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**How to deal with European Integration: Italian
political parties' stances from the Council of
Hannover to Maastricht**

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INTRODUCTION

Why this research

The purpose of this thesis is to analyze more in depth the relations among Italian political parties and the European integration process, their contribution to this construction and the communitarian influences on Italian political cultures. In particular, the focus has been on the positions of parties as DC, PSI, PCI (and later PDS and RC), the Northern league and MSI which, during the period of time analyzed, influenced the Italian party system in a significant manner, being them the principal actors on the political arena. A starting point is the conviction that, although the European unification process was born, developed and harbored by the initiatives and intuitions of great politicians and government functionaries-thinking of De Gasperi, Spaak, Adenauer, Schumann, De Gaulle, Delors, and so on- or high intellectuals belonging to the European field- for instance, Spinelli- this remains mainly a political phenomenon and for this reason it is important that enough space is left to those political forces that contributed ,to this process, in a significant manner. This thesis refers to that Italy in the middle of the first republic which after the fall of the Berlin wall saw the party system falling apart, a system that had been since after the Second World War unaltered in its forms and equilibriums. The treaty of Maastricht, with its challenges and contradictions is at the centre of this process of reconstruction because, with its content, it was able to break that unanimity

on the process of European integration that, at least at the surface, characterized the Italian party system since the second half of the 1970's until the 80's. The circumstances were unique: a party system, for the first time since the foundation of the union, found itself facing a discontinuity in the European unification, due to the discordant positions by the principal political actors.

The situation just described allowed to open up a new breach in the historiography which has always considered the history of the Italian "first republic"¹ as a separate field to the European integration considering them as two parallel straight lines. However, after the internationalization of the political processes, which began in Europe with the fall of the Berlin wall and the treaty of Maastricht, it is no longer plausible to study the internal dynamics of a state without taking into consideration the influences of European integration process. How is it possible to analyze the political conflicts of the new parties, in and among the different currents, without including Maastricht in the elements of differentiation? This, however, does not lead to a predominance of international aspects on the domestic politics but it means to let the two dimensions interact and to study their reciprocal influence. The result has been, indeed, a research built on a triangle in which

¹ The expression "First Republic" refers to a specific Italian political system that goes from 1948 until 1994. It is necessary to denote that, according to historian criteria, the denomination of a form of government followed by numerical adjectives, generally indicates regimes of the same kind that discontinuously succeed in a country with different institutional and constitutional assets, as the German Reich or the French Republics. However, in the Italian case, the distinction between *first* and *second* republic is a journalistic expression and it is formally incorrect since it considers as element of historic discontinuity the political transformation that took place between 1992 and 1994. In fact, this two-year period was not a change in regime but there was a deep alteration of the party system with the replacement of many of its national exponents.

the vertexes are the political parties, the European integration and the major events of the first republic.

The time frame and political parties

The first questions to answer have been the time frame and the political parties to analyze. Concerning the first aspect, the research found a starting point in 1988 with the council of Hannover, an occasion in which the twelve heads of state entrusted the president of the European Commission, Jacques Delors, to lead the works of the committee in charge of studying the possibilities to reach an economic and monetary unification. Although this meeting follows the decisions taken by the Single European Act of 1987, it is important to notice that Hannover marked the beginning of a specific and autonomous path. In fact, while we have now reached a monetary union we still need to arrive to an effective single market. As it was necessary to define the starting point, it was also necessary to determine the end which was marked by the definitive signing of the Maastricht treaty in 1992. More challenging has been, instead, the choice of parties to analyze due to the complex and crowded Italian political scene which saw the emergence of new parties in the political arena. The DC represented a first necessary case to consider, for its internal role and its support given since the beginnings of the European integration. Party of mediation since its origins, DC has been in power since 1946 and it has always distinguished itself for being a inter class party that consisted in the collaboration among different social classes in order to realize a social market economy. It tried, in fact, to conciliate capitalist and socialist doctrines, with a social vision of the economy. Not less interesting has been the case of PCI as main party of the opposition in the political scene, even though it contributed, together with PSI and DC, to

the writing of the Italian constitution. In fact, the attempt by all its political leaders as Palmiro Togliatti, Achille Occhetto and Enrico Berlinguer was to arrive to the government thanks to the collaboration of mass parties (catholic and socialists). However the tragic killing of the DC leader Aldo Moro utterly impeded this strategy. Its connections with the Soviet Union have been always strong until the fall of the Berlin wall and the crisis of the communist regime. Interesting has been its changing approach towards the process of unification in which, just in a first moment, the communists found themselves against the unification. Curious has been also the analysis of right wing parties as MSI-dn which helps the study of a right that in Italy, thanks also the European process, tried to become conservative and modern at the same time, cutting off linkages with post-fascism. Very stimulating has been the choice to consider the position of the Northern League, a political force that has been studied by many political analysts while left apart by some historians, and it is probably for this reason that the thesis has given ample attention to it. Finally, the analysis has addressed to PSI that held a leading role in the Italian foreign policy thanks to prominent figures as Craxi, De Michelis, Amato but which at the same time it was invested by the Italian political crisis that was, later on, the cause of the disappearance of the socialist party from the political arena. Being it a typical mass party, the socialist party has always diffused a socialist and Marxist vision, in a first moment more traditional and later more revisionist, so much so that with the alliance to DC, it contributed to the creation of the “centro-sinistra organico”² that supported many governments of the so called “first republic”.

² The Italian expression “centro-sinistra organico” refers to the coalition that in the ‘60s extended to the Italian socialist party, PSI. The adjective “organic” has been introduced to differentiate this political formula from the previous one in the first 1960, where the

Chapter one

Italian Political Parties from Hannover to the fall of the Berlin Wall

1.1 The Italian historical and political context in the 80's

In the 1980's Italy was not dramatically hit by the political and economic conservative influences that took place in Europe as a consequence of the politics followed by Great Britain which, in this period of time, was led by Margaret Thatcher. Although the movement towards a more right wing government, Italian political events, through the formula of the pentapartito, continued to unfold according to the ritual schemes focused on the alliance between DC and PSI with the participation of PLI, PRI, PSDI. Nevertheless, the stability of this alliance did not mean governmental solidity: the republic never ceased to face governmental crisis, mainly because of rivalries between Christian democrats and socialists as well tensions inside currents of a same party formation (especially DC). Italy in the 80s was the result of one of the most troubled periods of the history of the republic- enough to remember the tragic killing of Aldo Moro in 1978 and the disaster at the Bologna station in 1980. However, the 80s were less troubled than the 70s, in fact left and right terrorism ceased to exist, social protests decreased. The problem is that this did not mean at all an increasing in political consensus for the main parties. The difficulties and the leadership crisis by DC and PSI set out the conditions so that in 1981, after almost 30 years, a laic as Giovanni Spadolini, belonging to the PRI, was elected as President of the Council. After this short interlude, barely tolerated by the principal political governmental axes, the supremacy of DC-PSI reappeared on the political

socialists gave an "external support" to the government without having any minister being part of it.

scene. The relation between the two political forces was found to be very favorable to the socialists, thanks to the prominent and charismatic figure of Bettino Craxi, secretary of the PSI and first socialist to enter Palazzo Chigi. For what it concerns the PCI, the party arrangement crystallized around PSI and DC meant, for the communists, the impossibility to build a government alternative. Therefore, even if the process was slow and with no clear objectives, the PCI started a redefinition of its political strategy which inevitably caused a rigid internal contrast on the ideology and identity of the party³. However, this process was slowed down in 1984 with the unexpected death of its secretary, Enrico Berlinguer. To complete the party system, it is worth mentioning the diffidence coming from MSI-dn and the new electoral results in 1987 achieved by the Lega Lombarda.⁴

The fragilities and the internal conflicts among the principal political forces did not hinder the new attitude in the foreign policy, a field in which Italy exercised an intense dynamism in the CEE, thanks to charismatic figures as Craxi and Giulio Andreotti. Moreover, the approval of the Single European Act – SEA - was determining for the CEE to identify the driving force that would have allow to restart the process of unification that had encountered some uncertainties during the 70's and in which Italy presented itself as conducting a substantial role⁵. Certainly, one main reason of the success of the SEA was the establishment of precise dates within which the objectives of the treaty had to be completed: “Objective 92”, the year when the single market had to be accomplished, was the great challenge proposed by the President of the European Commission, Jacques Delors, to the member

³ M. Clark, *Modern Italy*, London-New York, Pearson, 2014, p.496.

⁴ S. Colarizi, M. Gervasoni, *La tela di Penelope. Storia della seconda repubblica*, Roma-bari, Laterza, 2012 p. 6.

⁵ G. Guarino, *Eurosistema. Analisi e prospettive*, S.p.A Milano, Giuffrè editore, 2006, p.7

states. However, this ambitious plan led to a double clash: the first concerned the rift between the British opinion about the process of integration and that of all the other member states. The second, instead, was about the economical-political axis since the SEA increased inevitably the supremacy of the economy over the political field. The single market lacked in fact, the essential political controls on democratic basis which will be reached later, with the Maastricht treaty⁶. This of course led to harsh contrasts among member states as well as, and we will see the case of Italy, inside each state.

Hence, the only certainties that characterized European events were the presence of the Berlin wall and the iron curtain.

1.2. Italian political parties and the European integration

During the 80's the Italian political system, being it so conflicting, found in the European project a point of convergence. Including PCI with Berlinguer, all political parties expressed unanimity towards European integration even though continuing to manifest doubts concerning the time frame and the modalities to reach the aims of the treaty.

It is indeed necessary to understand how this wide and shared support had grown up. The first factor is of course the role played by the Cold War: the

⁶ Many political forces blamed the fact that the single European act was centered mainly on economic basis while leaving apart the political and democratic dimension of European institutions which will be reached with the Maastricht treaty. For instance, we can see that the new treaty notably expands the role of the EP by adopting the co decision procedure in conjunction with the Council. Or the role played by the European parties is taken into consideration. So, before the Maastricht treaty many parties were skeptics about the political and social integration, especially because the SEA did not seem to mention any.

politics of blocs resulting from the Second World War brought as a consequence the fact that any integration or regional agreement in which Italy participated and that found the support by the USA, would have been backed by all those political forces that sustained Washington and the contrariety of those in favor of Moscow. In this historical and political context, DC led by Alcide De Gasperi, became immediately one of the pillars of the European construction which indeed originated under Christian democrat leaders: De Gasperi, Robert Schumann and the chancellor of RFT, Konrad Adenauer. DC could in fact claim with pride to have been the first to have ever sustained the process of integration. However, as far as DC is regarded, the Cold War was not the only constraint for Christian Democrats' European policy. At the base laid the idea that a re-united Europe could have brought peace and stability, being the single nations (which had split Christendom) one of the reasons of the two World wars.

The PCI, instead, opposed the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) since the beginnings because the communists defined it as “the repercussion of an anti-Soviet American strategy aimed to divide Europe and to consolidate capitalism”⁷.

Since the treaties of Rome, the PSI changed its attitude, gradually expressing a more and more favorable consensus for the European integration. The socialists were in fact favorable to the single European market if this would have benefit the social aspects such as the eliminations of territorial disparities. Just in the 70's, the PCI began to mutate its approach towards an ever close Europeanism that, eventually, led the communist to become in the

⁷ G.Napolitano, *Dal PCI al socialismo europeo. Un'autobiografia politica*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 2006, p.310.

80's committed supporters of the process of integration. This stemmed from both domestic and external determinants such as the alliance with the Christian democrats in the 1970s (the Historic Compromise) under Berlinguer leadership and later the failure of communism in central and eastern Europe. With the fall of the Berlin wall, in fact, political parties acquired a higher freedom to pursue more articulated and autonomous international political strategies.

The relation between MSI-dn and Europe had been complex: after the Second World War, MSI strongly supported the birth of the CECA because it considered it a necessary instrument for Europe to acquire that centrality that had been faded by the main superpowers during the last world conflict. Filippo Anfuso, former ambassador of the Italian Social Republic in Berlin, was one of the first to realize that politics about Europe would have also helped a nationalistic political force as MSI⁸. In the 80's MSI was still a "special observed" in the Italian political life and particularly inside the institutions. The "missini" repeatedly criticized Italian foreign policy accused of being, in a first moment, pro-American and then responsible for contributing to build a Europe focused on mere economic bases. Furthermore, the MSI was one of the rare political forces that, even if with specious and propagandist aims, often posed the problem of ending the division between the West and the East in Europe.

Opponents of a European Union founded on nations as claimed by MSI-dn, were the members of the Lega Lombarda, led Umberto Bossi, which will become, in 1991, the Northern League. His ideal was coherent with the

⁸ E.Kulahci, *Europeanisation and party politics. How the eu affects domestic actors, patterns and systems*. University of Essex, Winhoe Park, ECPR press, 2012, p. 57.

origins of the party which in the 80's claimed "an autonomist and federalist Europe that, by refusing the logic of the empire, would have guaranteed, contemporarily, work e freedom".⁹

Political parties in Italy, as also in other countries, were obliged to analyze more in depth their vision about Europe as a consequence of the direct election of the European Parliament. In fact, as Levi and Morelli state "European elections launched a process of Europeanization by parties, compelling them to watch more attentively, the problems of integration"¹⁰, that until 1979 had been delegated exclusively to governmental and bureaucratic élites. However, the European faith professed by all the parties and usually combined with contradictions in political practice, led to support an integration made of lights and shadows. It was, indeed, fundamental that the Europeanism, so bolstered by the political forces, was translated in practical terms by a determined, constant and coherent political action.

1.3. *The first steps towards the monetary union: the Hannover European council*

Italian political parties (mainly DC, PSI and PCI) which had strongly supported the CEE institutional reform, included in the Spinelli project¹¹,

⁹ U. Bossi, *Unione per l'Europa federalista*, in "Lombardia Autonomista", a.II, n. 19, Maggio 1984.

¹⁰ L. Levi, U. Morelli, *L'unificazione eruoepa. Cinquant'anni di storia*. Cit, p. 225.

¹¹ Under the impulse of Altiero Spinelli, on 14th February, the European Parliament approved the draft treaty establishing the European Union (EUT), widely known as the "Spinelli project". Despite the fact the EUT was never ratified, subsequent EU treaties have introduced the institutional reforms it envisaged. The attempt by Altiero Spinelli was to give the European Union a constitutional text to be drafted by the European Parliament. In that moment, the EP, even if elected by direct universal suffrage, lacked the real political power to influence the European decisional process. Altiero Spinelli aimed at making the EP the principal institution for the constituent process. In other words, there was the idea of

saw with diffidence the integration based just on the single market rather than on a global reform regarding the institutional structure of the European community. In fact, in order to reduce the democratic deficit, several political forces tried to focus on the debate about institutional issues since, according to some, the road towards a democratic union was not yet initiated.

It was in this context, in 1988, that the European Council of Hannover took place: the expectations were high and the ambitions were numerous, especially centered on the modalities through which the twelve heads of state would have faced the hypothesis to put the single market aside the monetary union. In Hannover, the twelve decided to evaluate, within the year 1989, the steps to better reach the objective: for this purpose, *“ils ont décidé de confier à un comité la mission d’étudier et de proposer les étapes concrètes devant mener à cette union”*¹².

Although Hannover conferred to the member states that European spirit that was lacking, Italian media and parties did not seem to have understood deeply the intentions that the council of Hannover had set up. In fact, daily newspapers used to focus, predominantly, on other matters such as the reconciliation between CEE and COMECON that seemed to open up a window in the relations between West and East or the conflict between Thatcher and other member states.¹³

However, the electoral campaign for European elections on June 1989 reawaked the political clash among the Italian parties on the scene. The

conferring a new impulse to the process of integration through the drafting of “a new treaty
“and not by simply amending the already existing treaties.

¹² *Conclusions du conseil européen de Hanovre*, Hannover, June 28 1998.

¹³ A. Varsori, *La cenerentola d'Europa*, Rubbettino, 2010, p. 338.

positions on the future of Europe in 1992 and the path to be followed were the main topics of discussion. The debate was concentrated on two main issues: the first issue concerned the request for a higher equilibrium between political and economic union while the second, more conflicting, centered on the state of preparation of Italy towards 1992, a matter that harshly opposed the parties of the majority against those in minority due to different responsibilities held in leading the country.

The XVIII DC congress, even if summoned in occasion of the European electoral campaign, opened up the way to discuss about such themes. Emilio Colombo, minister of foreign affairs, highlighted that the Objective 92, fundamental step of the process of unification “tends to limit itself to economic and commercial issues and on the institutions for the realization of the single market. All of this is important, but it still remains a circumscribed objective compared to the ideals that have always animated the Christian democratic parties of Europe (...) It is now time to decisively steer towards the political union”.¹⁴

Also certain euro MP's tried to mark the importance that the DC, being it the principal political force in power, should make Italy responsive to the challenges that the single market would have presented. According to Maria Luisa Cassanmagnago Cerretti, DC had to give a decisive contribution “to the confrontation that the Italian system will have to face in 1992”. A modern, democratic and sympathetic State that aims at playing a determined role in the future Europe (...) has to look after its problems and delays of economic and social nature by identifying the structural issues and face them

¹⁴ Intervento E. Colombo, in XVIII° Congresso DC, Roma, 18-22 febbraio 1989, ASLS, Fondo DC, Congressi nazionali, Scatola 28, fascicolo 18 in Aggiornamenti sociali, gennaio anno XLIII

leading to evolution”¹⁵. Also Dario Antonozzi, group leader of Dc delegation at the EP, stated that DC should rapidly adopt European directives “to achieve the great single market”. The government and the parliament have to keep up with European institutions (...) and together with other political forces, the DC has to grasp all the opportunities necessary to achieve political unity, without either accepting or favor isolationisms”¹⁶.

In 1989, the XVIII PCI congress proposed itself as a turning point. Even if, the secretariat led by Achille Occhetto tried to launch, for the communist party, a process of revision and modernization in order to build an alternative to DC, in 1989 it was still ambiguous if the PCI had in mind a clear idea of which path to follow and the manner of leading the party¹⁷. However, the congress presented a clear turning point because of its contents and forms, for instance “work” which had always been the central theme for the communist forces was just the eighteenth of the points dealt by the secretary. On the other side, the priority was given to international and, especially, European issues of which the subject matter was very innovative. After having reminded that “our European choice is precise and determined and something profoundly different from the generic Europeanism”¹⁸, Occhetto presented the major challenges that PCI had to face in the phase of integration: the main role of the European left forces is “to foster and contribute to the construction of a Europe based on democracy. We have just said, and we say again, that we are not only favorable, but we are also advocates of the single market and in the mean time we realize that the

¹⁵ Intervento M. L. Cassanmagnago Cerretti, in XVIII° Congresso DC, Roma, 18-22 febbraio 1989, ASLS, Fondo DC, Congressi Nazionali, Scatola 28, fascicolo 18.

¹⁶ Ibidem

¹⁷ A. Agosti, *Storia del partito comunista italiano, 1921-1991*, Laterza, 2000

¹⁸ A. Occhetto, *Il nuovo Pci in Italia e in Europa. È il tempo dell'alternativa*, in “l'Unità”, 19 Marzo 1989.

market and new European market, cannot be a field without arbiter, in which the great decisional powers are elected by restricted industrial groups, finance men, politicians, out of the restrictions of democratic control. Here, the principal matter is that of the political power. Of the democratic power. A democratic government is necessary to face the problems of the economic and social cohesion”.¹⁹

Thus, Occhetto presented the political power issue as a major challenge to the Italian and European left forces, a challenge that was also the central theme of Marxism itself but which was, at the same time, transposed into a European dimension. Moreover, the PCI did not avoid criticizing the attitude of the political forces in power, considering them responsible for the delays and defaults registered by the government to prepare Italy towards the single market. As a consequence, Senator Andriani, representative of PCI, highlighted the concern about the “external constraint”, that is to say, the temptation by Italian politicians to delegate to external powers (in this case the European Union) the duty to carry out those reforms that otherwise the Italian political class would have not been able to implement. The theory of the external constraint already characterized Italian politics in the period previous to Maastricht and, according to this, Guido Carli in his biography states that: “once again, we had to bypass the Parliament, which is the sovereign of the republic, by building elsewhere things that could not be built in our homeland”²⁰.

The socialists shared, completely, the ideas exposed by the communists besides the critics about the governmental politics. Antonio La Pergola

¹⁹ *Ibidem.*

²⁰ G. Carli, *Cinquant'anni di vita italiana*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1996, pp. 8.

summarized the positions by the PSI on 1992, in this way: “the problem is not whether to implement or not the single market that everyone, to a greater or lesser extent is talking about, but how to achieve this result (...) as socialists, we surely want the market and we therefore want all the benefits brought about by the opening of the frontiers (...) we do not want, however, that the market dominates us; we are the ones who should govern the market”.²¹

Exponents of different ideas concerning European policies were MSI-dn and the Lega Lombarda which, because of their ideals and their detachment from the internal politics, had both been excluded by the European electoral campaign of 1989 with LN electing only 2 Mps. As a consequence, the strategy followed by both parties went in two directions: the first concerned the critics over the current political situation, while the second was dedicated to their own idea of Europe that they claim to be far more genuine compared to that of the other political forces.

The idea of Europe seen by Lega Lombarda was based on three pillars: 1) giving space to the small and medium enterprise since, according to them, the European integration was benefitting just big industrial a financial groups; 2) to build, aside EP, a chamber of people and Regions; 3) to halt the immigration flows so that every man a woman can have the possibility to live “in a society in which one can realize his own collective ethnic identity”.²² The second point was the cornerstone of Lega Lombarda electoral campaign to which Bossi accordingly expressed that “we can choose between two ways of Europe, Europe proposed by the roman parties:

²¹ A. La Pergola, *L'Europa dei socialisti*, in “ Critica Sociale”, a. XCVIII, n. 1-2 1989, p.32

²² U. Bossi, *L'Europa dele civiltà*, in “Lombardia Autonomista”, a. VII, n. 6, maggio 1989.

centralist and anti-regionalist (...) and a Europe, that we proposed, which dispose of a bicameral parliament with a Chamber of the regions”²³. This position was also well summarized by the slogan used for the elections: “Further distant from Rome, closer to Europe” together with the first traditional manifest showing a chicken from Padania, that after having made its own golden eggs, these ones were stolen by Rome to bring them to the south.

On the other side MSI centered its electoral campaign on three main ideas: a) critics to partitocracy; b) support to an idea of Europe founded on nations and consequent critique to a Europe based just on market and money; c) historic and political inheritance of fascism.

Concerning the first point, Gianfranco Fini underlined how the Italian politics risked distancing themselves from Europe and, according to this, he stressed how “Europe does not understand how is it possible to have a political system that has 48 crises in 45 years of governing”²⁴.

To conclude, the themes and the tones used by both parties, Lega Lombarda and MSI-dn showed the reasons why they had been excluded by the European electoral campaign and by the political internal conflict.

1.4 The fall of the Berlin wall: towards a new Europe

A project is considered to be good when it is able to positively react to internal or external stimulus that alter its original situation. Those events, that would have characterized the end of the communist bloc in Europe, strained the validity of the path towards the economic and monetary union,

²³ U. Bossi, *Appello agli elettori*, 16 giugno 1989, AMRAI F52714

²⁴ G. Fini, *Tribuna politica*. Conferenza stampa MSI.dn, 9 giugno 1989.

which the twelve heads of state had approved in Madrid in the summer of 1989. The dissolution of the communist bloc started to become more intense between July and August when some eastern countries began to open their borders to let huge amount of citizens find new ways of access in Western Europe. The phenomenon became so intense and overwhelming that on November 9 the GDR opened its frontiers towards FRG: in Berlin, Germans destroyed that wall that kept them separated for almost thirty years.

EEC and the single member states found themselves facing two main political problems: 1) what to do with the two German republics; 2) what future for European eastern countries for which EEC and Western Europe were a big hope. Europe had been divided for so long that elaborating feasible alternatives to the iron curtain was not easy job also because there was a shared conviction that Europe ended in Berlin, that the Europe that the single member states were building was limited exclusively to the Western Europe. The elimination of this ideal border and the need to answer to the issues mentioned above, presented complex problems to all European forces which even though they saw with the enthusiasm the fall of the iron curtain, were not either psychologically nor physically ready to face these matters. Moreover, in the second half of November, the project of German reunification presented by Helmut Kohl to the Bonn parliament, contributed to increase this sense of political confusion. Europe, once again, found itself frightened by the hypothesis of reconstructing a solid and populous unitary German state in the heart of Europe. The greater risk, according to some exponents of DC and especially Forlani, was to divert the attention from the European unification. In this respect, during the DC national council of 17-18 November 1989, the secretary expressed "it would be a dangerous mistake to believe that this process, symbolized by the removal of the Berlin

wall, underestimates the process of European unification. (...) the transformation of the community has to go on anyways (...) it is now the moment, in other terms, to not entrust the final objective of the political construction of Europe, to an indefinite future: we need to move up specifying aims, competences, institutions and methods".²⁵

Evidently, this was the starting point towards a new conception of Europe.

Chapter two

The difficult road towards Maastricht

2.1 Consequences of 1989 European elections: Further directions by Italian political parties

The European elections of 1989 gave interesting results. DC registered a slight downturn, shifting from 32.97% to 32.91%. Also the PCI registered a decrease in respect to the previous elections in 1984, in which the communists surpassed DC. However the real defeated party was the PSI and its secretary because they achieved a result that was barely superior to that of the last European elections. In this way, the socialists did no longer see any possibilities to solve that government crisis that was majorly hitting their party.

Impressive was the results attained by other small parties that performed differently of what was expected. Further directions were given by Lega Lombarda that achieved an unexpected electoral success so that, on December 4, the four movements that joined Alleanza Nord officially founded the Northern League. The party, led by Bossi, entered the party

²⁵ Consiglio nazionale Dc, 17-18 Novembre 1989

scene, together with all the other traditional political forces to which the Northern League was stealing votes. To celebrate this achievement, on December 8 1989, the first congress was held. In this occasion, Bossi highlighted ethnic and regionalist themes as well issues related to immigration, while the euro MP Luigi Moretti dealt with European affairs criticizing the way in which the traditional parties were committed to the duties of European integration. In this respect, Moretti stated, “the Italian state, in Europe, talks about equal dignities but our economic situation is heavy, compared to those of our European partners, partners that will do anything to send to Italy, in compensation of our passivity, labor coming from the third world. This will lead to dangerous social and racial tensions that will only benefit the great economic powers and authoritarian parties”.²⁶ More in general, regarding Northern League’s European politics, Ilvo Diamanti wrote, “the elaboration by the League, rather than defining the institutional prerogatives of Europe, seems to be pushed out to define its limits. Rather than outlining the general borders of Europe, it seems to be busy to highlight its intra national articulation. The idea of Europe, expressed by the Northern League, is based on two main premises: the centrality of the region over the state, as institutional reference; the identification of regions with nations and populations (...) it follows two corollaries: the contraposition to an idea of Europe founded on nation-states and conceived as new institutional entity, organized in a centrist manner, in analogy with the nation-states (...) the European community, as it is currently conceived, seems to the Northern League, the projection of

²⁶ L. Moretti. *Lega Lombarda in Europa. Europa delle regioni. Rapporti con altri movimenti autonomisti. Federalismo*, I° Congresso Lega Lombarda, Segrate 8-10 Dicembre, 1989, presso AFLN

centralist logics that characterize most member states, functional, specifically, to the interest of traditional parties”.²⁷

For what it concerns the MSI instead, it was the only European extreme right party that did not record an increase in consensus in the last European elections. This European *débauche*, together with the previous one on 1987, opened a “showdown” between the two core exponents of the party, the outgoing secretary Gianfranco Fini and Pino Rauti, supporter of a more radical wing. In the respect of the Italian foreign policy, the secretary stressed the deep relation between the internal political situation and then new chapter opened in Europe: “in the future, all our foreign policy must be euro centric and must denounce the unbearable and anti historic acquiescence of our governments, and, in particular that of DC which favors the interests of the enemies of Europe”.²⁸

In the case of the PCI, the path to the XIX^o congress was a clear example that the modernization process initiated first by Berlinguer and later by Occhetto, was taking shape as a consequence of the fall of the Berlin wall. In fact, D’Alema in occasion of a meeting between partisans that were commemorating the Bolognina fighting, stated that the proposal of renewal by Occhetto was aimed “to restore a new party of democratic and socialist nature, integral part of the European socialism, which aims to gather all those forces that intend to make an effort for an alternative of progress and reformer of our country”²⁹. Some opponents of this idea, one of them Armando Cossutta, rejected the prospective of adhesion with the Socialist

²⁷ I. Diamanti, *L’Europa secondo la Lega*, in “Limes”, n.42/93, p. 163.

²⁸ G. Fini, *Il discorso del segretario*, in “Il secolo d’Italia”, 12 gennaio 1990.

²⁹ M. D’Alema, *L’orgoglio delle nostre idee*, in l’Unità, 15 novembre 1989.

International(SI) especially because they feared that this could have been the first step towards the unification with the PSI and so with Craxi.

About the evaluations given to the process of European integration, according to the PCI, it was necessary to proceed with the idea that the European construction should be based on a range of institutions: first of all, the presence of a European Parliament holding elective power and able to exercise the role of a true government for the entire community. Secondly, the need to overcome the democratic deficit resulting from a process focused just on economic terms and thirdly the establishment of the Economic and Monetary Union, EMU. Concerning the second point mentioned above, the PCI, considered, as the major objective of the Italian foreign policy, the need “to democratize the process of integration and reach the political union”³⁰. However, oppositions inside and outside the party continued to grow, meaning that the PCI would have travelled on strenuous roads.

2.2 European and German unification: the point of view by Italian political parties

Italian political events unfolded also under the dramatic situation of the east of Europe: the states of the former communist bloc were moving towards a delicate transition characterized by new democratic assets. Moreover, west Berlin was still under the control of USA, Great Britain and France, while USSR was in control of the east part of the city and so it was not easy to negotiate the end of areas of influence. The problem was that this new political situation did not correspond with adequate international political instruments.

³⁰ *La risoluzione sulla politica estera dell'Italia*, in l'Unità, 12 Marzo 1990.

The argument was centered on the main superpowers that were defined again as winning powers; a situation that did not favor Italy at all, especially in a moment when the east was becoming a great opportunity for the countries of Western Europe to make new foreign policy strategies. In this context, Italian political parties considered the German unification as a European question, trying to release it from bilateral relations in which Italy would have been excluded. The German unification was a very debated issue, since according to Western democracies, the two world wars had been triggered by a powerful Germany. During the second half of XX century peace in Europe had been linked with the break of Germany in 2 less powerful states. So a long run issue was taking shape: which would have been the future of a peaceful Europe if Germany had to be reunited? DC indeed, hoping for a clear and energetic initiative, affirmed that the crisis of the communist regimes would have opened new perspectives of freedom and democracy in the Eastern Europe, with a more solid international cooperation.

MSI asserted that the dream to build the “great Europe” would have been fulfilled only if Germany would have been reunified rapidly and if all those movements and parties that truly believed in a European homeland would have affirmed themselves in the various European states. Occhetto was convinced that, first, the European unification had to be linked with the process of economic-monetary integration and above all with that of political union. This would have implied the reduction of German armed forces used only for defensive purposes.

What it concerns the PSI, in an article on “Critica Sociale”, Giampiero Orsello stated, “the German unification cannot be deferred, it has to happen (...) as a conclusion of a unitary process in which the whole community is

interested on the base of precise warranties of intangibility of eastern frontiers”.³¹

Even though the positions of all the Italian political forces were similar, they did not succeed in elaborating a single document while a significant number of resolutions that differed in few words were presented. However, the common ground was the idea that the German unification had to be a European issue not limited in the sphere of bilateral relations. Furthermore, the parties opened up an intense and broad debate that intensified later, but that can be summarized as whether the German unification would have led to a European Germany or, on the contrary, to a German Europe. In the first case, Germany would have become a reunited country normally integrated with the European community while in the second stance, there was the fear that Germany would have assumed a dominant and disastrous position as it did in the past. If the second possibility had prevailed, this would have meant, for Italy, disastrous economic and political consequences, being it a medium power with a heavy financial crisis. For this reason, once again the government hoped for the European way.

2.3 New parties on the scene: PDS and Lega Nord

January 31 1991, seventy years after the Livorno congress and right after the end of the XX congress, the PCI dissolved. Occhetto immediately defined the European policy that would have characterized the new PDS, delineating a line in between democracy and socialism, a determining feature of the new political force. The congress indeed, ended with the split of the group led by Garavini, Libertini and Cossutta. Libertini himself founded later that

³¹ G. P. Orsello, *Un'azione socialista per L'Europa*, in “Critica Sociale”, n.5/90, pp. 37.

movement that will be called officially Partito della Rifondazione Comunista.

During the same months, the Northern League was moving its first steps. In this phase, Umberto Bossi emphasized the polemics against Rome accused of following a southern policy that used to draw resources from the north and increasing clientelism. In this perspective, the Italian semester of presidency became an occasion to denounce that Italy that was performing worse than other member states with the highest inflation index and a huge budget deficit. In that respect, Bossi wondered how our country could present itself at the 1992 appointment. In the opening discourse at the first congress, the leader marked the way in which not only Italy was in danger but also the whole Europe because it risked to become a federalist institution made of several centralist states. Therefore, what can be detracted from the opinions of LN was an instrumental approach to European integration functional to a higher autonomy for the regions of the north. Indeed, in his relation Moretti defined the proposal by the Northern League about the institutional asset of the EEC “to the regions, we have to assign a certain weight and a role within the system of the future European Union together with the European central authority and the other member states. Hence, the Union should be structured into four levels: Community, Member states, Regions and Municipalities among which the functions have to be shared according to the subsidiarity principle”.³² According to the Northern League, to build a Europe based on autonomies would have meant to multiply the economic centers and to favor enterprises so to restore the precarious economic situation.

³² L. Moretti, *Le Regioni in Europa*, I° Congresso Lega Nord, Pieve Sant’Emanuele, 8-10 Febbraio 1991.

2.4 The first steps of the path towards Maastricht

The Maastricht treaty represented a fundamental stage in European Integration since it opened the way to political integration. It created a European union based on three pillars: the European Communities, common foreign and security policy (CFSP), police, and judicial cooperation in criminal matters (JHA). It recalled the themes treated in the previous treaties, especially the Single European Act of 1986, by completing and broadening them. Further, it reinforced the powers of the European parliament and it dictated the rules of the economic and monetary union (EMU). The EMU defined the final touches to the single market and it consists of three components: the coordination of the economic policies by the member states, multilateral surveillance and budget and financial discipline. The ultimate objective was to create a single currency and to ensure currency's stability thanks to price stability.

In Italy, at the end of 1988, the budget deficit affected the GDP for about 96% and with the lack of immediate and determined actions by the government, the gap would have grown further by 1992³³.

In words, all the political parties pledged allegiance to the communitarian principles and were ready to make the decisive steps but in reality, what they tried to do was to avoid the orientation given by the European Union, which would have slowed down, drastically, the public spending and the welfare on which the government consensus was built.

³³ See Colarizi S., Gervasoni M. (2012) *“La tela di Penelope. Storia della seconda repubblica”*(2 ed.). Laterza

To this respect, the coordinating minister of communitarian policies, Romita, assured that the primary objective to be pursued by Italy, was to reduce the “double democratic deficit”: first of all, in the European sense, concerning the relations between EP and the other European institutions and secondly a closer relation of national parliaments to the European legislative initiative.

Despite the considerable doubts coming from the other political parties, Andreotti and De Michelis were convinced of the importance of concluding the Maastricht treaty even if this would have not represented the most desirable situation for our country. “The alternative to the compromise is not to do better, but to not obtain any result from Maastricht. This would be in an case worse than what we expect from our situation”³⁴. The parameters given by the Union were very strict and could be respected just with a rigorous economic policy and a completely different management of public resources. This policy needed to be constant and not occasional.

The PSI was the party that gave to the result achieved in Maastricht the most positive judgment. According to the socialists, this step represented a starting point to reach all those objectives that will in the future strengthen the communitarian bond. Moreover, in accordance with the PSI, the treaty will facilitate the opening of those countries that were waiting and it will allow Europe to carry out a more decisive role by assuming all those responsibilities that will come facing the new international situation.

Concerning the DC, the national directorate expressed deep satisfaction for the results achieved in Maastricht and for the positive contribution that it

³⁴ M. Gazzi, intervista a G. De Michelis, *L' Italia si prepara alla grande rincorsa*, in “Corriere della sera”, 9 dicembre 1991.

gave to the government. The process of European, political and economic integration, according to the Christian Democrats, was a more important decisive step face the new situation that emerged in the Eastern Europe. All the decisions taken in Maastricht and the international situation imposed to the political forces an exceptional commitment for a more efficient and secure government initiative. However, the secretary of the party, Arnaldo Forlani ,believed that “the path towards the single currency would have presented, for our country, a hard challenge, to be dealt together with all the political forces”.³⁵ Also the communists asserted that from the government coherence and rigor was needed in order not to create a big gap with the other member states that were marching towards the same result but starting from an advantageous situation.

The political force that mostly seemed to share the result achieved in Maastricht was the Northern League. The party, in fact, found in Maastricht the decline of nationalistic empires and the first step towards a real federal Europe. The critics instead, came largely from the extremes, as MSI, which condemned the contents of the treaty and the problematic situation of our country in dealing with the responsibilities that the treaty implicated.

The comments about the Maastricht treaty were a clear sign that we were moving towards the loss on that innocence of Italian Europeanism. As a matter of fact, the Italian political class seemed to waken from the spell of that ideal Europeanism that had characterized the political situation so far. Maastricht imposed severe parameters and deadlines that had to be respected for the risk of being excluded. Europe was no longer perceived as a loophole to solve internal problems but as a crushing element of destabilization. If the

³⁵ Direzione nazionale, 12 dicembre 1991, ASLS, fondo DC, scatola 53, fascicolo 769.

road to Maastricht had been difficult, the path to EMU was even more challenging and needed a rigorous and constant rebalancing of the country. The question was whether our political system would have been able to respond promptly and adequately.

Chapter Three

The ratification of the Maastricht treaty within the crisis of the Italian party system

3.1. The ratification of the Maastricht treaty and the Italian crisis

The period of time that goes from the signing of the new treaty at Maastricht- February 7th1992- and the ratification by the Italian parliament- October 1992- was one of the hardest periods of the history of our republic. All the tensions and contradictions that characterized the political, economic and social life of Italy, especially during the '80s, now became known in all its seriousness. As Giuseppe Mammarella wrote, the 1992 crisis “wiped out the old equilibriums without generating new ones”.³⁶ In the same year, the inquiry initiated by the judiciary, known as *Tangentopoli*, started a process that, within a few months, revealed a broad network of illicit relations between politics and the world of economy. This of course influenced the political elections of 1992, in which the political forces in power were harshly defeated. DC registered a neat downturn together with PSI, while the Northern League, taking advantage of this confusing political situation, became the fourth national party. PDS and RC were way far from the results achieved by PCI during the previous political and European elections.

³⁶ G. Mammarella, *L'italia contemporanea 1943-1998*, cit., pag. 555.

In the second half of June, Amato was elected prime minister. The country was facing dramatic moments. May 23rd, during the prolonged vote to elect the new president of the Republic, on the highway towards Palermo, the magistrate Giovanni Falcone, his wife and the bodyguard were victims of an attack claimed by mafia. Falcone, one the leaders of the fight against mafia, had several times, accused the political class for not supporting the judiciary enough against the organized crime. In the mean time, the parties overcame their internal divisions and they elected Oscar Luigi Scalfaro as president of the republic. However, attacks by mafia continued so that a few months later on July 19, Paolo Borsellino, considered the heir of Falcone, was victim of a car bomb. In the later months, several members of the Amato government were constrained to resign following the inquiries by the pool of Milan.

In this context, the Maastricht treaty seemed to have a greater importance. In fact, many looked at it as the new external constraint that would have allowed the political class to implement those reforms that would have helped the country to restore. Several times, the literature has tried to understand the motivations that pushed Andreotti and De Michelis, together with Guido Carli, to accept and support the new agreement that as we know, was potentially destabilizing for the fragile political and economic reality of Italy. If the fall of the Berlin wall was the event that made the crisis to speed up, the Maastricht treaty, together with the other causes, represented the fuel that lighted the fire. Someone believed that the motivation that pushed the government to sign the treaty was the hope that this new European external constraint could restore the financial resources.

February 7th the twelve heads of state signed the treaty on behalf of a country that was not sure to be able to stay in Europe and reducing the deficit, the public debt and the inflation within a reasonable span of time.

3.2 The ratification of the treaty: positions by RC, PSD, MSI, LN

The ratification of the Maastricht treaty was not characterized by the unanimity that was typical of the approach by Italian political forces towards European integration, during the second half of the 70s. One example is the fact that in the Senate the debate was represented by three reports belonging respectively to the majority party, Communist Refoundation Party (RC) and MSI. RC and MSI tried to slow down the ratification process by raising constitutionality issues or demanding an advisory referendum. The heated debate took place especially in the left wing forces. RC repeatedly accused PDS for supporting a European strategy of unification that was predominantly “reactionary and authoritative”.³⁷ In particular, PDS was blamed for being reactionary because it was approving a position that, in reality, the party did not believe in. Moreover, the authoritarian character was given by the fact that PSD was expressing strong and straightforward stances towards the European integration by undertaking a path on its own detaching completely from RC principles. In fact,, PDS affirmed, “we belong to and we want to continue to belong to a Europe that goes beyond to that depicted by Maastricht, nevertheless the treaty represents an essential passage for the Europe that we want”.³⁸ Still, they recognized in the ongoing project the preeminence of monetary institutions, economic integration and market mechanisms. From this polemic exchange of opinions, two

³⁷ On. Sergio Garavini, XI Leg., Assemblea, Discussioni, 3 Luglio 1992, pag 617.

³⁸ Sen. G.G. Migone, XI Leg., Assemblea, 16 settembre 1992, p.6.

fundamental developments can be traced. One is the fact that after one year from the PCI transformation, the two parties, born from this disjuncture, took completely different paths on national and European policies. On one side, PDS, that joined the Socialist International and co-founded the Party of European Socialists (PES), addressed itself towards the European social democracy. On the other side, RC decided to remain faithful to the communist orthodoxy. The second development concerns the way of conceiving the process of integration. With The treaty of Maastricht and the fall of the Berlin wall, the process of unification stopped to be perceived as an almost autonomous path that travelled on tracks shared by the main political forces, independently of the positioning on the left-right line. In an indefinite manner, a struggle, among different ways of conceiving the path and the objectives of this process, was being opened.

Of different kind was the opposition of MSI. In a first moment, MSI decided to abandon the room in the senate, so that their contrariety was not put on the same line of that of RC, which the MSI considered anti European. However, after the dramatic internal situation due to the beginning of inquiries by the judiciary, MSI decided to stand against the ratification. The party led by Gianfranco Fini, accused the majority in power to go against the interests of our country by ratifying the treaty.

From what it has been written, it is evident how the attitude of Italian parties towards European integration was changing. Verzichelli and Conti wrote that “after the ratification of the Maastricht treaty, the European integration has been seen in a more attentive manner, with the emergence of an increasing plurality of positions [...] important changes can be observed both in the overall evaluation that the parties give to specific issues [...] and

both in the overall evaluation that the parties give to the process of integrations [...] consequently, we assist to a slow passage from the uncertainty of position often very similar, to the clarity of controversial positions”.³⁹

The Northern league brought a factor of innovation and disjuncture. The movement led by Bossi started to define a project of Italian federal reform within a Europe that had to be united in the same manner. The LN, affirmed supporter of the process of integration, was afraid of the risk that the member states mirrored their structure within the EU. “Europe was created under the will of states” wrote Marco Formentini, “and these states, at the moment of crucial decisions, will barely renounce to their powers by giving them up to a superior ideal. Only the incentive coming from the forces for autonomy and freedom will guarantee the result. It is on this field, that federalism launches to centralism its decisive challenge”.⁴⁰

The concept of Europe based on autonomies was new in the Italian political debate since both in Europe and Italy centralism has always prevailed, due the logics of the Cold war. Hence, the Northern league proposed a linkage between the acceleration of the process of integration with regional and macro regional autonomy as the slogan said “Further away from Rome, closer to Europe”. In later years in fact, all the parties were constrained to face this new issue and take a position.

³⁹ Luca verzichelli, Niccolò Conti, *La dimensione Europea nel discorso politico in Italia: un'analisi diacronica delle preferenze politiche* (1950.2001), in M. Cotta, P. Isernia, L. Verzichelli, a cura di, *L'Europa in Italia*, cit. Pag. 102.

⁴⁰ Marco Formentini, *Maastricht apre al federalismo*, in *Lombardia autonomista*, n.32, a. X, 4 settembre 1992.

Concerning the main parties in government, DC and PSI tried to guide Italy in assuming a fundamental role in the political and economic integration, especially after the fall of the Berlin wall and the question about the German reunification. Since April 1990, the Andreotti government and in particular, De Michelis and the minister of Foreign Affairs were very active in promoting a project to summon a inter government conference on European integration, without neglecting the economic integration. On the political integration, seen the last international developments, the government was favorable in seeing a re-united Germany since this would have strengthened the political and social identity of the European community. On the economic side, the government recognized that the single market and the single currency together with a European central bank would have represented an opportunity and a risk for Italy. Regarding the opportunity, the forces in power recognized how Italy could have become a leading actor in a great European market. Moreover, with the “external constraint” that would have emerged with the single currency, Italy would have had the possibility, as in the in the end of ‘70s, to solve those problems of economic nature, such as the budget deficit that “would have concluded a slow and contradictory process of rebalancing and modernizing of the Italian economic and financial system”.⁴¹ However, in this process, there was the risk that the European partners, as Germany, with the single currency coming up, would have imposed to Italy conditions that we could have not met, putting the country in a condition of economic and financial inferiority. At this point the political forces in power felt a heavy responsibility to show to be ready to meet the rigid parameters of convergence in order to demonstrate the seriousness of Italian intentions and to introduce the

⁴¹ A. Varsori, *La Cenerentola d'Europa*, Rubbettino, 2010, cit. Pag. 367.

mechanism of the “external constraint”. The position of the government on European integration was founded on two main premises: the first concerning the time frame that would have allowed the political class to implement the necessary reforms to face the convergence parameters; the second regarded the ability by the government to make the political world and the public opinion accept choices of austerity and economic rigor that would have seemed unpopular. In this context, Andreotti affirmed, “we need to forget the old habits to believe that with the public deficit we can solve the problems. After decades of this philosophy, we are over a barrel”.⁴²

October 1992 the senate approved the treaty with 176 votes in favor and 16 against, with the chamber of deputies approving it with 403 favorable votes. The sensation that stemmed from the ratification was that, once again, a specific Italian position on the treaty was missing. Giuseppe Guarino states indeed, “it is in the interest of each of the member state to formulate reliable provisions on the impact the Union will have on our system and to rapidly introduce measures that reduce the negative effects that this impact will bring and increase the positive ones”.⁴³ The problem was that, by avoiding giving motivations that brought Italy to adhere to the treaty and by renouncing to elaborate an overall Italian position over the process of integration, the public opinion began to perceive Europe in a different way. There was, in fact, an overturning of the external constraint that was no longer seen as the solution to the problems that our country was facing but as the source itself of the complications as unemployment, immigrations, and

⁴² AISLS, ADC, DN, b. 53, fasc. 759, in A. Varsori, *La cerentola d’Eruopa*, cit. pag. 370.

⁴³ G. Guarino, *Verso l’Unione Economica e monetaria. Di alcune rilevanti modificazioni degli assetti istituzionali interni*, in 1989. *Rivista di Scienze politiche*, n.1/93, p.5.

public spending. This was the result led by Maastricht, which conducted all the political forces on the scene to a serious breaking point.

3.3 The imprint given by Maastricht at the end of a party system

During 1993, the long process of erosion of the Italian party system that intensified in the 80s due to the several contradictions that emerged finally ended. With the fall of the Berlin wall and the Maastricht treaty on the international and European side, and the inquiries and attacks by mafia on the internal side, this process received the decisive hits. A further hit to the party system was given in April 18th1993 when Italians were called to vote for several referendums among which some concerning public financing to the parties and the electoral law.

Table 1

The results of some referendums on April 18 1993

Referendum question	%yes	%no
Abolition of public financing to parties	90,30	9,70
Abrogation of the law that institutes the Ministry of State participation	90,10	9,90
Abrogation of the electoral law of the Senate of the republic	82,70	17,30
Abrogation of the law that institutes the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests	70,20	29,80
Abrogation of the law that institutes the Ministry of Tourism and Show	82,30	17,70

The political earthquake, following the referendums results, sanctioned the end of the Amato government, previously involved in inquiries against

corruption. The president of the republic, Scalfaro, gave the mandate to Carlo Azeglio Ciampi to form a new executive able to restore the financial and economic situation of the country to meet the Maastricht parameters. PDS and LN supported the new government by abstaining to the motion of confidence. Ciampi called as well some ex members of the PCI to be part of the new government but the decision of the chamber of deputies to deny to the Milan judiciary the authorization to proceed with inquiries against Bettino Craxi, led Achille Occhetto to refuse the delegation by the government.

Lastly, in the autumn of 1993, a round of voting for administrative elections took place in some important cities among which Rome, Trieste, Naples and Milan in which Marco Formentini was elected as mayor. The Northern League, at the leadership of Milan, represented the detachment of that electorate that decided to turn its backs to DC and PSI, which have been, for decades, the benchmarks of the political sphere in government. Furthermore, the wide support that Gianfranco Fini received in Rome and Alessandra Mussolini in Naples was one of the most significant political facts. MSI politically strengthened by direct legitimization of their electors, came out from the ghetto that characterized it since its creation and was ready to create a future solid right wing aggregation. Following the events just mentioned, Scalfaro decided to dissolve the two chambers and to call for new elections on March 1994.

The crisis of the 1992-1994 biennium has often been defined as “lame revolution” since the political class did not want or was not able to take advantage of the general political situation of our country, involved completely in the judiciary inquiries, to initiate a new political season. In

fact, according to Vittorio Bufacchi “ the reasons of the convocation for new elections were the following: first, the referendum of April 1993 has profoundly changed the functioning the electoral system; secondly, the administrative elections that took place during the months of June and October of the year represented the detachment between the forces represented in Parliament and the popular will; thirdly, the judiciary was working to lay bare “the pathologies” found in the management of public affairs”.⁴⁴ In this sense, Lucio Caracciolo highlighted the impossibility and the inability of other non- political agents, as the judiciary and the public opinion movement that supported the magistrature action, to let the *pars destruens* being followed by the *part construens*.⁴⁵

3.4 The Italian political parties and Europe in 1993

After the heated debate in the Parliament that characterized the ratification of the Maastricht treaty, the instable political situation, the earthquake generated by *Tangentopoli* and the referendums on April 1993 let the issues correlated to the process of European integration take the second place. Consequently, the debate related to Maastricht among the political forces and within the media and its impact in Italy decreased, although the implementation of the treaty was close. However, the process of ratification continued after the uncertainties of 1992, so at the European council at Edinburgh the twelve succeeded in solving the problems that emerged when the Danish rejected the new treaty. The heads of state tried to incite the spirit of European unification by pointing out the benefits that the single market would have brought. “The great single market is an irreversible achievement.

⁴⁴ V. Bufacchi, *L'Italia contesa. Dieci anni di lotta politica da Mani pulite a Berlusconi*, Roma, Carocci, 2002, p.173.

⁴⁵ L. Caracciolo, *L'Italia alla ricerca di se stessa*, cit., p. 589-590.

It will offer a higher range of choices at lower prices to consumers, it will increase employment and it will make the international competition of European enterprises more intense”.⁴⁶ Moreover, the European council highlighted the importance by the member states to implement the necessary normative so that the single market could function in all its potentialities. On this issue, significant results had been achieved by Italy: in a letter sent by the minister of communitarian policies to the DC coordinator at the Senate, it was marked how Italy, in the rank regarding the implementation of normative, was positioned as second after Denmark and before Great Britain. On January 1st 1993, the European Federalist Movement (Movimento Federalista Europeo, MFE) organized a gathering in Rome in which all the negative attributes of Italy, were abandoned- as corruption, criminality- with the hope that the new born, EU, could help the country to solve the internal contradictions.⁴⁷

After two years of compromises, the ratification procedure ended. However, at the end of October the new treaty entered into force but it seemed to have lost all that political and idealistic enthusiasm that was typical of CIG (inter government conferences). The economic crisis, the increase in unemployment and the dramatic situation in the ex Yugoslavia were more than simple wake-up calls so that as Franco Venturini wrote, the European council in Brussels that would have started the Maastricht era, “it was not clear if (...) this should be a party or a funeral”.⁴⁸ In any case, the treaty of Maastricht entered into force and the challenge for our country, continued to press.

⁴⁶ Consiglio europeo di Edimburgo, 11-12 dicembre 1992, *Conclusioni della Presidenza*.

⁴⁷ The new is reported in G. Marvelli, *Mille falò per la nuova Europa*, in “Corriere della sera” 2 Gennaio 1993.

⁴⁸ F. Venturini, *La festa triste dell’Europa*, in “Corriere della Sera”, 28 ottobre 1993.

Conclusions

“Europe’s nations should be guided towards the super state without their people understanding what is happening. This can be accomplished by successive steps, each disguised as having an economic purpose, but which will eventually and irreversibly lead to federation.”

Jean Monnet

In his autobiography, Guido Carli wrote down how “the Italian political class did not realize that, by approving the treaty put itself in the position of having already accepted a change of such extent that Italy would have been unhurt with difficulty”.⁴⁹ The consideration given by the ministry, that signed for Italy the agreements in Maastricht, conveys the dimension of the role played by this agreement and the relative reactions by the party system. At the same time, the last words of Carli’s autobiography confirmed the function of rupture that this treaty assumed in Italy, concerning the relations between the parties and the process of European integration. In fact, before the Maastricht treaty, during the 70s, the Italian situation was characterized by a uniform convergence to the process of integration by all the political parties including the PCI led by Berlinguer. Within the Italian parliament, all political parties seemed to adhere to the federal ideal and blamed other states, especially Great Britain led by Margaret Thatcher, to express an excessive prudence towards this process. However, the frequency of the stances favorable to an acceleration of the process of unification was followed by the inability to meet the commitments requested by the single

⁴⁹ G. Carli, *50 anni di vita italiana*, cit., p. 437.

market: the political class of the 80s was not able to translate the European ideal into political practice. In other words, it can also be affirmed that they did not want to translate a federal ideal into policies and institutions. The common background of this situation was the theory of the external constraint according to which the gaps of economic and political nature that characterized the Italian condition in this period, could be filled by the closeness to the process of European integration. The phase of this unanimity entered into crisis with the signing of TEU when the parties, together with the government, started to become aware of the commitments assumed by Italy and the dangerous delay of our country. Furthermore, with the fall of the Berlin wall, the Italian political parties were free to follow more autonomous and complex international political strategies. At the same time, the internal political struggle caused by mafia and the inquiries on political corruption influenced the attitude of the political forces on the international field. Sometimes, the international dimension assumed a preeminent character, while, other times, the internal situation was the one that prevailed. It is from the analysis of these two dimensions that the thesis on the stances of political parties during the '90s can result more completed. Together with the political and social storm, initiated on February 1992 by judiciary inquiries, and that reached the peak with the killing of the two magistrates Falcone and Borsellino, the Treaty of European Union (TEU) broke that broad consensus on the process of integration. In Maastricht, the lost innocence of Italian Europeanism was celebrated and it was realized that the mere declarations on European loyalty would have been useless if not accompanied by unanimity of the Italian approach towards European integration. The disastrous financial situation of Italy, for instance, hindered our country from proceeding step by step with other countries. The priority

assigned by the TEU to the Economic Monetary Union (EMU) and the rigid parameters of convergence raised strong perplexities among Italian political parties which began to express the first oppositions. It was, indeed, during the ratification of the Maastricht treaty that the unanimity on the European faith, that constituted, for almost twenty years, the only political area without conflicting attitudes, was broken. The debate that animated the ratification was centered on three main critics. The first concerned the preeminence of EMU over the political union, a point that combined all the political forces including MSI and LN, that all together struggled to democratize the European Union. This was, in fact, one field in which Italy tried to challenge the other member states being the economic and monetary union disadvantageous for our country. The second critic converged on the Italian political situation. The concern of Italian parties was whether Italy would have been able, seen the disastrous economic and financial situation, to assume all the responsibilities that came along with the treaty. On this point the political forces that supported the executive reiterate their determination in managing the use of public resources in a “healthier” way. On the other side, instead, there were all the opposition parties as Pds, LN, RC and MSI that blamed the political class for be responsible for the decline of our country. The last critic concerned the content of the TEU, to which some parties as RC and MSI decided to firmly oppose.

To conclude, the debate over the ratification of the treaty underlined how the political forces did not commit neither to the objective of the monetary union nor to the process of convergence chosen to achieve it. For the history of European integration, the treaty of Maastricht has represented, until nowadays, a milestone that can be compared to the Schuman declaration of May 9 1950 that instituted the European Coal and Steel community (ECSC).

Beyond the discussions among the undeniable national interests, the German reunification and the single currency issues remain for everyone, events of fundamental importance. The path chosen to arrive to these objectives has contributed in a determining way so that the European construction invaded the national political debates and albeit with less frequency, also the sphere of national and European citizens. From the treaty of Maastricht, it seems that the European population has inherited always with higher determination, their right of opinion over the future of EU.

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Tesi di laurea triennale

Come far fronte all'integrazione Europea: le posizioni dei partiti politici italiani dal Consiglio di Hannover a Maastricht

(Riassunto)

L'elaborato di ricerca si è proposto di analizzare come i diversi partiti hanno reagito agli avanzamenti dell'integrazione europea e come hanno elaborato diverse visioni politiche in merito. Il punto di partenza è la convinzione che nonostante il processo di unificazione sia nato, si sia sviluppato e nutrito grazie all'iniziativa di brillanti esponenti politici di governo o intellettuali appartenenti al mondo europeo- come De Gasperi, Adenauer, Schuman, Spinelli, Delors - esso rimane principalmente un fenomeno politico e per questa ragione, è fondamentale che particolare attenzione sia rivolta a quelle forze politiche che hanno contribuito a tale processo in maniera significativa. Questa tesi si concentra, in particolar modo, sul periodo della storia italiana della cosiddetta "prima Repubblica" la quale, dopo la caduta del muro di Berlino, vide scosso violentemente quel sistema partitico che, dopo la Seconda Guerra Mondiale, era rimasto immutato nelle sue forme come negli equilibri. Il trattato di Maastricht, con le sfide e contraddizioni delle quali fu portatore, è al centro di questo processo di ricostruzione poiché con il suo contenuto riuscì a rompere quell'unanimità che caratterizzò il sistema partitico italiano dalla seconda metà degli anni '70 e nel corso degli anni '80.: un sistema partitico e politico, che aveva una posizione contraddittoria rispetto all'integrazione Europea, si trovò ad affrontare la prima vera discontinuità nell'unificazione europea dalla fondazione della comunità, date le diverse e contrastanti posizioni dei partiti italiani.

La situazione appena descritta ci permette di analizzare gli eventi storici del nostro paese sotto un'altra dimensione, visto che la storia della "prima Repubblica" e l'integrazione Europea sono state sempre considerate come due rette parallele inerenti a campi storici nettamente diversi. Dopo l'internazionalizzazione dei processi politici avviatasi in Europa con la caduta del muro di Berlino e al trattato di Maastricht, non è più possibile accostarsi allo studio di una realtà nazionale senza tenere ben presente il quadro dell'integrazione Europea e le sue influenze sulla politica interna. Come è possibile analizzare i conflitti politici interni tra partiti senza prendere in considerazione Maastricht come elemento di differenziazione? Tuttavia, questo non vuol dire sposare una linea storiografica incentrata sulla preponderanza degli aspetti internazionali rispetto a quelli di politica interna, ma vuol dire lasciare che le due dimensioni interagiscano al fine di poter studiare la loro reciproca influenza. Il risultato è stata una tesi costruita intorno a un triangolo in cui i vertici erano i partiti Italiani, l'integrazione Europea e le vicende dell'Italia Repubblicana.

Il punto d'inizio della ricerca è stato il consiglio Europeo di Hannover del 1988, nel quale i dodici capi di stato e di governo affidarono al presidente della commissione Europea, Jacques Delors, il compito di guidare i lavori di un comitato incaricato di studiare la possibilità di giungere a un'unificazione economica e monetaria. Seppur vero, che esso fu la conseguenza dell'obiettivo prestabilito nell'Atto Unico Europeo (AUE), il consiglio di Hannover rappresenta un percorso autonomo, tanto è vero che se oggi si è arrivati a una moneta unica, un effettivo mercato unico è ancora da raggiungere. In quest'occasione, alcuni dei principali partiti politici analizzati quali DC, PCI, PSI, LN e MSI guardarono con diffidenza ad un'integrazione Europea basata soprattutto sul mercato unico piuttosto che

su una riforma globale dell'assetto istituzionale e comunitario. Erano numerose le forze politiche che al fine di ridurre il deficit democratico, cercarono di incentrare il dibattito politico su questioni istituzionali. Fu il caso del PCI tramite Giorgio Napolitano che durante diversi dibattiti cercò di imboccare la strada dell'unione democratica vista come punto fermo dell'origine dell'esperienza comunitaria. Anche la DC ricordò più volte come l'appuntamento del 1992 non era tanto da mettere in relazione con il mercato unico quanto con un processo che deve assumere un carattere di unificazione culturale e politica d'Europa.

Come è stato necessario definire un punto d'inizio della ricerca, è stato altrettanto necessario definirne la sua conclusione con la firma del tratto di Maastricht nel 1992. Più impegnativa è stata la scelta dei partiti da analizzare visto il complesso quanto affollato panorama del sistema partitico italiano. La DC e PSI hanno rappresentato un primo quanto utile caso visto il sostegno dato all'integrazione Europea sin dai suoi esordi. Altrettanto fondamentale è stato il contributo dato dal PCI che rappresenta anch'esso un caso interessante.

È importante notare come prima del trattato di Maastricht, negli anni 70', nel Parlamento italiano si creò la situazione per la quale non si registrarono posizioni contrarie né ai contenuti del progetto di unificazione, né all'idea stessa di integrare l'Europa. Anzi, tutte le forze politiche sembravano aderire convintamente all'ideale federale e rimproveravano altri stati, in particolare la Gran Bretagna guidata da Margaret Thatcher, un'eccessiva prudenza verso ulteriori forme di unificazione. Inoltre, la teoria che emergeva in questo periodo era quella del cosiddetto "vincolo esterno", in altre parole la speranza da parte del ceto economico, politico e dai mezzi di comunicazione,

che le lacune delle quali era accusato lo Stato Italiano, potessero essere risolte mediante una più pressante appartenenza all'unificazione europea. Tuttavia, questa fase entrò in crisi durante la firma del TUE, mano a mano che Governo e partiti acquisivano consapevolezza degli impegni assunti dall'Italia e del grave ritardo del Paese. Con la caduta del muro di Berlino i partiti furono, inoltre, maggiormente liberi di seguire strategie di politica internazionale più autonome. Inserendosi nella bufera politica e sociale avviata nel 1992 dalle inchieste giudiziarie e gli attentati rivendicati dalla mafia ai magistrati Falcone e Borsellino, Maastricht celebrò l'innocenza perduta di quell'eupeismo italiano che scoprì che le dichiarazioni di fedeltà europeistica necessitavano di essere tradotte in pratica politica. La disastrosa situazione economico-finanziaria dell'Italia accompagnata dalla priorità dell'Unione economica e monetaria (UEM) e i rigidi parametri di convergenza assegnati al TUE, suscitarono forti perplessità nei partiti italiani. Fu proprio durante la ratifica del TUE che si ruppe quell'unanimità europeistica che procedeva compatta da ormai vent'anni. Questa linea di frattura vide schierate in campo le forze politiche in potere che ribadirono la loro determinazione a operare per una gestione delle risorse più sana in linea con i parametri richiesti, mentre nell'altro stavano i partiti di opposizione, PDS, LN, Rifondazione Comunista (RC) e MSI che criticarono la classe politica che guidava il paese ritenendola responsabile del tracollo italiano. Per quanto riguarda il contenuto del trattato alcuni partiti come RC e MSI espressero profondo dissenso verso l'integrazione europea. Se il MSI criticava l'esproprio di sovranità politica, RC rivendicò l'assenza di democrazia. Diversa fu la posizione di PDS, che aderendo all'Internazionale Socialista e co-fondando il partito dei socialisti europei (PSE), si era incamminata lungo la strada favorevole all'integrazione europea.

I risultati ottenuti da parte dei partiti italiani, alla fine del lungo percorso verso Maastricht, rappresentarono proprio quel concetto di frattura prima menzionato. Per quanto concerne i partiti di maggioranza quali DC e PSI, essi furono tra i pochi se non gli unici a mantenere una posizione monocolore tant'è che, fin dalle origini, supportarono l'integrazione europea senza alcun esito. Nonostante i diversi dubbi sorti con le complessità di un trattato di tale portata e le notevoli difficoltà incontrate nel nostro paese a causa della pesante crisi economica finanziaria di quegli anni, i socialisti e in particolar modo la democrazia cristiana riposero comunque grande fiducia in Maastricht credendo fino all'ultimo nella possibilità di riuscire a risanare il paese.

Per quanto riguarda il PCI, è noto come i comunisti avevano dapprima avversato il processo d'unificazione. Tuttavia la scelta occidentale voluta da Berlinguer negli anni '70 ed un maggiore distacco da Mosca posero le basi affinché con il crollo del muro di Berlino, il PCI si avviasse a sostenere il processo d'integrazione. Inoltre proprio l'atteggiamento nei confronti dell'integrazione europea, da Maastricht in poi, si è rivelato una delle principali differenziazioni tra i due partiti (RC and PDS nati dallo scioglimento del PCI). Un altro fattore di notevole importanza è lo spazio dedicato ai partiti di destra. L'analisi del MSI ha contribuito alla costruzione in Italia di una destra che, anche grazie al quadro europeo, puntò a divenire conservatrice ma allo stesso tempo moderna. Basti pensare al fatto che sebbene i missini fossero favorevoli a una maggiore integrazione, giudicavano la grave posizione dell'Italia dinanzi agli impegni che Maastricht portava, fino ad arrivare per via di Tangentopoli a trovarsi contro la ratifica del TUE. Infine, particolarmente stimolante è stata l'analisi della Lega Nord che, sebbene fosse una forte sostenitrice dell'integrazione

Europea, non smise mai di rivendicare il rischio di perdita di sovranità nazionale che gli stati avrebbero incorso in un progetto federale come Maastricht presentava.

Per finire, possiamo dire che il dibattito sulla ratifica del trattato di Maastricht sottolinea come nessuna forza politica italiana ha sposato integralmente l'obiettivo della moneta unica né il processo di convergenza per arrivarvi. Nonostante ciò, aldilà dello scontro tra i contrastanti quanto evidenti interessi nazionali, per la storia dell'integrazione europea il trattato di Maastricht rimane una pietra miliare, un evento di portata storica. Va riconosciuto che il percorso scelto per arrivarvi ha contribuito in modo determinante a che la costruzione europea irrompesse nei dibattiti politici nazionali, tra i cittadini e i popoli europei.