understands the Earth as an exploitable stock of infinite resources. Moreover, environmental degradations and climate changes are considered as « unnatural » disasters that are socially produced (Barca 2014). Lastly, a political ecological approach is necessary cross-scales as it tends to think social and political transformations within the framework of the « economy-ecology-world » (Deléage 2010, 24).

As this thesis examined, political ecology is a large corpus of ideas and theories. From the Malthusian type of ecological thought born after 1945 to the largely diffused institutionalist ecological practices, passing by the 1970s grassroot ecology, the green political thought is plural and multiple (Bourg and Whiteside 2017).

We argued that political ecology is protean as the discipline is also considered as an ideology in many respects. As Freedon (1998) demonstrates, political ecology represents a deep shift in paradigm as it advocates that nature shall be the guiding factor of human conduct and not the opposite. It thus implies the desacralization of human presence and action on Earth and of the established social systems only as another constituting element of the planet ecosystems. The political ecology ideology provides a holistic viewpoint as it emphasizes the interdependence of all the form of life to achieve harmony (Ibid, 1998). In addition, more than changing the human-nature relationship, political ecology also advocates for social and economic transformations to safeguard the planet together with deep social behavioral changes.

Since its emergence in the 1990s, the resilience framework rise represents another theoretical attempt to transform human-nature relationship. Where during the decade of the 1980s, « risks » and « vulnerability » were the leading concepts to approach climate change, Rudolf (2013) explains that since the following decades the ecological and climate « resilience » started to be increasingly used in environmental public policies. Nowadays, the term is experiencing a large success among the scientific community, national stockholders and within international policy programs (Sterk, van de Leemput, and Peeters 2017). Parallely to its current popularity, the multiple definitions present in literature make resilience appear to be an ambiguous concept characterized as vague, unclear, and plural.

With the purpose of clarifying the concept, we first distinguished ecological resilience from social resilience. Ecological resilience refers indeed to « a measure of the persistence of systems and of their ability to absorb change and disturbance and still maintain the same relationships between populations or states variables » (Holling 1973, 14). As explained by Holling (1973), the first scholar to theorize on the concept, ecological resilience theory represents a shift of perspective among the ecologists of the 1970s. Indeed, it is a critical framework denouncing the intensive and industrial agriculture and the overexploitation of natural resources

(Walker and Cooper 2011). On the other hand, social resilience has been defined as the ability of social entities, such as citizens; communities and societies, to « tolerate, absorb, cope with and adjust to environmental and social threats of various kind » (Keck and Sakdapolrak 2013, 8).

Since the 1990s, new researches on ecological resilience tended to go beyond the ecological systems examination and expand it to the Socio-Ecological Systems (SESs) (Berkes and Folke 1998). The socio-ecological resilience has been defined as « the capacity of a social-ecological system to deal with change and meanwhile continue to develop » (Folke et al., 2010). As a merge of the two ecological and social resilience, the SESs resilience is composed of three features which are: the amount of change and shock the system can support without alerting its state of stability; its capacity to learn and adapt on the base of previous experiences; and its ability to continually self-organize (Ibid. 2010).

Socio-ecological resilience appears therefore hardly transplantable into specific plans of action for sustainable development as it integrates cross-scales, cross-timelines, and cross-fields public policies (Spears et al. 2015). The review of literature highlighted that despite some scholar's attempts at translating the concept into public policies, most of them affirmed that socio-ecological resiliency cannot be operationalized, as it is too complex for the policy field.

In addition, we questioned the instrumentalization of the term in political debates. The technicity and complexity of the resilience thinking made its instrumentalization easy by political actors (Barroca, DiNardo, and Mboumoua 2013). Thus, the term resilience is largely contested for been a communication tool to attract the audience rather than a meaningful concept for the elaboration of ecosystem management policies (Davoudi et al. 2012). Ferguson (2019) distinguishes different « discourses of resilience » within the current climate security debate. He highlighted that the neoliberal discourse of resilience, largely diffused in political and mediatic debates, has limited the range of resiliency which is today highly negatively connotated.

As we mentioned, political ecology is the theoretical basis for the constitution of a proper green ideological identity and for the emergence of a peculiar political grouping. The green political family emerging during the 20th century have tended to detach from the older well-constituted ideologies of Socialism and Marxism (Freedman 1998). The greens have attempted to avoid being assimilated with an unequivocal intellectual corpus, limited to several thinkers, as it is the case for Marxism for instance, and developed a distinct ideological thought (Ibid. 1998).

We examined that the green ideology is part of the new left ideologies which propose alternative agendas (Kaelberer 1993). However, the greens are also different from the other new left parties as they integrate nature and Earth as a proper actor, a central element of their paradigm. For that reason, Price-Thomas (2016) argues

that the denomination of « new politics » better considered the specificity of the green thought as it includes both its commitment to the natural world and its original political culture. The author identifies three composing themes of the green ideology which are ecology, radical democracy, and egalitarianism (Ibid. 2016, 280).

We thus have questioned the existence of a homogeneous and singular political family which would gather the western European green parties. We argued that this green family shares a common new left ideology and a same political identity. In that sense, this political family does not comprise the conservative ecologists who simply refuse progress and are nostalgic of the pre-industrial lifestyle (Delwit and De Waele 1996).

As Müller-Rommel (1994) demonstrates, in addition to its peculiar ideology, the green political family is also characterized by a common internal organizational structure and by its peculiar electorate. The green distrust of the intellectual and political class together with their rejection of the traditional partisan structure have contributed to the determination of their original structure into a « partisan activist type » type of party (Lucardie and Frankland 2016). Since their constitution in political parties, the greens have privileged an original internal organization characterized by collective leadership based on transparency and deliberation; a non-hierarchical and non-professionalized structure; and a decentralized decision-making process with high autonomy given to localities and regions (Ibid., 2016). Then, the distinctiveness of the green electorate also contributes to the recognition of the greens as a distinct political family (Müller-Rommel 1994). Green voters are members of the new middle class which emerged in post-industrial societies of Western Europe (Kaelberer 1993). They are a young generation of activists, highly educated and they share a materially secure lifestyle (Gassert 2008). For these reasons, the green electorate and membership distinguish themselves by their left-wing and post-materialistic profile (Lowe and Rudig 1986).

3. The green party: genesis, evolution, and diverse destiny

The Western European green parties trace their origin from the new social movements emerging at the end of the 1960s. The decades of the 1960s and 1970s are interpreted in literature as the genesis of the rising global awareness on natural resources degradation and on the unsustainable pollution of the Earth. As Delwit and De Waele (1996) explain, at the end of the 1960s the succession of environmental hazards significantly impacted Western European societies. In particular, the nuclear incident of Chernobyl on the 26th of April 1986 has significantly contributed to increase the visibility and the mediatization of environmental accidents and triggered abundant movements of contestations across Europe (Eckersley 1992). The obvious contradictions of the liberal-capitalist economic model of development together with the apparent incapacity to manage new socio-environmental problems contributed to the generalization of a feeling of loss of control over the environment (Ibid., 1992). In 1976, the publication of the Club of Rome's report titled « The Limit of Growth » denouncing the negative environmental impacts of the race for economic growth and the demographic

increase had a resounding effect in Western European countries and stimulated social mobilizations (Ibid., 1992). This context of environmental issues recognition triggered a new social demand for political ecology at the end of the 1960s and enabled the rise of contestations of the post-world war consensus on growth (Corduwener 2016).

As Müller-Rommel (1994) demonstrates, the Green parties in Western Europe have started in a similar pathway: they are the product of alliances and networks triggered by citizens at the local level, focusing on socio-environmental issues which have been neglected by the mainstream parties in power. At their birth, these ecological movements were rather focusing on one single or on a limited number of issues, such as the fight against nuclear power, the defense of air or water quality, then their progressively enlarged their areas of actions (Müller-Rommel 1994).

The review of the literature on the new social movements has highlighted the deep causes of the emergence of the new social movement during the 1960s. First, one largely recognized approach interpreting the rise of the green ideas during the 1960s is the theory of the post-materialistic values change developed by Ronald Inglehart (1977). As Inglehart (1977) explains, the emergence of post-materialistic values has constituted an ideological base and support for the new social movements which all revendicate liberalism of morals; tolerance; anti-clericalism; refusal of authority; and which fight against militarism and nuclearization. Hence, the transformation of new values and new political priorities allowed the development of the green « sensibility » among the younger European generation during the 1960s and 1970s decades. Moreover, as we examined, the emergence of anti-nuclear and ecological movements in the aftermath of May 1968 have questioned the classical cleavage theory. As Lowe and Rudig (1986) highlight, the emergence of the ecologists is the manifestation of a fifth cleavage appearing at the beginning of the 1970s which opposed the defenders of materialistic values and *old politics* practices to the anti-establishment parties in favor of post-materialist values and of the *new politics*. According to Kaelberer (1993), these environmental movements are the promoters of a new left policy program: more libertarian than the traditional left, they have developed a comprehensive and alternative agenda focusing of environmental protection but also a large range of concerns such as women's rights or civil liberties.

As Delwit and De Waele (1996) explain, the progressive weakening and breathlessness of the new social movements convinced the ecologists to constitute proper political parties able to influence the decision-making process. As Corduwener (2016) explains, during the 1970s decade the green political parties progressively shifted from the extra-parliamentary left to being parliamentary left parties. Originally characterized by their rejection of representative democracy, of its party system structure and its parliament, the green parties gradually adhered to these principles and acquired deputies across national parliaments. In addition, Lucardie and Frankland (2016) explain that it is during this decade that the ecological movements of the 1960s,

characterized by their « amateur-activist » type of political organization, progressively shifted toward the more traditional form of parties which is the « professional-electoral » party type. The newly formed green parties thus appear as the new and exciting political force in the path of political parties game (Ibid. 2016). They experienced a major electoral ascension during the 1970s which demonstrated their recognition as legitimate democratic actors both by the electorate and by other parties (Corduwener 2016).

Then we examined that the 1980s decade is presented in literature as a period of electoral breakthrough for green parties (Müller-Rommel 1994; Delwit and Waele 1999; Lucardie and Frankland 2016). This first « green wave » has been examined in the context of the popular contestations and mass protests across Western Europe during the 1980s with the peace and anti-nuclear movements. Gassert (2008) argued that the green success during this period is a manifestation of the green parties adaptive capacity toward pragmatism and opportunism. Indeed, the New Left parties from the 1960s, such as the greens, have operated a further detachment from the principles of grass-roots democracy and its rejection of parliamentary representation and professionalization.

In the path of the 1990s, while ecological issues reached a planetary dimension (Deléage 2010), the green parties entered for the first time into their national governments generally in coalition with center-left parties. However, the decision to choose political allies triggered deep divisions among green adherents (Müller-Rommel 2019) and the political effectiveness of their governmental participation was highly questioned, notably for the French and Italian greens. We also examined that during the 1990s, a new generation of ecologists emerged and often opposed the first generation of the « soixante-huitard » by advocating a party evolution toward a more classic partisan political style (Lucardie and Frankland 2016; Facchini and Michallet 2017). Then, during the 2000s, the increase of international activism on environmental concerns contributed to expand the institutional offer for the green parties in Western Europe (Villalba 2016, 107).

This brief historical review of the green parties' evolution within their national institutions can be interpreted as a « success story » of the ecologists that must necessarily be nuanced. As explained by Facchini and Michallet (2017), the historical evolution of green parties is often a non-linear process characterized by the creation of a large variety of little political movements, lists and coalitions established for the purpose of an electoral campaign and which struggle to survive after the elections passed. Indeed, we demonstrated that the composition of the green European family highlights a large diversity of political parties which differ in terms of organizational structures, number of adherents, electoral capacity, and ideological orientations.

Our examination of the green parties' typologies developed by scholars has revealed that the label of « green » thus refers to different realities across the old continent. First, Robyn Eckersley (1992) has classified green parties according to their ideological tendencies and their peculiar projects. The author distinguishes different

sub-ideological orientations among the ecologists such as the « eco-centrism », « eco-anarchism » and « eco-liberalism » for instance. Secondly, we examined the Müller-Rommel (1994) typology which classified green parties according to their age and political maturity from the « childish » to the « adult » formations. Thirdly, Lucardie (1999) classified the greens according to their peculiar position in their national political systems. The party's position is conditioned by its own political project and culture; its ideological orientation; the dominating cleavage of the political scene; the electoral system itself; and lastly the strategic positions of the other parties. The author thus identifies five types of party postures which are the positions of « marginality », « quasi-marginality », « isolation posture », « moderate and alliance » posture, and « radical ».

In light of these typologies, we have noticed that before 1980, Les Verts and FdV were isolated in the French and Italian political scenes due to their original stance of « neither left, neither right » (Ibid. 1999). Then, Les Verts in 1996 and the FdV in 1994 moved toward an intermediate posture by a more moderate stance and their strategic alliances with the main left parties (Ibid. 1999). Nevertheless, it will be examined that the FdV has shifted toward a marginal posture since the beginning of the 2000s and it is thus increasingly marginalized in its national political scene. Regarding the Belgian greens, Ecolo occupied during the 1990s a radical left position as the party deeply opposed the mainstream parties and also enjoyed a significant political influence within its political scene (Ibid. 1999). The radical positioning and electoral success of the party has been explained by the specific nature of the Belgian system, as consociational democracy, which usually permit them to obtain a certain political influence (Delwit 1999).

4. Case studies: manifesto and programmatic profile analysis

a) FdV: evolution toward political marginalization and lack of programmatic profile

In December 1990, the *Verdi Arcobaleno* merged with the Federazione delle Liste Verdi and the two formed the Federazione dei Verdi (FdV). The years following the party creation, the decade of the 1990s was marked by a general popular contestation of the party system which considerably affected and hindered the progression of the green party in its early years. Briquet (2010) indicates that between 1992-1994, the First Italian Republic faced a crisis of moral and political legitimacy caused by a succession of scandals among the elite class in power. Despite the revendications of FdV to practice politics in a different way, Biorcio (1999) argues that the Italian greens failed to make an electoral profit from this general discontent unlike the extreme-right new parties. While themes such as the nuclear power, agricultural pesticide, or hunting succeeded to be integrate in the national agenda-setting during the 1980s, other issues emerged and became the new national political priorities such as the fight against corruption, public debt, unemployment, the increase of fiscal pressure and immigration (Ibid. 1999). In addition, as we examined, the new electoral system of the Second Republic, more majoritarian than the previous one, pushed the FdV to no longer run alone but rather always as member of center-left coalitions (Ibid. 1999). From 1996 to 2004, the party entered for the first time in the national government as member of the « Ulivo » coalition gathering center-left and leftist parties. On the one hand, the

governmental participation of the FdV considerably increased the greens visibility and significantly contributed to their insertion within the political system. On the other hand, this coalition affected the Italian greens political autonomy in an enduring way. The retrogression of the FdV during the 1990s has also been caused by the party difficulty to create its own and stable electoral base. Contrary to its Belgian and French counterparts, the FdV failed to penetrate different social categories and its electorate thus remained highly volatile. At the European elections of June 1999, the green registered their lowest electoral score since their creation: 1.8 per cent of total suffrage (Delwit and Close 2016). The party struggled during the elections of the 2000s and was not able to electorally perform either as an autonomous political formation or as member of a broad alliance (Ibid., 2016). On the constituent assembly of the 10th and 11th of July 2021, the Federation was dissolved after 34 years of activity, and a new ecological formation entitled Europa Verde was created (Genovese 2021).

As we examined for the case of the FdV or for the newly constituted Europa Verde, the Italian green's political programs and manifestos were not available. The absence of programmatic data of the Italian greens has been interpreted both as a manifestation of their unstable internal structure and in a wider prospect as an expression of the difficult anchorage of political ecology in the country. First, the lack or unavailability of the Italian green party's own political programs have to be examined in light of their struggle to compete for elections as an autonomous political organization. Indeed, the greens' political proposals have been elaborated in the framework of large alliances and electoral lists, such as the « Rivoluzione civile » (Delwit and Close 2016). Member of broad coalitions, the greens developed manifestos that are rather the manifestation of the negotiations between the left-wing parties and do not represent a proper formalization of the Italian green ideas and their agenda setting of environmental issues. We analyzed the struggle of the Italian greens to compete independently in elections and to build a stable internal party's structure in comparison with the northern European green parties.

The political marginality and the electoral unsuccess of the FdV have also been explained by structural features that the country shared with the other southern European countries. As Biorcio (2016) explains, the southern European countries have been more severely impacted by the 2008 economic crisis making the importance accorded to ecological and climate questions less important compared to other political priorities such as inflation, unemployment, or insecurity. The other factors explaining the green difficulties in Italy are the low number of citizens' adhesion to environmental associations (Biorcio 2016) and the north-south European gap per capita incomes (Delwit and Close 2016).

We also argued that the difficulty that the FdV encountered in building a solid internal structure and a proper programmatic profile are accountable for political choices made by members of the party. Indeed, from 1996 the party did not maintain close relations with ecological associations and rather developed a divergent

programmatic profile (Biorcio 2016). In addition, the erosion of the party's membership and its unstable electoral basis significantly contributed to weaken the Italian greens.

b) EELV, one actor among others in the political ecological French scene and the pragmatic profile

On the 28th and 29th of January 1984, the Clichy Congress marked the foundation of the French green party Les Verts (Delwit 1999). We have studied the party historical evolution thanks to the crucial work of Jérôme (2021). First, from its creation until 1993, Les Verts was characterized by the « neither right, neither left » rhetoric impelled by Antoine Waechter's direction. From 1993 to 2001, the leadership of Dominique Voynet and her successors marked the party shift toward the left, the so-called party « gauchisation », together with the development of a new alliance strategy and of the ambition for further professionalization (Ibid., 2021). Then, starting from 2001, Les Verts both faced deep divisions at the internal level and externally conquered the French territory through local and regional electoral successes. Indeed, as we studied, the Duflot's leadership period is characterized by disputes about the party executive strengthening and the personalization of the national secretary post. The French greens developed their managerial and communicational skills but also underwent recurrent scissions of their left-alternative branch members contesting the increasingly mainstream character of the party (Ibid. 2021). On the 13th and 14th of November 2010, an assembly held in Lyon answered to the diffuse desire of party renewal and operated its refoundation into Europe Écologie - Les Verts (EELV). as part of Duflot's strategy to increase party credibility, the green's remodeling resulted in an electoral and marketing success as well as a mediatization of EELV. Since 2017, EELV has entered in a new phase of more intersectional issues, favored by their connections with activist movements on gender, race, and territory issues (Ibid. 2021). As we examined, until the 1990 Les Verts was the only representative of political ecology in the French political scene (Vignes 2014). Then, the party lost its monopoly of political ecology, notably due to recurrent scissions leading to the creation of competing green parties.

Contrary to the Italian or the Belgian political scenes, the French one has a multitude of green political formations that split the green electorate and limit the electoral progress of political ecology (Boy, 1999). We studied that the plural composition of Les Verts, since its creation composed by liberal-libertarian and environmentalist ecologists (Repaire 2016), together with the constellation of small green formations (Villalba 2016) both had an impact on the party program. Indeed, the manifestos of Les Verts and especially of EELV are attempting to include all the French green tendencies and represent thus a systematic exercise of unification. In addition, Price-Thomas (2016) interprets the pragmatic political profile of EELV as a consequence of their will to participate in government together with the progressive party rapprochement with the classical left.

Since their coalition with the classical left, EELV have adopted a moderate ideological positioning resulting from the challenge of the French green to both perform as a real party' government and to keep a sufficiently distinct political project with respect to the socialists (Villalba 2016, 107).

Regarding our three comparative themes, we can argue that EELV has maintained its radical democratic profile and advocates for a deep transformation of the human-nature relationship. However, the party seems to have a more moderate positioning on economic issues and notably a certain reticence toward anti-growth and degrowth policy. More than proposing reforms to better engage the citizen in a deliberative and decentralized democracy, such as its « 49.3 Citoyen » and lowering the voting age to 16 years old (EELV 2021, 64), the party advocates for a new institutional design with the creation of the Sixth Republic (EELV 2021, 64). In the frame of the innovative and sustainable economy, the manifesto has fewer radical ambitions than in the democratic field and does not explicitly advocate for degrowth measures. Finally, the EELV the human-nature relationship shift is characterized by its new politics radicalism and a certain eco-centric orientation. The party is rooted in the institutionalist ecology as it prioritizes to include the climate, the biodiversity and the planetary limits within the constitution (Ibid. 2021, 12). We can also underline that socio-ecological resilience is here addressed as EELV tends to include the ecosystem persistency into the constitutional order thanks to the SOS international framework.

c) Ecolo: the successful Belgian greens and a left oriented profile

On the 23th of March 1980, the movement Écologistes Confédérés pour l'Organisation de Luttes Originales (Ecolo) was officially created (Rihoux 1993). The party is active in the francophone and Dutch communities while the Flemish community has its own green party. As Delwit (1999) explains, directly during the three years that followed its creation, Ecolo obtained national, municipal, and European elected representatives and thus entered rapidly in the institutions. Then, from 1985 until 1989, the party experienced its « teenager crisis » (Ibid., 1999). Both its fulgurant electoral success and the adhesion of a new generation of ecologists contributed to the emergence of tensions and plunged the party into paralysis. Nevertheless, the unprecedented success of Ecolo at the European elections of 1989 and at the nationals of 1991 marked officially the end of the party crisis and the beginning of a new historical period. Indeed, the governmental majority composed of socialists and social-Christians was not large enough to modify the Belgian constitution in view to pass institutional reform consecrating the creation of the Belgian federal union (Ibid., 1999). The coalition in power thus invited the Belgian ecologists, notably Ecolo, to participate in the reform of the Belgian state which represented a crucial moment for the party. From the late 1990s to the 2000s, after a period of electoral and financial crisis, the party returned to stability (Delwit and Close 2016). Following the last governmental crisis, the party re-integrated on the 1st of October 2020 the federal executive as part of the « Vivaldi » coalition. Ecolo was also present in the regional governments of Wallonia and Brussel as well as in the French

Community government. Since its beginning, Ecolo was considered as one of the major green party in Western Europe due to its electoral results and its strong parliamentary representation (Delwit 1999).

Regarding the programmatic profile of the party, Wavreille and Pilet (2016) demonstrate that the Ecolo manifesto has been characterized by a greater attention given to economic issues. Indeed, we demonstrate that in its current manifesto, Ecolo focuses on the constitution of an alternative and sustainable economic model. As we examined, one of the main tools to shift toward a diverse economic model advanced by Ecolo is the reorientation and decentralization of public investments toward specific fields such as public mobility, housing rehabilitations and renewable energies. We have also noticed the centrality of the polluter-pays principle in this manifesto as an economic tool to change the human-nature relationship. Economic measures such as the price-signals but also institutional tools as the inclusion of biodiversity in the constitutional order are the tools promoted by the party to change the human-nature relationship. Then, Ecolo advocates for a party renewal by promoting citizen legislative initiative and decisional referendum and by the creation of a new institution similar to an Ombudsman defender of the next generation' interests.

5. Conclusion

This final thesis highlights the emergence and the evolution of green political parties in Western Europe. The European greens share a common ideology, a similar internal organization, and an original political culture which allows us to recognize them as members of a specific political family. We studied the emergence of the green political family through the growing politization and mediatization of environmental issues within western European societies as a crucial element contributing to the entrance of the green parties into the different layers of power. The presentation of our three case studies, Ecolo; EELV and the FdV; yet sheds light on some of their similarities and differences in terms of electoral successes, participation to power and their stability over time. We argued, based on the diverse typologies of green parties developed by scholars, that our three green parties experienced diverse evolution paths. The Belgian greens have been recognized as a radical left and highly influenced green political formations comparing to other western European similar political organizations. The French EELV, after having been isolated in the French political scene, has evolved into a moderate and intermediate type of green party since the 1980s, characterized as being regular allies of the center-left socialist party. The Italian greens have also faced a phase of political marginalization before 1980s and progressively adopted an intermediate posture in coalition with the social democrats in 1994. The presentation of our three case studies allowed us to confirm this evolutionary path, except for the FdV that has been increasingly marginalized and became less influent since 2008.

The socio-ecological resilience defined in the literature as a cross-scale; cross-field; and a cross-time framework is, as we studied, too technical to be entirely translatable into concrete manifesto proposals. We

argued that the plurality of the concept has allowed for its political instrumentalization notably by the neo-liberals and other establishment parties which contributed to make resilience more of a tool of political communication, rather than an operationalized concept. In this regard, we argue that this manipulated use of resilience both contributed to less understanding on the real meaning of the concept and even impacted the green parties' use of the socio-ecological resilience. Our comparative manifestoes analysis emphasized that the two green parties rarely used the term in their political programs. Thus, as we explained, socio-ecological resiliency does not appear to be a privileged policy model for climate change and environmental management for the green parties. We have also confirmed our hypothesis of the national context impact, as we examined that the national ecological awareness; the electoral institutional design and party system; and the existing environmental legislations are features influencing the green parties' programmatic profiles.

Regarding our first comparative theme, which targets the democratic changes proposals toward more deliberation, decentralization, and a greater popular engagement into the decision-making process, the two green formations have a different positioning. EELV has maintained a radical democratic profile by advocating for a new type of institutional regime, the Sixth Republic, giving less competencies to the central figure of the president and more to the parliament and to federated regional units. Conversely, Ecolo appears less extreme and instead puts forward changes of democratic practices rather than a deep transformation of the Belgian regime. Indeed, the central revendication of the Belgian greens is the deaccumulation of political mandates and the replacement of the current senate by an inter-federal assemble defender of the future generation's interests. The French green occupy a more radical positioning on democratic issues as they recognize the failure of the Fifth Republic in the management of environmental concern and puts forwards the creation of a parliamentary regime with its set of new institutions such as a Chamber of the Future and of the Citizenship. However, both the Belgian and the French greens encourage the lowering of the vote age to 16 years old and citizen-initiated measures, such as the popular referendums and citizens legislative constraints, as a crucial tools to enhance democratic deliberation and to better integrate population into political debates.

Then, we have also pointed out variances in the way the parties address the theme of alternative and sustainable economy. The Belgian greens seems to have a more radically oriented profile on economic issues, or also a more eco-centric orientation, as they encourage the diminution of weekly work time which is a central element of the degrowth stance. Conversely, EELV does not promote such kind of degrowth measures but rather focuses only on the simple strengthening of the work quality and the workers' health. Even if the French greens contest the notion of growth, their ambiguous stand on the economic slowdown and the work decay make their ideological positioning moderate on economic issues comparing to their Belgian counterparts. Nevertheless, both parties advocate for a reorientation of public investments from the nuclear to the renewable energies and buildings insulation; toward public mobility solutions; and corporate eco-friendly behaviors which are considered as essential pillars for the establishment of the economic sustainability.

Thirdly, the two parties share a similar ideological profile on the human-nature relationship reshaping. As we highlighted, both EELV and Ecolo encourage institutional tools to protect environmental resources and prevent climate change. While the French greens propose to integrate in the constitution, the animal welfare; the right of the ecosystems to regenerate and to participate to democracy; together with the legal recognition of water as a common good, the Belgians greens rather focus only on constitutionalizing animal dignity. In addition, both green parties suggest enhancing environmental justice notably with the recognition of the ecocide crime which represents a legal constraint to natural resources exploitation and degradation. As we examined, the implementation of the polluter-pays principle in environmental taxation and management is another favored tool of the two green parties. However, Ecolo seems to put an emphasis on the polluter-pays principle as an economic constraining tool to change the human-nature relationship while EELV rather approach it as a framework for environmental justice.

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