THE RAISE OF NATIONALIST
AND POPULIST PARTIES IN THE EU.
CAUSE OR SYMPTOM OF THE POLITICAL CRISIS?

Matteo ZANELLATO[*]

Abstract

The European Union (EU) is confronted nowadays with both economic, social and political challenges. The post crisis recovery has to deal also with the refugee crisis and the employment uncertainties. The political challenges are amplified by the growth of the nationalist parties that exploit the different social crisis the EU is facing only to increase their support in the national elections, without transmitting strong values. In this article through the critical theory I will analyze the one-dimensional parties, meaning the parties without a specific weltanschauung that tries only to gain public offices with a nationalistic-populistic propaganda. In the conclusions, I will try to offer some solutions to escape this political impasse.

Keywords: critical theory, téchne, one-dimensional parties, Italian right wing parties

Introduction and methodology

The growth of nationalist-populist parties amplifies the social, economical and political challenges for the EU, but Europe cannot become a collection of potential populist governments and cannot either be restricted as a free trade area.

My research question is 'what justifies the ascension of populist political parties in Europe in the last years, given their weak ideology?'. From this research question arises a secondary question: 'in what in depth téchne influences political parties?'.

My hypothesis is: 'if téchne is a purpose and not a mean and the only goal permitted is the growing of the apparatus and the society is a one-dimensional one, then populist political parties have the function to keep the unhappiness controllable by the apparatus'.

My objectives are to present the critical theory approach, to explain the impact of technology on politics, to explain the Europeanisation of political parties and exemplify the weak ideology of populist political parties with concrete examples. The overall goal of my research is to identify new solutions to preserve

---

[*]Matteo ZANELLATO is MA graduate at National University of Political Science and Public Administration, Bucharest, Romania; e-mail: zanellatomatteo88@gmail.com.

the representative democracy, a united EU as a space of peace, with its checks and balances.

My expected conclusion is that the populist-nationalist parties in Europe have developed so much because of the social and economic crises that are still going through the EU, but they do not respond to an anti-European, anti-democratic or racist worldview, despite that their speeches seem to prove otherwise. Indeed, in this context, the presence of "anti-system" parties allows the system to hold itself.

This paper will provide a multidisciplinary analysis, encompassing comparative politics, philosophy, political theory and international relations. Due to this reason, I will use various types of sources: both scientific, official documents and mass media/newspapers

In order to better understand this paper, I will operationalize four concepts: *weltanschauung*, téchne, will to power and political parties.

The concept of *Weltanschauung* means a worldview. I consider that nowadays, it is no longer possible to have a different *weltanschauung*, because the growing of the apparatus is the only purpose, the only admissible worldview.

I'm not a philosopher who studies being and technology, but I try to analyse its practical consequences in the politics' dimension. I will reside my paper on the works of Severino and Galimberti on the relation between man, nature and technology. In their works, they underline how technology became purpose, and they use the words technology, technique and technical as a synonym to the concept of the scientifical-technical apparatus that I will better describe in the next chapter.

The concept of will to power is tightly connected with the concept téchne. Nietzsche defines it as the perpetual renewal of the man' values, being an impersonal will. For Severino it means the will to transform something in something else. I will follow his assumption.

The classic definition of political parties belongs to Max Weber: «parties [...] are in their essence freely created organizations pursuing free recruitment [...] their purpose is always to seek votes for election in public office» (Pasquino, 2009, p. 146). Giovanni Sartori (2005, p. 56) defined it in 1976: «A party is any political group identified by an official label that presents at elections, and is capable of placing through elections (free or non-free), candidates for public office». I will use the definition of Sartori, but I will analyse only parties that run for public offices in parliamentary democracies with free election.

In this paper, I will use the critical theory approach on political science because of the critique of current paradigms, the critique of the general norms and mainstream discourses that are considered to have a normative and a cultural hegemonic status of power. I will present the aforementioned theory in the first chapter. I will also analyse technology as a purpose, through a short literature review of the main authors who have studied *téchne*, following the Italian philosophers Severino and Galimberti. According to this school of thought, *téchne*,

being the highest form of rationality, it has no obstacles in achieving what may do. This causes that the political decisions are taken in accordance with the technological apparatus in which we live.

Starting from the fact that governments and mainstream parties are constraint to propose the same solutions, this paper will argue that nationalist-populist parties try to exist even without a strong ideological base and a different *weltanschauung*.

Without claiming that nationalist movements are bad in itself, I argue that present forms of nationalism are not the cause of the crisis the EU is facing, but a symptom of deeper issues. We should bear in mind the assumptions of Marcuse in *One-dimensional man* stating that technology transforms the environment into a soft dictatorship, in which technology becomes the purpose and the man becomes a mean. Meaning that these present nationalist movements will not be able to solve these issues, as they could not be solved either by previous endeavours. Our society is a one-dimensional one in which political parties and cultural movements with an alternative *weltanschauung* cannot emerge. To prove this, in the analysis chapter I will briefly present the evolution of parties from cadre parties to cartel parties. Before describing it, I will analyse what are the quantitative technological changes that have led to a qualitative change. In the last part of this chapter I will briefly describe the results of the Europeanisation of political parties within this theoretical framework.

The case study provides a diachronic analysis and a discourse analysis of the right-wing party in Italy, more precisely the road of *Alleanza Nazionale* (AN) to *Fratelli d'Italia* (FdI). In the first section I will describe the evolution from AN to FdI, in the second section I will analyse the programs of FdI.

The data collection process focuses on open sources like Eurostat and OpenParlamento.

1. Critical theory and technological progress

Critical theory emerges from the intellectual elaborations of the Frankfurt School. The *Institut für Sozialforschung* was established in Frankfurt from a group of Marxist' intellectual in 1922.

In 1930 Max Horkheimer became president of the institute, an independent Marxist intellectual who felt both alien to the communists - blaming them for having applied only mechanically the principles of Marxism - as to the Socialists – because they were integrated into bourgeois society.

After the preliminary phase of the Institute, I agree with Baldassarre (2016, p. 11) that the next stages, which can be divided into three periods, gave rise to the second generation, of which the main representative is Jurgen Habermas. The institute is still functioning and the director is Axel Honnet.

The first generation of Critical Theory is developed in three books: *Dialectic of enlightenment*, *Eclipse of Reason* and *One-dimensional man.* The second strand

is explained in the book *Theory of communicative action* reflecting above the fact that «democracy makes sense only within specific forms of interaction and association, from the public forum to various political institutions» (Bohman, 2016).

After presenting the School of Frankfurt, we have the basis to analyse the critical theory. The first opera outlining critical theory is *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. It was wrote by Adorno together with and Horkheimer in 1947. The goal of the two authors was already announced in the premise «What we had set out to do was nothing less than to explain why humanity, instead of entering a truly human state, is sinking into a new kind of barbarism» (Horkheimer and W. Adorno, 2002, p. XIV). To understand what the new form of barbarism is, we need to ask ourselves what the authors understand by enlightenment. As Carlo Galli points out in the introduction:

> *[…]for authors, enlightenment is not intended in its historical conception, nor in the Kantian sense of human emancipation from its ignorance, but, more generally, in rationalistic thought, both in its liberal side and positivistic, both, although to varying degrees in different ways, in the dialectic (2010, p. IX).*

Modern society was progressing from the scientific point of view, but in a growing decadence from the cultural point of view. Although they initially sought to put their criticisms within the contemporary cultural and scientific framework, they later abandoned this goal, and as the consequence the crisis of science appeared, seen from an anti-positivist perspective.

Enlightenment, thought constant progress, should liberate man through the domination of nature. This is possible through science and the abandonment of myths and rites. Every "truth" must be swept to give space to applied science, meaning reality. In this way, the elimination of any untested truth transforms applied sciences into the only possible "truth". And being a "truth" cannot be denied, neither to change the world. Enlightenment has betrayed itself. This form of progress, which results in levelling equality rather than individual freedom, transforms man's domination to the nature in man's domination over man and the domination of the things over the man.

These negative consequences can also be seen in the role of the culture industry that produces an uncritical consumption of goods and leisure activities organized by the industry itself.

Another fundamental work that outlines the critical theory is *Eclipse of reason*. Written by Horkheimer and published in 1947, the book explains how instrumental reason has prevailed on the objective reason.

The author immediately begins questioning what the word "rationality" means for the ordinary man realizing that the embarrassment in the answer is because the answer is too simple: «reasonable things are things that are obviously

useful, and that every reasonable man is supposed to be able to decide what is useful to him» (Horkheimer, 2004, p. 3). Through this reason, man can evaluate the suitability of the means to achieve the goals.

To this rationality, definable subjective reason, Horkheimer opposes objective reason, which belongs to «great philosophical systems, such as those of Plato and Aristotle, scholasticism, and German idealism». This reason exist in the objective world, and is an objective theory of reason. «It aimed at evolving a comprehensive system, or hierarchy, of all beings, including man and his aims» (Horkheimer, 2004, p. 4). These two reasons have existed throughout history, with the objective reason that established the fine and the subjective reason that evaluated the means. But subjective reason becomes instrumental reason when it is no longer able to think about its relationship with objectivity, so that, becoming independent of this, does not overcome its dependence, but obscures it by strengthening it: «the neutrality of instrumental reason, which knows only the end as a means, is "more metaphysical than metaphysics"» (Baldassarre, 2016, p. 33).

Another important work is *One-dimensional m*an wrote by Marcuse and published in 1964. In advanced industrial societies, the technical production and distribution apparatus operates as a system that determines in a preventive manner the apparatus product. It also uses the technology «to create new, more effective, and more pleasant forms of social control and social cohesion» (Marcuse, 2007, p. XLVI). Marcuse also criticize the advanced industrial society able to incorporate the traditionally anti-system classes, such as the working class. This society transforms the individual into a consumer only free to choose different products, showing how a rational society is transformed in an irrational one.

A comfortable, smooth, reasonable, democratic unfreedom prevails in advanced industrial civilization, a token of technical progress» (Marcuse, 2007, p. 3). If the author's judgment that opens the first chapter seems to indicate no solution to change the status quo, but he appealed on the «substratum of the outcasts and outsiders, the exploited and persecuted of other races and other colours, the unemployed and the unemployable» (Marcuse, 2007, p. 260).

The book is also a criticism of positivism and quantitative research in social sciences because: «the operational treatment of the concept assumes a political function» (Marcuse, 2007, p. 110).

Critical theory can be included in the normative theory. This theory starts from the question «what is the best way to live?», with the purpose to think about the world not only as it is but also as we might think it ought to be. Nowadays, the question of the «best way to live» must be mediated with issues like free choice, living in a world where liberal themes are shared values (Marsh and Stoker, 2010, p. 156).

Critical theory aims to relate the Marxist theory of alienation with the Weberian theory of rationalization and, in the background, the Freudian unconscious theories. In fact, this theory focuses on the criticism of the forms assumed by bourgeois mass society rather than on capitalism as such. The differences from Marx could also reside in the value attributed to liberalism. If for Marx ideologies were "superstructures", for Horkheimer and Adorno liberalism is useful to naturalize and legitimate a system of market exploitation.

> *It had promised originally the possibility of a more rational and liberated world, where individuals, freed from archaic superstitions, and from the hierarchies that such superstitions supported, would be able freely to determine and pursue their own conception of the good life (Marsh and Stoker, 2010, p. 165).*

Despite that promises, for Horkheimer and Adorno the liberalism created a system in which the choices we make are routine and conformist, where our aspiration are materialistic and unimaginative, and where our lives are reduced to the production and the consuming. Their goal was to develop a normative notion of "real democracy", in contrast with the liberal societies' form of the époque, but not an antiliberal one, since they shared with liberalism the commitment to rationalism and universalism (Bohman, 2016).

Critical theory is structured around the conflict between the objective reason and the instrumental reason. For this theory, society is not a "thing" separate from the individuals but it is a moving totality.

Critical theory tends to criticize traditional theories because these applies the methods of the exact sciences, not commenting the rigor of the process, but its transformation into the ultimate goal (Baldassarre, 2016, p. 30). This reduces the concept of "truth" to that of certainty.

The subordination' intensity to the apparatus today is facilitated by the complexity of democratic institutions, born out of globalization and developed in a multidimensional way. In this scenario, critical theory deepens how the democratic structures of the supranational institution can be reformed. Habermas done an in-depth study on the EU (Bohman, 2016).

In this article I will not follow a specific current of critical theory, but I will analyse technology by aspiring to an «"human emancipation" in circumstances of domination and oppression» (Bohman, 2016). To do this, I have to separate my research from the traditional concept of the critical theory, in which capitalism society is using technology to impose itself as dominant apparatus.

To separate the critique of capitalism from the basics of critical theory, we must consider capitalism rational but with an irrational component. Max Weber cut off the irrational "thirst for gain" from capitalism, which can instead be considered the rational control of this irrational impulse. The rational capitalism transforms the "thirst for gain" in research of a constant gain (Weber, 1991).

The philosopher Umberto Galimberti states that if capitalist profit is pursued in a rational manner, the corresponding activity is also oriented according to the calculation of capital, transforming the domain from man by man to man by the calculating apparatus, who rationally undergo both the employer and the worker. In this scenario, man becomes nothing more than a specialized officer of the apparatus. Capitalism, which is driven by an economic reason, as "only rationality is a condition of profitability".

The typical scientific organization abstraction presides over this rationality. Moreover, it resolves any quality in quantity and any work in functional performance decided by the apparatus' rationality, marred by any ideology, and is revealed as pure technical reason. Technical reason brings man out of the story. If man is understood as a subject of needs, he becomes irrelevant as they become satisfied only if they are compatible with economic calculation; if man is understood as the object of actions (both employee or employer) his relevance is given by productivity. In this scenario, man's purposes are reduced to variables (Galimberti, 1999, pp. 428-429).

For Galimberti, under the rules of technical reason, capitalism is also deprived of its ultimate human component, passion.

For Severino (2012), to the logic of technical reason must also be subjected the ideologies, which otherwise, without the use of technique - and giving up to themselves, could not prevail over the others. Another important consideration of Severino (1988) is that technique uses capitalism and its apparatus, and not vice versa. In this environment, all the purposes of man become the means of a single purpose that incorporates them all: the undefined enhancement of technique. Being capitalism a moderation to the irrationality of the thirst of gain, it will always have as its goal the undefined increasing of its gains. In this way, or «it destroys the earth and then destroys himself; or it gives a different purpose than that for which it is what it is, and even in this case destroys itself» (Galimberti, 1999, p. 434).

After these considerations, Marcuse's words written in 1964 appear prophetic: «In the medium of technology, culture, politics, and the economy merge into an omnipresent system which swallows up or repulses all alternative. [...] Technological rationality has become political rationality» (Marcuse, 2007, p. XLVII).

A final consideration is important before proceeding with my analysis, when and how the age of technology has begun. In ancient Greece *téchne* meant "art" in the sense of "know-how". Until the nineteenth century it was associated with "progress", later it will be associated with "risk" (Natoli, 2004, p. 71). Günther Anders (2016, p. 7) tragically claimed that the man today is nothing more than an appearance compared to the *téchne*, the true subject of the current history.

August 6th was day zero of a new computation of time: the day from which humanity was irreparably able to self-destruct (Anders, 2008, p. 73). The atomic bomb is the watershed between a commodified world and a world that is not just at the will of goods, but of its blind production using machines. Anders calls it the

«principle of the mechanical»: we produce technical machines serving for our work, for our entertainment, for our annihilation (Anders, 2008, pp. 7-8).

Episodes such as Hiroshima and Nagasaki have shown to the world that the man is not aware of the side effects of its inventions, but, above all, it has shown how difficult it is to find a correlation between the initial experimental investigation and the outcome (Iannone, 2016, p. 53).

> *Scientific-technical rationality is the most powerful form of domination, just because destroying the will of "truth", which dissolves the future, remains open to the absolute unpredictability of anything in which the future consists - that is, it is fully prepared to modify its theoretical-practical structure, on the basis of the unpredictable, which is gradually presented on the experience (Severino, 1988, p. 62).*

After presenting the relationship between critical theory and téchne, in the next chapter I will analyse the political parties and how they become one-dimensional.

2. Analysis: one-dimensional parties

The apparatus, as we have seen before, tends to increase itself. Technological progress as a purpose in itself will come to occupy the spaces that were once assigned to politics. In this section I will analyse how technology has transformed political parties, stripping them of their *weltanschauung* and their role as intermediate bodies. It was not always like that. Politics before the age of technology belonged to the sphere of «being», as it did not respond to technical progress, but to metaphysical ideologies or values.

Because of the importance of the political parties in western democracies I will dedicate my analysis to the them. Sartori states that «citizens in western democracies are represented through and by parties. This is inevitable» (Dalton and Weldon, 2005, p. 931). Political parties have traditionally played a key role in democracies. They recruited people who will cover public offices, ensuring mobilization and support from party members in their favour. Through the elections, political parties structured and controlled the demands of society, structuring them into specific social groups both at a meta-political and policy level. Governments live through parties, which also integrate citizens into the social structures (Viviani, 2009, p. 55).

I will follow the historical perspective of Panebianco about the different classification of ideal-type parties (Hague and Harrop, 2011, pp. 178-179), and I add the definition of Cartel parties given by Katz and Mair (1995). I will analyse before the relation between cartel parties and the age of technology in order to prove how the qualitative change of technological progress has also changed parties. In the last part of this section, I will address the European issue: from the

Europeanization of the parties to the analysis of the spaces of democracy reduced by the functional institutions.

2.1. Party changing: a historical perspective

Cadre parties were formed only by MPs in the nineteenth century and they were only active before the elections (Pasquino, 2009, p. 150). These parties were formed because of a shared liberal *weltanschauung*, which it saw positively the division of the society in parties (Ignazi, 2013, p. 7). These parties, while having a low number of members and few non-parliamentary activities, were part of the sphere of «being» because they adhered to well-defined values such as liberalism, national conservatism or, in the Italian case, to the Risorgimento values.

Various motives can be attributed to the overcoming of the cadre parties and the leap of the mass party. Literature attributes this passage to the organization by extra-parliamentary ways like socialist movements (Katz and Mair, 1995) or the emergence of confessional parties because of the rejection of secularization of the State made by liberal parties (Ignazi, 2013, p. 14). In both cases, the increase of the universal suffrage and the increase in schooling has contributed to the increase in political participation, and hence partisanship.

The catch-all party emerges at the same time that Marcuse wrote *One-dimensional man*. Kirchheimer wrote about this ideal-type of party when the strong identities of the mass party left out and the adhesion to the "system" was almost absolute. The economic growth and the welfare state were the society's features and the use of television (Luther and Müller-Rommel, 2005) led to a direct relationship between party leaders and voters, who became more consumers than participants (Kirchheimer, 1966).

In my opinion, the catch-all party model loses the historic opportunity to reformulate political programs based on a renewed *weltanschauung*, linked to new phenomena that were characterizing the world in that period.

2.2. The cartel party in the Age of technology

Although Katz and Mair (1995, p. 18) state that the ideal-type of cartel party was born in the 1970s, I think that this date does not take into account some considerations. Better specified, the consequences in the west society of the fall of the USSR and the introduction of technologies in the environment we live that will not only change it, but lay the foundation for other environmental changes.

Luciano Gallino pointed out how societies to progress must have a radical opposition, both within and outside. Marcuse then explains how in the West the opposition, absorbed inside, was still guaranteed outside by the existence of the Soviet enemy. The fall of the Berlin Wall has removed to the West something who have a different *weltanschauung*, making the liberal-capitalist worldview the only possible. Although Gallino points out that Marcuse had already seen «in

authoritarianist, bureaucratized, and USSR technological fetishism nothing other than local variations of one-dimensional society» (Marcuse, 1999, p. XIV)

For a better understanding of the technology impact in the world, we should mention the considerations of Hegel who understood that the quantitative change of a phenomenon leads to a qualitative change of the environment. Marx applied this concept to the economy: a change of the importance of the instrument - money - turns an increase of this the end in itself of the economic process. Galimberti applies this principle to the technique, arguing «If technology become the universal condition through which every aim is satisfied then technology is no longer a means but the principal end through which every other end can be reached» (Galimberti, 2009, p. 8). The introduction of bioengineering and the internet have demonstrated the qualitative change in the environment in which we live.

In my opinion, in this scenario the raise of cartel party is better explained. Katz and Mair (1995, p. 17) state that the cartel party

> *[…]is characterized by the interpenetration of party and state, and by a pattern of inter-party collusion. In this sense, it is perhaps more accurate to speak of the emergence of cartel parties, since this development depends on collusion and cooperation between ostensible competitors, and on agreements which, of necessity, require the consent and cooperation of all, or almost all, relevant participants.*

The authors referred this definition to the mainstream parties aimed at public office occupation, this article attracted criticism at the academic level, such as that of Koole, who accused him of mixing scientific research on parties with neo-populist sentiments (Koole, 1996, p. 517). In my opinion, only if we try to see society as a whole, we can understand how parties today are unable to have a different - if not new - worldview.

If technique is *the fundamental trend of our time*, and nothing can be done to prevent its will to power, then parties became functional administrators with the goal of the apparatus' growth. This democratic unfreedom brings parties to stop thinking about a more just world, and leaders - both at nationally and locally level (Saccà, 2015, p. 14)- to work on increasing their party in public offices.

This fact is demonstrable by the membership decline[1], as citizens or are no longer interested in party participating because their needs have moved on consumerism, or because they know that the parties are no longer able to bring some changes[2]. Marcuse identified in 1964 referring to spiritual and metaphysical activities, what became the ceremonial part of practical behaviourism (Marcuse,

---

[1] A research of Ingrid Biezen, Mair and Poguntke (2011, p. 33) demonstrate how the party membership is falling in the last decades.

[2] Eurobarometer show how in the EU only 16% of citizens have trust in the political parties, while the 36% had in the year 2000.

2007, p. 16), today happens with political parties: the participation becomes a ceremonial part, with conventions conceived more for the front page of the newspapers than for the discussion of themes and programs. In this scenario, members become nothing but the supporters, who have no interest in creating a dialectical thinking within the party structure.

Téchne, using capitalism, has changed the world and made it smaller, has also subverted the political order. Good governance nowadays is very difficult, because of the *butterfly effect*: a small event in a corner of the world can have enormous consequences in your own country (Iannone, 2010, p. 157).

Not only the work of the parties in the public offices become more difficult because of globalization, but technical progress asks further degrees of specialization. If for Galimberti (1999, p. 447) the dependent relation of technique by politics is overthrown, for Iannone (2016, p. 25) parliaments became marginal because they are merely notaries ready to ratify the discovers of the technological progress.

In the previous chapter, I explained how technique uses the political and the capitalist apparatus to grow further. The need for a politics that not opposes to the technique is manifested in the functionalization of both institution and political conflict. The EU, one of the supranational functional institutions, is an important issue for European parties.

After the Treaty of Lisbon, the EU offers to the political parties an important opportunity, because of the competences of the European Parliament, but at the same time, it also shows the limits: some of the most important European institutions that govern the economic crisis are not included in the ordinary legislative procedure.

I agree with Severino (2012, p. 22) that the adoption of the Euro without the adoption of a European government has been done to relieve politics from the management of economic policy. In this way, the European political government it was transformed in a government that reduce economic and political risks.

The European Stability Mechanism is the instrument meant to save the Eurozone from the public debt crisis. The highest decision-making body of the ESM is the Board of Governors composed by the Ministers of Finance of the Eurozone and, as observers, the European Commissioner for Economic and Monetary Affairs and the President of the European Central Bank. Decision are taken with a qualified majority of 80%, and the voting weights are proportional to the subscriptions of Member States to the capital of the ESM (Christova, 2011, pp. 52-53). This new mechanism establishes the principle of conditionality, typical of the IMF, which subordinates aid to a precise reform plan (De Benoist, 2015, p. 29).

A single currency without a European government, a mechanism that is subverted to the possible control of the European Parliament and subordinate to the rules of the apparatus, make it possible to say that, without merit judgment, the spaces to have a different *weltanschauung* are extremely reduced.

Parties does not fill the void. They tries to conquer public offices, not being able to change the world because technique does it better than they do. The criticism to the EU, being a strategy (Ladrech, 2002), may help political parties to achieve their purpose. My analysis shows that parties, creating a hypothetical system to confront with, uses the EU in an uncritical manner (either approving or not the issues connected to the EU). Through the EU institutions, more parties have the occasion to access in public offices - and the example of the French National Front it is the biggest one, excluded from the national political system and the more influent anti-establishment party in the European Parliament.

The Europeanisation of political parties, even if it has contributed to the diffusion of "Europe" in domestic discourse (Graziano and Maarten, 2008, pp. 156-157), it has not produced a renewal of political cleavages based on "pro" or "against" EU fractures, transforming the European party competition thus a further reproduction of the one-dimensional party system at European level.

In conclusion, in agreement with Galimberti (2009, p. 450), I can argue that the population will vote élites that will split roles in the majority and the opposition, but they will not be able to make any changes to this constituted system. The society is politically blocked, as any party is forced to support the same policies once they reach the government - the Tsipras government in 2015 that signed the loans with the ECB, the EU and the IFM demonstrates the truthfulness of what has been said.

However, society is also blocked on the cultural level, as all "anti-system", "populist" or "nationalist" proposals are aimed at protecting the rights and behavior of the society they criticize (populist-left parties) or they had represented (populist-nationalist parties).

3. Case study: the evolution of the Italian right. From Alleanza Nazionale to Fratelli d'Italia

If we are talking about cartel or one-dimensional parties, it would be easier to analyse the evolution of one of the main-stream parties, both conservative or progressive, but this would not show how the antisystem parties are actually a vent valve controlled by the system in itself. I have chosen to analyse the FdI party because they participate in the Italian government (in the *Popolo della Libertà*, PDL) and now seems like the Italian version of the French National Front.

3.1. From AN to FdI: five years of political change in Italy

The similarity with the French right party was not an objective for the Italian right as appear in present days. The rupture between the *Movimento Sociale Italiano* (MSI) and the National Front took place after the fall of the Berlin Wall, but already in 1984 with the overlapping of the FN to the MSI at the European elections came the separation of the two extremist parties (Paoli, 2014).

The break took place precisely on the projects that the two parties had to European integration: the National Front totally against and MSI, which then become AN, in favor of intergovernmental integration. Moreover, being the Italian party system an euro enthusiast one (Castelli Gattinara and Froio. 2014, p. 3), even the right wing party tried to set itself on this position, attempting to join the EPP trough a renewal of the party in the 2006. Only Francesco Storace, former President of Lazio region, tried to oppose the will of Gianfranco Fini, even if Wilfred Mertens immediately blocked this attempt (Repubblica, 2006). A series of events stripped the Italian politics at that time and, therefore, AN. The electoral defeat of the spring of 2006 seemed to move away Fini and AN from Silvio Berlusconi. Then a finance bill considered disastrous from all the opposition and the birth of the Democratic Party forced the center-right coalition to renew itself (Fini, 2013).

Berlusconi had two chances, to create the unique party through the course launched years ago by Urso and Adornato, or that initiated by Brambilla with the "*Circoli della libertà*". Berlusconi preferred to avoid dialectics and cultural deepening in his party, leaning on Brambilla and announcing the birth of the PDL without consulting the allies (Mazza and Urso, 2013). Initially Fini refused the proposal, but the imminent elections and the possible inclusion of Storace in the coalition, meanwhile released by AN to create a party at the right of his former party, led Fini to accept the unique lists between FI and AN.

After the victory in the national elections in 2008, AN's dissolution congress was "only a bureaucratic practice to be solved than the end of a project and a political party that lived over seventy years" (Mazza and Urso, 2013, p. 122). The only opposite to the dissolution was MP Roberto Menia (Il Tempo, 2009).

In my opinion, the merger of these two parties matured in short time and without taking into account the seminars and discussions that have been previously organized showed that the two parties did not rely on a renewed worldview, but only to better organize the management and distribution of the public office.

In November 2011 Berlusconi resigned, overwhelmed by scandals and a too weak majority to address the public debt crisis. Mario Monti, the former European Commissioner just appointed life senator, succeeded him. Monti was voted by the entire parliament, with only the opposition of the *Lega Nord*. In this scenario, Meloni said that she votes the new government only for party connection to the PDL.

In the winter of 2012 the Monti's Government fell due to some disagreements with the PDL. Preparing the electoral campaign Berlusconi and his allies studied a fragmented parties offer to the electoral body with the purpose to gain the national elections (Fuscagni, 2012). In this context was born FdI, a party useful to reshape the appearance of a right-wing party for the Berlusconi's electorate. On February 24-25, FdI reached 1.96%, and it gained nine MPs and no senators. The goal now was to give a party identity to justify its existence.

In my opinion, the exit of the former AN from the PDL has shown that the party was not based on a strong worldview but on merely power interests. I also

emphasize that Fini's party, *Futuro & Libertà*, who instead tried to reinterpret two different cultures, such as the liberal-radical and the national one, did not emerge.

3.2. Analysis of the programs of Fratelli d'Italia

Because of FdI is a new party, the programs I will briefly confront are: the one of 2013 national elections and that of 2014 for European elections. I will confront them based on MP's actions in the National Parliament before 2013.

Despite the first declarations done in the first period of FdI (from the winter of 2012 to the first congress) where Meloni called to create a more serious center-right than the PDL was, the discourse switch to right: the "good people" against the élites that harmed the peoples' interests. These should be compared with the behaviour of MPs who were in the PDL.

On the one hand, criticisms to the EU, to the international finance, to the corporations that have benefited from globalization seem true and aligned with thinkers and parties against globalization. On the other hand, when most FdI parliamentarians who were in parliament with the PDL in the previous legislature, voted against these principles. They voted the Monti government - and with that the toughest measures of that government, they did not always act on what they would later say. No one challenges the freedom to change ideas and positions to a parliamentarian, but on crucial issues, party discipline is not enough to explain this attitude.

I will analyse three crucial moment for the Italian politics: the election of the Monti's Government, "*Salva Italia*" act' vote and the European stability Mechanism' vote, together with the Fiscal compact. I will analyse the votes of the four bigger representative of the future FdI party: three of them coming from AN, Ignazio La Russa, Giorgia Meloni and Fabio Rampelli, and the last came from FI, Guido Crosetto.

In a Facebook post Meloni wrote that she voted the Monti government, despite the affiliation of some ministers to the international finance groups. In November, 18th 2011 in the session 551, the four bigger representatives of the future FdI' party voted in favour to Monti (Openpolis, 2017).

Another key moment for the fate of Italy during the crisis was the vote for the "*Salva Italia*" (Ddl 4829) decree that introduced the tax on the formerly abolished "first home" and the pension reform. In December 16th 2011, in the session 562 Meloni and Rampelli voted in favour to this decree and Crosetto and La Russa were absents (Openpolis, 2017).

In the summer of 2012, the fiscal compact and the ESM were introduced. My analysis reveals that only Rampelli and Crosetto were at the Parliament at the voting day. In July 29th, in the session 669 Rampelli voted in favour and Crosetto voted against (Openpolis, 2017). The absence of a strategy of the four parliamentarians shows that Crosetto had a personal position.

In this context, the appeal of primaries for the centre right and the declaration "no more governments with technocrats or left-wing parties" (La Russa, 2013) allows me to say that the main purpose of this party is to survive. They contradict the party's main principles, in favour of a participation in the typical division of public office of the cartel parties (reduced only to the centre-right coalition, in this case).

In the last part of this section, I will analyse the programs for the EU issue of FdI. In 2013, the program for national elections had the will to change the euro policies to save the Eurozone and Europe from the crisis dictated by the austerity policies (Fratelli d'Italia, 2013). Only a year later, the attitude towards the Euro has radically changed, becoming the source of the economic crisis (Fratelli d'Italia, 2014):

The Euro is the only currency in the history emitted in the absence of a reference state and applied to non-homogeneous economic areas between them, for this is a too strong currency for some and a downturn factor in almost all states of the Eurozone, including Italy. Its circulation has so far awarded only Germany and a few other countries linked to her, who have enjoyed a competitive advantage, leading to recession and unemployment in the calibrated economies with different economic systems.

My research states that since 2014 FdI started to have a strong program against the Euro and the EU, but above all, a program that partially denies what the party said a year earlier. For the purpose of my research this fast swift in core issues shows that this party was not born because it had a different worldview from the PDL. The first purpose of FdI was to participate in the public office' division, that otherwise could not have been possible because of its votes were moved to another party - and thus to other candidates - or to abstention.

Conclusions

The absence of different worldviews does not help liberal democracies, which are likely to be locked in the creepy caricature of itself, as Gallino pointed out and I have proved in this paper. The absence of different *weltanschauung* makes any party eligible. This can be viewed not as a problem, because as we have seen these parties do not have strong values, but if the outsiders would organize themselves against the system, the risk that the dismantle of the social and political achievements of this model of society will increase.

My research question was «what justifies the ascension of populist political parties in Europe in the last years, given their weak ideology?» and the secondary research questions was: «in what in depth téchne influences political parties?». The hypothesis was: if téchne is a purpose and not a mean, the only goal permitted is the growing of the apparatus, and the society is a one-dimensional one, then

populist political parties are functional to keep the unhappiness controllable by the apparatus. My research confirms my hypothesis, which responds to my research questions, by showing that the apparatus creates useful populist-nationalist party-structures to contain the outsiders. These parties, without any special *weltanschauung*, are useful for the technological apparatus development with the aim of containing the losers of globalization, because they will not have the possibility -both historical, cultural, and political- to govern the changes.

Not only, these parties do not reply to deeper issues: they do not respond to the sense of loss that man, who is no longer able to live the sphere of being, because it is occupied by technology, and has to live in an environment where he is no longer the purpose in itself.

In my opinion, not everything is lost, but in order to save liberal democracies and supranational structures, something must be changed, starting with the political parties. Older parties born from the nineteenth century experiences are collapsing in all over Europe. In England the Conservative failed to manage the pre and post Brexit phase, and the Labours seems blocked by the President Corbyn; in France, the Socialist and the Republican parties were out of the ballot, there are also other similar cases.

Only the birth of parties with a majority vocation and unrelated to the experiences of the twentieth century could break the actual one-dimensional politics. These parties should be stripped of any preconceived ideology to allow a fundamental internal dialectic to govern this era of epochal changes. A wise committee that advise the national assemblies of these political parties could be the most appropriate way to deepen the thematic from its roots. Based on these considerations, maybe they should reconsider the role of the EU after the fall of the Berlin Wall, after the recent crises, and moreover, they might redefine the relationship between man and technique.

References

Anders, G. (2008), *Il mondo dopo l'uomo,* Milano: Mimesis.

Anders, G. (2016), *Obsolescenţa omului,* Cluj Napoca: TACT.

Baldassarre, L. (2016), *La Scuola di Francoforte,* Firenze: Clinamen.

Bohman, J. (2016), *Critical theory,* (retrieved from https://plato.stanford.edu/cgi-bin/encyclopedia/archinfo.cgi?entry=critical-theory).

Castelli Gattinara, P. and Froio, C. (2014), Opposition in the EU and opposition to the EU: Soft and hard Euroscepticism in Italy in the time of austerity, *Institute of European Democrats*(Spring), 1-34. (retrieved from https://www.iedonline.eu /download/2014/bratislava/IED-2014-Opposition-in-the-EU-and-opposition-to-the-EU-Pietro-Castelli-Gattinara-Caterina-Froio.pdf).

Christova, A. (2011), The European Stability Mechanism: Progress or Missed Opportunity?, *Baltic Journal of European Studies,* 1(2), pp. 49-58.

Dalton, R. J. and Weldon, S. A. (2005), Public images of political parties: A necessary evil?, *Western European Politics,* 28(5), pp. 931-951.

De Benoist, A. (2015), *Il trattato transatlantico,* Bologna: Arianna.

Fini, G. (2013), *Il ventennio,* Milano: RCS.

Fratelli d'Italia (2013), *Le sfide per l'Italia,* (retrieved from http://www.fratelli-italia.it/le-sfide-per-l-italia-9-gennaio-pomeriggio/).

Fratelli d'Italia (2014), *Programma Europa,* (retrieved from http://www.fratelli-italia.it/programma-europa/).

Fuscagni, S. (2012), *Marcia avanti e marcia indietro: il caos ordinatissimo di Berlusconi e una mentalità vincente da valorizzare* (retrieved from http://www.freefoundation.com/?p=2593).

Galimberti, U. (1999), *Psiche e téchne,* Milano: Feltrinelli.

Galimberti, U. (2009), Man in the Age of technology, *Journal of analytical psichology*, 54(1), pp. 3-17.

Graziano, P. and Maarten, V. P. (2008), *Europeanization, new research agendas,* Houndmills: Palgrave MacMillan.

Hague, R. and Harrop, M. (2011), *Manuale di Scienza Politica,* Milano: McGraw-Hill Companies srl.

Horkheimer, M. (2004), *Eclipse of reason,* New York: Oxford University Press.

Horkheimer, M. and W. Adorno, T. (2002), *Dialectic of Enlightenment,* Standford: Standford University Press.

Horkheimer, M. and W. Adorno, T. (2010), *Dialettica dell'illuminismo,* Torino: Einaudi.

Iannone, L. (2010), *Manifesto antimoderno,* Soveria Manelli: Rubettino.

Iannone, L. (2016), *Umanità al tramonto,* Milano: IPOC.

Ignazi, P. (2013), *Forza senza legittimità,* Bari: Laterza & Figli.

Il Tempo (2009), *Applausi freddi poi Menia scalda tutta la platea.* 22 March (retrieved from http://www.iltempo.it/politica/2009/03/22/news/applausi-freddi-poi-menia-scalda-tutta-la-platea-674488/).

Katz, R. S. and Mair, P. (1995), Changing models of party organization and party democracy, *Party Politics,* 1(1), pp. 5-28.

Kirchheimer, O. (1966), The transformation of Western European Party Systems, in: LaPalombara, J. and Weiner, M. (eds.), *Political Parties and Political Developement*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, pp. 177-200.

Koole, R. (1996), Cadre, catch-all or cartel? A Comment on the notion of the Cartel Party, *Party Politics,* 2(4), pp. 507-523.

La Russa, I. (2013), *A proposito del 2 giugno, dello Ius Soli e adozioni gay. La mia intervista a "Il Giornale"*, 1 June (rertrieved from

http://www.ignaziolarussa.net/2013/06/a-proposito-del-2-giugno-dello-ius-soli-e-adozioni-gay-la-mia-intervista-a-il-giornale/).

Ladrech, R. (2002), Europeansation and political parties, *Party Politics,* 8(4), pp. 389-403.

Luther, K. R. and Müller-Rommel, F. (2005), *Political Parties in the New Europe,* New York: Oxford University Press.

Marcuse, H. (1999), *L'Uomo a una dimensione,* Torino: Einaudi.

Marcuse, H. (2007), *One-dimensional man,* New York: Routledge.

Marsh, D. and Stoker, G. (2010), *Theory and method in political science,* London: Pallgrave and MacMillan.

Mazza, M. and Urso, A. (2013), *Vent'anni e una notte,* Roma: Castelvecchi.

Natoli, S. (2004), *Tecnica e Rischio,* Milano: LED.

Openpolis. (2017), *Openparlamento*, (retrieved from https://parlamento16.openpolis.it).

Paoli, S. (2014), Euroright. The extreme Right in the European Integration Process (1978-1989), in: Orsina, G. and Varsori, A. *European Political Families and Parties and the European Integration, 1945-1992*, Bruxelles: Peter Lang, pp. 254-277.

Pasquino, G. (2009), *Nuovo corso di scienza politica,* Bologna: Il Mulino.

Repubblica. (2006), *Martens: "Impossibile An in Ppe", Fini: "Solo opinioni personali",* (retrieved from http://www.repubblica.it/2006/11/sezioni/politica/cdl-3/ppe-no-an/ppe-no-an.html).

Saccà, F. (2015), *Culture politiche e mutamento nelle società complesse,* Milano: Franco Angeli.

Sartori, G. (2005), *Parties and party systems. A framework analysis,* Colchester: ECPR Press.

Severino, E. (1988), *La tendenza fondamentale del nostro tempo,* Torino: Adelphi.

Severino, E. (2012), *Capitalismo senza futuro,* Torino: Rizzoli.

Van Biezen, I., Mair, P. and Poguntke, T. (2011), Going, going, gone? The decline of party membership in contemporary Europe, *European Journal of Political Research,* (51)1, pp. 24-56.

Viviani, L. (2009), *L'Europa dei partiti,* Firenze: Firenze University Press.

Weber, M. (1991), *L'etica protestante e lo spirito del capitalismo,* Milano: Rizzoli.