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## BOOK REVIEW

### Pier Giorgio Ardeni, *Le radici del populismo. Disuguaglianze e consenso elettorale in Italia*. Bari-Roma, Editori Laterza, 2020.

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In Pier Giorgio Ardeni's last work, the author proposes an analysis of the success of populism in relation to the level of inequalities, identified as the main propulsive of the growth of consensus among populist actors on the Italian scene. The proposed approach is multidisciplinary in nature and tries to integrate socio-economic analysis with political analysis to offer an exhaustive explanation of the populist success in Italy. The hypothesis advanced is that, as discontent, social unrest and levels of inequality grow, populism strengthens (see Rosanvallon, 2017) until it reaches positions of power. The originality of the work is tied not only to the theoretical hypothesis, but also to the methodology adopted: for the empirical verification, the author proceeded to trace the socio-demographic and economic profiles of the inhabitants of the lower territorial levels, that is the municipalities, taking as reference the ISTAT data coming from the registry offices to intersect them with the electoral results. The aim is to shed light on the connection between unequal income distribution, territorial gaps and voting behavior in the different areas of the country.

In the first chapter of the work, attention is focused on the historical reconstruction of the underlying causes of the increase in inequalities in Italy. After the economic boom that culminated in the early 1990s (see Toniolo, 2013), the Italian economy underwent a sudden slowdown, until the recession of the 2000s during which real per capita income produced returned to the levels of twenty precedent years. The survival of Italian companies, over the years, has increasingly been tied to a progressive decrease in wages rather than to a series of product and process innovations - stimulated by public and private investments - capable of increasing the added value of production (see Montoroni, 2000; Felice, 2005; Carreras and Felice, 2010) and the total factor productivity (TFP, indicator that measures the degree of economic efficiency of the system in its complex). Furthermore, growing inequality has been accompanied by a reduction in social mobility (see Lipset and Bendix, 1991; Sorokin, 1998; Breen and Breen, eds. 2004) and class mobility, elements that contribute to the widening of social gaps that pockets of discontent are swelling. Another central theme of the first chapter is that concerning education. The author highlights, based on the last OECD data, that Italy has a low level of qualified and specialized education compared to the average of European countries. The percentage of people with only a primary or lower secondary school certificate is around 40%, only Spain and Portugal have higher figures. Tertiary education is achieved by only 17.7% of Italians, compared with a European average of 33.4% and an OECD average of 36.7%. On the basis of what is expressed in the report, it also emerges that Italy is one of

the few countries in Europe where the employment prospects for graduates are lower than those of those who have a professional qualification. Alongside that of the country's delays, there is also a question of gender disparity: women with university degrees earn 71% of what men earn, while women with high school degrees earn 81%. In relation to GDP, Italy destine just 3.6% on education, compared to a European average of 4.7% and the OECD of 4.8%. The data also show that the share of graduates is very high (54%) among children of which at least one of the parents has a degree, demonstrating the fact that the school path undertaken and the level of education achieved depend heavily on that of the parents. This can only be partially explained through the endowment of human capital. In most cases, the family conditions of departure have the main impact on the completion of university studies.

In addition to economic stagnation, there is the central question of the text: income and wealth, as confirmed by ISTAT, Bank of Italy and Eurostat data, are increasingly concentrated and socio-economic inequalities are increasing (see Baldini, 2018). The Gini index - despite not taking into account the relative ratio of percentiles or deciles of the distribution (a similar analysis of the critical elements that the index presents is found in Piketty, 2018) - stands at 33%, reaching the levels of 1995. In particular, the income of the poorest quintile (20% of the earners of the lowest incomes) has remained unchanged in the last years in Italy, while it has grown in the average of European countries. The income of the richest quintile, instead, has increased to hold 40% of total income, a share greater than that of the poorest six deciles and that of the rich in other eurozone countries (calculated on average). In addition to the distribution of income, inequality has also increased in the distribution of wealth: the sum of real assets and financial assets net of financial liabilities of Italian households amounted to € 9743 billion at the end of 2017. It still appears to be more concentrated income: the two lowest deciles went from 2,300 to 1,110 and from 12,000 to 6,200 respectively, halving in both cases, while for the ninth decile it fell from 580,000 to 462,000. That has changed over the years is also the weight of social classes: the poor class went from 16.1% in 1989-91 to 21.4% in 2012-14, the lower-middle class fell in the same period from 47% to 41%. The rich class, instead, went from 1.8% to 2.4%. The incomes of these classes have varied asymmetrically: that of the poor class has changed little, passing from 6.4% to 7.4% of the total equivalent disposable income, that of the lower-middle class has dropped from 36.2% to 32.1% of the total, while the income of the rich class went from 6.4% to more than 10% of the total, to then drop, in the last two years, to 8.9%. If between the 1980s and '85 Italy was the country with the lowest Gini index among OECD countries after Sweden, in 2016 the wealth gap exploded, so much so that in the same year the richest decile held 29 % of total income and the poorest half only 24%.

Large category of workers have seen their wages stagnate or even decline, as a result of the loss of importance of labor income in relation to national income. In fact, it weighs 15% less than in the 1980s. More and more poor workers have incomes that do not reach the poverty line (see Andress and Lohmann, eds. 2008; Barbieri et al. 2018). The number of poor families has grown steadily since 2005 - ISTAT data - passing from 819 thousand to 1 million and 819 thousand. Poverty is more widespread in the South and in metropolitan areas. The territorial gaps in terms of GDP, per capita expenditure for final consumption, income from work and employment have also increased, creating a context in which the Center is getting closer and closer to the levels of the North, while the South accumulates increasing delays which move away from both. The regions of the South, in besides having decidedly lower average family incomes, have a rate of internal inequality that is more higher than the northern ones (the Gini index records 33.4% in the South and in the Islands, 31.8% in the Center, 31.1% in the North-West and 27.9% in the North-East). In such a context, in which the social level seems to be jammed and inequalities have growth, the author argues, the resentment of citizens "losers of globalization" (see Teney et al. 2014; Rodrik, 2017) ends up with creating a fertile ground useful for populist actors to swell the ranks of followers and voters. According to the author, the growing populist success in Italy depends not only on the 2007 crisis, but on the slow worsening, in the long term, of the living conditions of the citizens of the Peninsula, on the growth of inequalities and on the increase in disparities.

The second chapter we find the attempt not only to define the profile of that phenomenon with vague boundaries that is indicated by the name of populism (see Berlin et al. 1968; Weyland, 2001; Laclau, 2005), but above all to identify causal relationships and the factors that explain its genesis and growing consensus, trying to relate the populist statement, in its political and electoral expressions, with the data regarding the

socio-economic and cultural conditions of the voters. One of the characteristics of the populists is the identification of popular sovereignty as "the ultimate ground that gives legitimacy to public authority and so (referring) to that authority can even allow itself to bypass the formal institutions of democratic representation" (Ardeni, Id. . 66). This element, which belongs to the populist hard core, threat the representative institutions of liberal democracy, whose function claims to replace through the direct link between leader and homogeneous population. The claim arises from an alleged moral superiority of the populists over other parties (see Mansbridge and Macedo, 2019), united in a single frame of discredit, an element that calls pluralism into question (Müller, 2016). But it is precisely the causal perspective that is able, argues the author, to shed light on the profound economic, social and political reasons that taint the democratic system and that have led to call into question the same forms of democratic participation. In such a context, it is wrong to treat populism as a monolithic entity (see Mudde, 2000; Tarchi, 2008): not all populists are the same. Some parties, such as Podemos in Spain or Syriza in Greece (see Kioupkiolis and Kastambekis, 2018), attempt to face the structural reasons for the crisis of representative democracy by inserting redistributive issues in public opinion and in the political / institutional discussion of the respective countries. Populism (or, better, populisms) is therefore examined as an effect, rather than a cause, of the socio-economic determinants that trigger the crisis of representative democracy.

After distinguishing between right-wing populism (see Ignazi, 2002), left-wing (see March, 2007) and post-ideological populism (see Fishman, 2002; Santoro, 2017), the author reviews the two main types of explanation of the causes triggering populist proliferation offered by scholars: 1. Economic hardship (see Alagan et al. 2017), which emphasizes the insecurity deriving from the transformation processes that have affected post-industrial societies, with globalization, competition from low-wage countries, automation processes, and the economic crisis; 2. The cultural reaction (see Matteucci, 1970; Inglehart and Norris, 2016; Palano, 2017), resulting from the aversion to the progressive values of cosmopolitanism that produces the shift towards identity and nationalist values. In particular, according to the interpretation proposed by Inglehart and Norris, the new cultural divisions are intertwined with the processes of impoverishment, growing insecurity and socio-economic vulnerability, producing strong resentment in some popular classes. In such a context, populism reflects the identity crisis of large sectors of society that have undergone the process of globalization, foment a crisis of status and recognition triggered by the financial crisis of 2008. The cultural reaction would arise from the aversion to progressive values of cosmopolitanism which produces the shift towards identity and nationalist values. In this dynamic, the economic cleavage that informed the classical political dispute between right and left has lost its salience, and even the questions concerning the distribution of material resources have been interpreted through the prism of identity claims as the result of a generational change. values towards themes focused on identity and security of a post-materialist matrix (Inglehart, 1981; Mounk, 2018). On closer inspection, however, although cultural and economic arguments may seem in tension with each other, reading between the lines of some analyzes one can discern a type of convergence: among those who defend the primacy of cultural explanations there are authors (see Hameleers, 2019 ; Adler and Ansell, 2020) that do not in fact reject the role of economic shocks, which maintain, aggravate and accentuate cultural divisions, giving authoritarian populists the added boost they need. The same Norris and Inglehart (Id.), For example, argue that medium-term economic conditions and the growth of social diversity had an impact on the cultural front, accelerating reactions, and show that economic factors have played a decisive role in the support for populist parties. In the same way, some scholars (see Margalit, 2019) point out that variables such as racial anxiety and economic insecurity are not alternative hypotheses, because economic shocks have significantly intensified the cultural division led by the urbanization process. Factors such as the Chinese trade shock do not occur in vacuum, but in the context of pre-existing social divisions along socio-cultural lines (see Spruyt and Keppens, 2016). Other perspectives (Kriesi, 2004), have attempted to investigate more explicitly the link between the social and economic changes, which occurred in the wake of globalization, which have produced the transition from national capitalist societies to post-industrial global capitalism, with everything the result of growing inequality and reduction of integration between social groups that has arisen in relation to the growth of consensus for populist parties. Populism has been able to draw nourishment from these dynamics by adopting defensive and identity positions.

In this regard, for example, Caiani and Graziano (2019) attempted to break down the economic aspects of the Great Recession, considering other relevant elements such as political factors and the crisis of the party system but also structural social changes or cultural opportunities to understand the growing strength of populist parties in various European countries. For example, while recognizing the crucial role played by the 2008 economic crisis, the two authors argue that it is necessary not to overestimate its importance, considering at least two other phenomena essential for understanding the causes that trigger the populist advance: the political crisis and that cultural. Although the economic crisis has undoubtedly created a specific "window of opportunity" (Tilly and Tarrow, 2006) for the emergence of new political actors who have capitalized on citizen discontent, long-lasting political factors - such as growing distrust of political institutions and the crisis of representation that has hit mainstream parties (see Lisi et al., 2019) and the most recent cultural crises linked to migration issues have offered further fertile ground for the consolidation of populist parties in various European countries. As the two authors state (2019 p.1150), the populist consensus does not necessarily have to depend on objective figures on the share of immigrants / refugees present in a given place or on the real rates of poverty and unemployment (see Roberts, 2017). Populists, in fact, can themselves feed a "story of failure" (Caiani and Graziano, Id. P. 1150) and transform it into a perceived crisis (Moffitt, 2015). Although these studies link economic and cultural reasons, the author emphasizes the lack of perspectives that take into due account the issue of the growth of inequality in the distribution of income as an explanation of the populist rise. At best, in fact, in studies highlighting the importance of economic determinants in relation to the rise of populism, inequality is seen as the result of underlying trends such as globalization, or one of the many factors that underlie growing discontent. social. In reality, however, as some studies confirm (Burgoon et al. 2018 empirically verified that there is a relationship between "position measures" - that is, the growth of the income of one class compared to the others - and electoral support for right-wing populist parties), that of the growth of inequality is a trend that can only partly be linked to the Great Recession or globalization, but in reality it is an independent phenomenon with deep causes, which concern the crisis of the welfare state and fiscal progressivity that have represented the central to the transformation of Western capitalism up to the 1980s. He thus proposes to provide empirical evidence for this hypothesis, as opposed to those approaches (Inglehart and Norris, Id.) Which tend to minimize the impact of resentment created by economic inequality and social deprivation on the growth of populist supply based on to the consideration that the populist vote seems to be more linked to the middle classes than to low-skilled workers. The author attempts to link populist success to two factors that he considers central: the increase of the inequalities and the void of proposals resulting from the changed horizon of the left, a force that has historically made the fight against inequality its political guiding light. "Transforming anxieties and resentment into political consensus has always been the key to populism" (Ardeni, Id. P. 88). To undergo processes of impoverishment and to feel the weight of inequality, in fact - argues the author - are not only the poor, but also the middle classes who see their condition worsening and perceive themselves excluded from the advantages of globalization.

In the third chapter the attention shifts to the analysis of the success of populist parties in Italy. If in Italy, "the promise land of populism" (Tarchi, 2015), until the 1970s their potential remained latent due to the strong social control and popularity of mass parties, in the 1980s the crisis of traditional parties. However, according to some authors (Santoro, 2012; Tarchi, Id., Dal Lago, 2017) the event that most favored the populist re-emergence is the crisis of delegitimization of the political system following the Tangentopoli investigation, which sanctioned the passage from the first to the second republic. This event, which involved - albeit to a different extent - both right-wing and left-wing parties - had the effect of favoring the delegitimization of the entire Italian party scene, creating the perfect breeding ground for Umberto's rise. Bossi first and then Silvio Berlusconi. The most recent populist wave, instead, has its detonator in the 2008 crisis, accompanied by the scandals that favor the fall of the last Berlusconi government. At this historical moment, the growth of support of the 5 Star Movement is identifiable, a political actor that becomes the first party in Italy at the first participation in the 2013 political elections. But the cultural explanation a la Tarchi, which traces the Italian mentality as a driving force for the affirmation of the populists, does not give sufficient importance to the political offer and does not take into due consideration the transformation of the method of political communication. This is the missing explanation that the author identifies: populists are born and strengthened

in situations of social hardship and feed on disaffection towards the political class united in a single context of discredit (see Bordignon, 2013), an element that was facilitated by the bipartisan support that the parties granted in 2011 to the technical government led by Mario Monti. The attention to the extent of social unrest in order to grasp the causes from which the populist advance arises, for example, would allow us to explain why in 1992, from the dramatic crisis that the country went through in the imminent accession to the Maastricht Treaty, the reconfiguration of the party system took place along the lines already marked along the right-left axis, and did not have an indispensable relief valve in the emergence of a populist anti-establishment political subject.

Since 2013, the composition of the Italian Parliament has changed radically: an explicitly populist movement, led by the agitating leadership of Beppe Grillo that remains external to the institutions, forcefully enters in the place of representation par excellence. His strong themes are those of the fight against the corruption of the party power, the environmentalist and anti-globalization claims. Even after institutionalization, the Movement does not abandon the strong criticism directed against mainstream parties, united by a common tendency to take advantage of the role of representation to look after their own interests (see Corbetta and Gualmini, 2013), in total disregard for the needs of citizens (to reinforce the idea of similarity and complicity between the two main parties, the expression "PD minus L", see Biorcio and Natale, 2018, is coined) and with the complicity of the media. The idea of a population with a pure and unitary will, disfigured by the activity of corrupt representatives, informs the claims of honesty and the struggle of the "low" against "the high" considered transversal and superior to the dispute between right and left. The classic ideological clash, according to the representatives of the M5S, has the function of fragmenting the unity of the people (Grillo and Casaleggio, 2011), therefore the elementary mechanisms of direct democracy (referendum and popular initiative laws) should be preferred to traditional forms of mediation) favorites from the network. Its electorate is mainly composed, the author argues, of the marginalized people and the lower-middle urban classes, who speak in an anti-systemic and anti-party tone. The case of the League is different. Although at its origins it was characterized by strong populist elements even if a different matrix than those of the M5S, since 2013 with the new leadership of Salvini, the party has accentuated its populist characters (see Passarelli and Tuorto, 2018) and assumed more and more a national connotation through sovereign and identity slogans typical of the radical right - wing. The rejection of social equality and egalitarianism, the aversion to multicultural society and the strong contrast to immigration merge with populist rhetoric against traditional parties and the European Union. The autonomist instances of Padania are downsized, an element that allows the "Noi con Salvini" movement to take root in the southern regions as well.

The author, after describing the characteristics of the two populist subjects, moves on to the analysis of the vote of the elections March 4 2018, those in which the affirmation of the populists to the expense of the traditional parties was clearest. The elections attest the victory of the challenging parties over the mainstream parties as it never happened in republican history from the post-war period until now (Valbruzzi, 2018). The M5S confirms itself as the first party obtaining 32.7%. The center-left coalition gets 22.9% of the vote, while the PD alone reaches 18.8%. In the center-right coalition, Salvini's league obtained 17.4%, surpassing Forza Italia which reaches 14%. In the aftermath of the elections, the electoral maps show an Italy divided in two: the southern area of the country confirmed itself as the main electoral basin of the M5S, probably attracted by the attention that the movement has reserved for the issue of poverty (although from a welfare perspective), while the northern area expressed its support for the center-right coalition, which has exerted a strong attraction towards small business owners and white-collar workers with promises of tax relief. But the author is not satisfied with this macro-area reading and intends to thoroughly investigate the plurality of both territorial and class fractures that influenced the vote of March 4th. The two dimensions considered are therefore: the place and the socio-economic condition. The study is calibrated on the data of Italian municipalities, in order to deepen the link between territorial gaps and the populist vote and verify the starting point. Territorial analysis is used to shed light on the types of consensus that the two different types of populism have attracted. He proposes a distinction between urban, sub-urban and peripheral realities, which is able to observe the distribution of votes for aggregated municipalities on the basis of these types. Specifically, the criterion adopted is taken up by the Agency for Territorial Cohesion, which divided the Italian municipalities into six

types: a) urban center; b) inter-municipal center; c) municipalities of urban belts; d) municipalities of the intermediate intra-peripheral range; e) peripheral; f) ultra-peripheral. The first three categories are considered centers, while the last three are inland areas.

The electoral results deriving from this analysis illustrate interesting trends: at national level, while the Lega obtains higher voting percentages in the area and in the intra-peripheral municipalities, the M5S tends to increase its consensus in the inter-municipal poles and, a lesser extent, in the peripheral municipalities. Oppositely in the mainstream parties, the Democratic Party and its allies are largely predominant in the urban poles, while Forza Italia tends to increase its consensus in internal areas compared to urban centers. This aggregate data is already able to account for the appealing capacity of the various parties in specific territories. The disaggregated data offer an even clearer picture: The League increases its consensus as it moves from the urban poles towards the suburbs, particularly in the North-West, but also in the North-East and in the Red Zone. In the Center, instead, where the consensus for the party is lower, the areas of greatest rooting are the peri-urban ones, while in the South and in the Islands, where the League averages figures below 10%, the periphery effect returns to prevail, although not at the levels of the North. Support for the 5 Star Movement, instead, shows a reversed picture compared to that of the League: not only does the consensus grow if you move from the North to the Islands, but also the areas of settlement change. While in the North-West and the South the highest percentages are recorded in the urban municipalities of the inter-municipal poles and area, in the North-East the greatest consensus comes from the ultra-peripheral municipalities and then from the inter-municipal poles, as well as in the Center. In the Red Zone and the Islands (where it obtains very high percentages, up to more than half of the valid votes), the consensus for the M5S derives mainly from the peri-urban and intra-peripheral areas. Even in the disaggregated analysis, the PD and its allies confirm their urban settlement: in the municipalities of the North-West, North-East and Red Zone, the center-left is the most voted side, while in those of the Center-South it is largely surpassed by the M5S and Forza Italia. This picture confirms some basic trends: in no macro-area neither the League nor the M5S obtain their greater consensus in the polo municipalities. The M5S collects its consensus mostly in urbanized but not central areas, while the League in peri-urban ones. The PD dominates in urban areas, but not everywhere. If the consensus of the League grows in a territorial along the center-periphery axis (decreasing longitudinally going down from North to South), that of the 5 Star Movement finds greater appeal in peri-urban areas and increases longitudinally along the peninsula.

However, the author argues that this articulated geographical characterization of the vote is not "sufficient to explain what, instead, is the unequal distribution of income to denote" (Ardeni, Id. P. 149). Only the combination of the location effect with the class effect is able to explain the populist consensus more accurately. This is the theme that the author addresses in the fourth and final chapter of the essay. The variegated panorama that emerged from the vote of March 4, 2018 suggests the overlapping of different social fractures and divisions. The analysis of the vote at the municipal level allows us to understand the vertical divisions that revolve around the center-periphery axis (see Lipset and Rokkan, 1967) of urban agglomerations and inland areas. To this must be added an analysis of the social composition of the different types of territory from which it is possible to draw data in support of the theory proposed by the author according to which the increase in support of populists must be explained in relation to the new forms of inequality a micro-territorial level. To succeed in this enterprise, the author takes into consideration the socio-demographic characteristics of the resident populations (considering the following variables: presence of young people, the elderly and foreigners), the distance from economic and cultural centers and the availability of services in small municipalities, medium and large, of plains or mountains. By crossing the demographic data of 2011 with those of 2018, the author is also able to trace a map of the "declining municipalities" (Ardeni, Id. P.163), that is, those that record a decline in the resident population, observing that they are the peripheral areas of the southern regions to be most affected by the decline in population. The analysis thus moves to the issue of the distribution of income and wealth, using the data provided by the Revenue Agency on the incomes of individuals recorded for tax purposes, from which it emerges that precisely in these same peripheral territories of the declining areas of Central and southern Italy, far from the centers and with few services, the distribution of income appears more unequal and the populist vote was majority. This type of data, unlike others (ISTAT

or Bank of Italy), makes a micro-territorial analysis possible. From them it emerges that in Italy 74.1% of the inhabitants declare a lower income (i.e. very low, low or medium-low), 21.4% a medium income and 4.5% declare a medium-high income, high or very high. The largest share of low incomes is concentrated in the Center (72.1%), in the South (81.4%) and in the Islands (80.7%). After examining the distribution of income according to the various types (income from real estate, from employment, from retirement, from self-employment or from business), the author shifts the attention to the issue of income distribution between classes and on the territory, separating the data at the municipal level. Interesting results emerge from this intersection: 36.3% of registrants live in the pole municipalities (especially in the North and Center), whose total income amounts to 41.5% of the national total; only 4.8% reside in intermediate poles with a 4.6% income share; 37.5% of the registrants live in the municipalities of the belts, with a share of total income equal to 36.6%; in the intermediate municipalities reside 14.2% of the registrants with 12.0% of income; 6.1% of the registrants live in the peripheral municipalities, who hold 4.6% of total income; finally, 1.0% of registrants reside in the ultra-peripheral municipalities with an income equal to 0.7% of the total. Already these first figures show a data: the municipalities are richer than inland areas. From the data, however, another consideration also emerges: the municipalities of the inland areas of the North are poorer than the central poles, but richer than all types of municipalities in the South and the Islands. Both moving away from the pole-municipalities towards the suburbs and moving from North to South, the concentration of registrants in the lower income classes increases. The further the municipalities are from the centers, greater is the share of poor registrants. There is therefore an unequal distribution by areas and by municipal typologies which confirms longitudinal (from North to South) and transversal (along the center-periphery axis), with a greater concentration of income earners of the lower classes in the peripheral municipalities and areas and higher concentrations of income in the upper classes in the pole and central municipalities. If the voting choices reflect the trends of the social body in its economic, demographic and cultural components, argues the author, the new distribution of the vote that has established it with the 2018 elections must find a complete explanation by crossing the fracture of the distribution of the income with the demographic and geographical one.

As an empirical method, the author uses statistical correlation. First of all, he relates the vote for a party as a percentage of valid votes and the percentage frequency of registrants by income class, by municipality, starting with the colleges. From the breakdown of the correlations between vote and concentration in income classes by macro-area and municipal type, the following emerges: in the North-East, the traditional Lega basin, the correlations are significant (positive) especially in the pole municipalities, in the inter-municipal poles and in the belts. But if the idea is confirmed in the urban centers that it is the less well-off classes that are approaching the party, while those with high income move away from it, the opposite is already happening in the inter-municipal centers: it is the richer classes who vote for the League. In the belts, instead, it is the low-middle-income and low-income classes that are most closely related to the vote for the League. This same pattern is repeated in the municipalities of the internal areas. In the North-West, the vote for the League follows a similar trend, diversifying according to the types of municipalities: in the polo municipalities the correlation is positive for the low-middle and low income classes while it is negative for the others. In the Red Zone, this pattern is repeated for the municipalities, while it appears reversed moving away and moving towards the suburbs, where the middle and upper income classes support the League, particularly in the ultra-peripheral municipalities. In this case, the more affluent classes of the most isolated areas seem to be attracted by Salvinian security references. The trend of the vote for the League in the Center, in the South and in the Islands appears more different. In the case of the M5S the correlations grow in the common centers, confirming the more urban nature of the movement. The correlation between upper income classes and grade appears negative for all municipal types and everywhere, in the case of the M5S. In the North and in the Red Zone, the M5S confirms its greater appeal with the less well-off classes, while in the Center and in the South it extends to the middle income classes. Finally, for the center-left, the correlation between vote and high incomes is confirmed in all areas - in a decreasing sense as one moves away from the center - of the country, except for the Red Zone, where the consent of the middle class extends. In the Red Zone, for example, the vote for the center-left, in the ultra-peripheral municipalities, is linked to the lower income classes. The first consideration that emerges is that it is not only geography that explains the vote, but the distribution of income of the various classes

connected to the territorial distribution according to the center-periphery line. If in the centers the highest correlations are between vote and middle and lower middle income classes for the League, between vote and lower income for the M5S and between vote and upper, middle and lower middle income classes for the center-left, moving away from the centers, the correlations follow different trends: the League seems to attract greater consensus among the high income brackets, and then return, in the internal areas (but not in the Red Zone) to intercept the vote of the low income brackets. In the case of the M5S, the relationship between votes and income classes fades away from the center, while for the center-left it tends to disappear, confirming the settlement strongly linked to the urban centers of the array. The author highlights that the relationship between voting and inequality exists and is visible and that this accounts, at least in part, for the populist consensus. As for other, extra-economic factors that affect the vote for populists, he explores the issue of the demographic composition of the electorate. By aggregating the data at a national level and adding up the age groups, it emerges that, in all types of municipalities and especially in the inter-municipal and central poles, greater is the weight of young people, higher is the vote for the League, while greater the number of seniors, lower is the League vote. The M5S, instead, seems to follow a different - and unexpected - trend: greater is the weight of the under 25s, lower is the grillino vote, as well as the greater the weight of the over 65s, higher is the voting percentages for the movement. Finally, for the vote in the center-left, the correlation with the presence of young people assumes a positive character in the urban and inter-municipal centers and in the belts, while it becomes negative, in the same municipal types, with the presence of the elderly. The correlation between voting and the presence of foreigners, instead, is negative for the center-left and for the League, with much more marked values in the centers, and is positive and high for the M5S vote (also in this case with more marked in the centers). This seems to be in contradiction with the theory according to which the uneasiness which feeds the vote for the League is associated with the presence of foreigners.

Finally, to relate the two explanations, the cultural one and the socio-economic one, the author uses a multivariate statistical analysis with multiple regressions to verify which are the independent variables that explain the vote. Through this method, some hypotheses are confirmed while others find no support. Firstly, while factors concerning the distribution of income at the territorial level appear significant in explaining the vote, demographic factors do not seem to carry the weight that was expected. The results indicate, for example, that in the North-West the presence of young people is not a relevant element to explain the support for the League, unlike that of the elderly and foreigners who show a negative correlation with the party vote. Therefore, the vote for the League would be explained by economic factors, rather than focusing attention on the security message. The presence of foreigners does not even affect support for the M5S, while that of the elderly and young has a negative influence. In the case of the center-left, instead, all three demographic components have a positive influence on the electoral consensus. In the North-East, instead, the League's sovereign message - but not the security one - seems to have a greater influence on the lower and middle classes, as well as on the rich classes in the peri-urban municipalities. In fact, the presence of foreigners positively affects the party vote. For the M5S, all income classes, except the upper one, affect the vote, as does the presence of foreigners, while the presence of young people has a negative effect. The center-left, instead, finds support in the low and middle income classes, but not in the low-middle income ones. The presence of foreigners has a negative impact (confirming that the anti-immigration message has an impact in the North-East), while the presence of young people has a positive impact. As for the Red Zone, the vote for the League is positively correlated with the concentrations of middle and lower income, while the presence of young people, foreigners and the elderly is negative. Also for the M5S it is the less wealthy classes that contribute most to the vote, while the presence of elderly and foreigners has a negative impact. In the Red Zone, the egalitarian message of the M5S prevails over the security message of the League. The center-left, in what was its stronghold, loses consensus among the poorer classes, while gaining some on the lower-middle and upper incomes. However, the demographic impact of all categories is positive, for which the multicultural message is rewarded. In the Center, the consensus of middle and lower incomes for the League is confirmed, as is that of the lower-income classes for the M5S, while for the center-left the only class to influence is the lower-income class, but negatively. The presence of foreigners has a positive effect on the Northern League vote, which grows closer to urban centers. The M5S and the center-left see their consensus grow by moving away



from the center, and while for the M5S the presence of young people and foreigners has a negative effect on the vote, for the center-left the presence of the three demographic categories has a positive effect. Even in the South the presence of foreigners and the elderly explains the Northern League vote, but not that for the M5S. The concentration of middle and lower income classes explains the vote in the league and that in the M5S, but not the vote in the center-left. The center-periphery division only explains the increase in the consensus of the center-left that grows going away from the urban classes. Finally, in the Islands, the low income groups tend to support both the Lega and the M5S, while it is the lower-middle income that explains the support for the center-left. In conclusion, the author emphasizes that different faces of Italian populisms have manifested themselves in the different macro-areas of the country, gathering a differentiated consensus according to clear trends. Inequalities on income distribution are the key to explaining the populist consensus: everywhere for the M5S the concentration of the lower income classes has an impact on the vote in Lega and M5S, not in all macro areas for the Lega but everywhere for the grillini. This is confirmed by the almost always negative effect of the presence of these same income brackets on the vote for the center-left. For the support of the League, the presence of foreigners represents an important socio-cultural component especially in the Center-South. The relationship of the vote and its territorial distribution with inequalities is accentuated when interpreted along the center-periphery axis and in the comparison between growing and declining municipalities.

Other works (Morelli et al., 2020) have recently focused on the territorial breakdown and the link between spatial, demographic, socio-professional and economic opportunities factors of the Milan area to investigate the relationship between the political growth of the M5S and the characteristics of the territory. In the analysis proposed by the authors, the metropolitan territory has been analyzed in its complexity and divided into electoral districts, each of which has a particular composition of social classes, is more or less connected with the major urban center, has different opportunities to benefit public services and possibilities in the labor market. At the basis of this approach, the authors argue, there is the need to consider "spatial, social and demographic factors without forgetting the political offer" (Id. P. 174). Interesting results have emerged from the intersection between social, demographic and spatial dimensions, which allow us to advance a fruitful comparison with Ardeni's work. First of all, what transpires from the analyzes is that in the suburbs of the metropolis various unsatisfied needs are condensed that are not answered in the political offer of the traditional center-right and center-left parties. From the intersection between the spatial dimension and class factors, which allow to observe the structure of the vote on a sociological level considering mobility, the authors obtain some significant data: the consensus for the Movement appears to grow in the "social peripheries" (Id. P. 173), ie those places where social relations, job opportunities and housing conditions represent a scenario of "relative deprivation" (see Guiso et al., 2017 p. 4) compared to central areas. These elements give value to the concept of "disenfranchised grief" (Morelli et al., Pp. 176-177), used by the authors to indicate those areas characterized not by extreme marginality, but by suffering due to unsatisfied needs which traditional parties do not have offered representation. This concept does not refer exclusively to a class position, but takes into due consideration the link of this with the "emotions connected to a social suffering given by the loss of social rights, and to the fact that this is not, or cannot be openly recognized, nor do you find symbolic and collective forms to be discussed publicly or socially supported" (Id. pp. 162-163). The authors underline the growing propensity to support populist parties in marginal areas where greater is the concentration of low incomes and the poorer the offer of services and conversely highlight the greater support for traditional parties in places where a higher percentage resides. of citizens integrated on the socio-economic level. These results, which emerge from the connection of spatial factors with class factors and both with the rebellion against traditional parties to explain populist success, seem in line with the analytical perspective and conclusions reached by Ardeni's study.

What emerges from this analysis, in fact, is that while the 5 Star Movement has drawn lymph from the social appeal transversal to the demos of the urban suburbs and the abandoned South, accompanied by a message with egalitarian connotations, the League has intercepted a resentment more territorially concentrated, using a populist, identity and sovereign message through a mix of two registers: one aimed at the demos, which was successful in the North-West and in the Red Zone, and one aimed at ethnos - funded by a secure and exclusive message / excluding - which intercepted the requests of some constituencies in the South, Center

and North-East. This theory shows some interesting elements of novelty: underlining the need to link the populist advance to the increase in inequalities allows us to sort out the two main explanations that have been proposed by literature to decipher its success, namely the cultural backlash and the economic one. The perspective proposed here should not be considered through the lens of orthodoxy: identity closure and economic insecurity are not two components that must necessarily enter into a relationship, but neither must they necessarily be considered as mutually exclusive. In the specific Italian case, the socio-economic variables seem to have a greater impact, but also the cultural ones - although rarely and only in specific cases - seem to have a weight. This could help us to understand how much the political offer can modulate different responses to specific issues emerging from society, so that the choice of voters can follow different trajectories as a response to similar problems. However, the issue of inequalities is approached by the author in an original way: by transporting the question of income distribution to a micro-territorial level, and by dividing the various areas into sub-segments, it becomes possible to obtain a consensus map that apparently complicates the analysis, but in reality it allows to obtain a more in-depth reading of the topic, which takes into account some variables often underestimated such as the offer of services, the distance from the center, the incidence of demographic variables, the concentration of income brackets, all elements that are difficult to detect through "macro" perspectives and synthetic data processing. Poverty and inequality, in fact, are not only in the suburbs, as well as wealth. Phrases such as "the suburbs vote the populists" or "the poor vote for the populists" produce excessive simplifications of reality, with the pretense of providing (false) simple explanations to complex issues. As can be seen from the analysis, in fact, it is the poorest in the peri-urban or peripheral municipalities who demand the attention - which they have not found in the mainstream parties - of populist parties. This phenomenon has been referred to as the "revenge of the forgotten places" (Rodriguez-Pose, 2017) or it would be better to say "of the forgotten places and classes".

Furthermore, the perspective provided by the author could be useful to give new enamel to the traditional center-periphery cleavage (Lipset and Rokkan, Id.), Which, reread through the lens of economic distribution, could provide a useful explanation on political and of the party preferences that our societies are experiencing. In line with what Fruncillo and Pratschke (2020) affirm in a study on the practices of politicization of social inequality promoted by the M5S, in fact, the dynamics of strengthening consensus by populist parties require a type of analysis that focuses not only on differences between center and periphery, but also on those that occur within the same peripheries. Although the dichotomy center / periphery has not yet lost its heuristic value, it needs an in-depth analysis that allows to bring out the social phenomena of inequality, socio-economic marginality and residential segregation that lurk in them (Morelli et al ., Id.). Through the study of Ardeni's essay, the importance of the phenomenological approach is clear, which focuses on the root causes that explain the populist advance, a theme that some "ontological" approaches tend to overlook in favor of generalizations about the common characteristics that populism presents (subtle ideology, discursive register, mentality and political strategy). The advantage of such perspectives also lies in the fact that they favor the distinction between different phenomena by digging into generalizations. Although many populists show common elements, in fact, each of them seems to offer a specific interpretation of the crises. Even the social bases and the conditions of discomfort that feed the consent differ from case to case. Linking their success to multicausal factors such as inequality, residence in marginal areas of the country, income brackets, age groups and characteristic values, allows to provide an explanation of the populist advance favoring a multidisciplinary approach, trying to understand, each time, what type of populism it is and what are the unresolved problems, the unsatisfied claims and the material deficiencies on which the various populist actors rely.

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